



**Social Distancing, COVID-19, Self-Quarantine.** The U.S. has been inundated with these words in the past weeks. Numbers are going up, restrictions are getting tighter, health and financial fears are increasing. In a recent poll, mental health was the biggest concern for veterans at this time, even ahead of food, finances, and job loss.

#### **What we can do.**

- Try to keep daily wake, sleep, and meal routine as close to normal as possible.
- Physical activity is known to release endorphins boosting mood and reducing stress. Participate in a virtual fitness class or go for a walk/bike ride to enjoy warmer weather and open outdoor spaces if you're safely able.
  - [Fitness Blender](#)
  - [American College of Sports Medicine](#)
  - [Les Mills](#)
- Take a [continuing education class](#).
- Children across the state have suddenly become home-schooled. If there a subject you excel at, consider virtual tutoring.
- Join an online book club or discuss among friends
- Pick up a project or repair that has been set to the side for lack of time
- Learn a new language-- [MWR Digital Library – Mango Languages](#)
- Research your family tree-- [Ancestry Library](#)

#### **Beneficial Apps**

- Mindfulness Coach-- Developed by a team of psychologists at Veterans Affairs National Center for PTSD. Designed to educate on the basics of mindfulness.
- CBT-I Coach-- Designed to help improve sleep habits. Developed by CBT-I Coach was created by the VA's National Center for PTSD in partnership with Stanford University Medical Center, the Department of Defense's DoD's DHA Connected Health and VA Sierra Pacific Mental Illness Research, Education, & Clinical Center
- Virtual Hope Box
- Breathe2Relax

#### **If you find yourself struggling.**

Don't hesitate to find [confidential counseling](#) if needed. There are many services available via phone or video chat, including the Veterans Crisis Line; text to 838255 or call 1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1. You can also reach out to your local Health and Human Services to see what services may be available.

[Northwest Connections](#) 1-888-552-6642 also covers many counties in the state.

Most of all, the key is to safely maintain human contact. Fortunately, we live in the age of communication. Telephone, FaceTime, Zoom, and Skype are all great ways to stay connected. Reach out to family and friends who are especially at risk. Use this new normal to take advantage of slowing down and reconnecting with your families and fellow veterans. [Engage 22](#) Buddy Checks are of utmost importance at this time. A genuine Buddy Check serves a powerful and genuine purpose, especially in these uncertain times. Let's continue The American Legion's mission to serve Veterans, their families, and their communities.