



Smiles are Contagious

Committing acts of kindness can be the disinfectant to keep depression and anxiety at bay. It can be the vaccine for panic and fear. Here are some ideas [taken from a variety of sources] for you to practice in your family and community:

- Donate extra supplies (i.e., especially those you may have panic bought) to your local food pantry. [To find a location near you to donate just type “food pantries near me” in your web browser’s search engine (e.g., Google, Bing, Yahoo)].
- Volunteer at local food pantries. They need people to stock shelves, pack groceries, and do home deliveries.
- Call a friend or relative who’s far away or lives alone.
- Check-in (by phone) on elderly or vulnerable friends and neighbors who may need help.
- Start a neighborhood signup to help those in need (e.g., using e-mail, Facebook, Nextdoor).
 - Errands
 - Delivering them supplies and groceries
 - Moving trash cans to and from curbs
 - Yard work
- Donate blood.
- Share your talents with others (e.g., family, friends, local nursing homes). You could use various platforms (e.g., Facetime, Skype, Zoom, YouTube, Tik Tok).
 - Sing
 - Play an instrument
 - Draw a picture
 - Dance
 - Make something for someone in your home
 - Use your tech. skills to help local schools implement distance learning
 - Use your tech. skills to help local hospitals and nursing homes connect their residents to family and friends.
- Start a community garden in your neighborhood and set up a schedule to stagger work times for distanced gardening. It’ll help soothe the stir crazy, can teach an important skill, and provide food.
- Draw pictures, write poems, stories, or letters and send them to local seniors in nursing homes or hospital patients who can’t have visitors at this time.
- If you have a nanny or regular babysitter, release them from work and pay them, especially if you are able to work from home and/or are still getting normal paychecks.
- Be kind to staff working in grocery stores, delivery services, restaurants, and other essential jobs. They are working hard. Plus, they also have families and personal stresses of their own.

Remember that many of them may not have access to Personal Protective Equipment but are still putting themselves at risk to support their family and help others. A smile, some patience, and a thank you can go a long way.

- Shop locally wherever you can.