

Valentine's Day and Self-Care during the Pandemic

We all know Valentine's Day and its "purpose". The day allows couples to exchange gifts and celebrate their love for each other. Some people treat it as an extremely important holiday; some do not. Some people go all out, such as making a reservation at a fancy restaurant or buying an expensive gift for his/her partner. Some people just stay home and treat it as a normal day. Some people even celebrate the holiday by calling it "Single Awareness Day".

Regardless of your relationship status, you still should take care of yourself mentally, physically and emotionally not just on this particular holiday, but as often as possible. Self-care does not always require one person (you). Self-care can be shared with another person: a friend, a family member or even your pet!

Especially during this crazy pandemic, it is so important to take care of yourself. Most people find themselves looking for things to do. The internet is an amazing place to find so many options to keep yourself occupied. Staying moderately busy is good for you. Research shows that if you have no motivation and you do have a lot of free time, your mind tends to wander and that can cause negative thoughts to pop up. Fortunately, people are starting to explore hobbies and their interests more than before online, thanks to the pandemic.

To avoid or reduce that possibility of negativity from happening; you could look up different dinner recipes and share it with your family and friends. More and more exercise trainers are hosting their exercise classes virtually and exercising from home, you still have that structure just like in a regular class. It is not limited to just exercise, but they provide art classes, yoga classes and many different subjects you can join and follow along with.

But I am a Deaf person and I need to be able to understand what is happening in those classes. You're in luck! Most video conferencing programs do provide closed captioning or if you prefer, you can use any of the video relay services, call in to the class and be able to understand what's going on via an interpreter. Pretty cool, right? Technology is awesome!

If you are not comfortable with live classes, that's OK. You can do classes at your pace and do not have to participate in live sessions. For example, there is one website: [SkillShare](#). That website provides thousands of different classes you can take; from learning how to design a website to crocheting those hats and gloves we would need for the harsh winters. Keep in mind, not all classes are closed captioned but they are making those classes more and more accessible everyday! It is free, but if you want to do more; there is a premium membership for a reasonable price.

If you feel that you can't get yourself motivated to do all this, perhaps talking with a counselor or therapist could be a good starting point. More therapists are doing distance counseling; where you get to use the video conferencing software and see your therapist on your screen. More deaf-led organizations are providing this option, which is great because especially in Michigan, there are not many ASL fluent therapists. The organizations you can reach out are: [Deaf Counseling Center](#), [National Deaf Therapy](#), and [Deaf C.A.N.](#) However, you do have the option of working with a counselor who is certified in Michigan and you are satisfied with having an interpreter with you, use [PsychologyToday](#) to read the reviews and to contact the counselor directly to make an appointment.

Take care of yourself! Share this information with your friends and family. We will get through this together. Have fun exploring the hobbies and interests that you may find yourself wanting to do it all the time and you will not realize that there is a pandemic going on. =)