

Staying in a Routine During Quarantine

Routines can benefit our life and well-being in many important ways, including stress-tolerance and anxiety management. When so much is uncertain, it can be reassuring to have a consistent schedule to stick to. Here are some tips for staying in a routine and how to add habits or activities to it!

Mimic your campus routine

- If you haven't already, create a daily structure similar to if you were still on campus--getting dressed in the morning, going to Zoom classes or watching recorded lectures at the same time, and doing homework when you would have on campus (i.e. between classes, in the evenings, etc.).

Distinguish between when you are doing work and when you are not

- Put a copy of your schedule on your door so your family knows when you are in class or doing school-work.

Construct your own deadlines

- If your professor has pushed back deadlines for major projects, assignments, or exams, set your own mini deadlines for yourself to break up the work or studying so you don't leave it until the last minute.

Stack habits

- If you're trying to implement new activities or tasks into your routine, try habit stacking.
- What is habit stacking? Instead of trying to implement a new habit at a new time and location in your day, add a portion of that habit to something you already do consistently.
- Habit stacking greatly increases the likelihood that you will stick to an added activity or behavior. The more you do something, the stronger the neural networks for that activity becomes, increasing the likelihood that you will get it done and with ease. By linking new tasks to habits you're already committed to, the likelier you are to maintain the new habit.
- Formula for habit stacking is: **Before/After CURRENT HABIT, I will NEW HABIT**
 - For example:
 - "After I watch my lecture, I will spend 10 minutes doing work for the same class"
 - "Before I turn off the light for bed, I will read for 5 minutes."
- Learn more about habit stacking: [Habit Stacking: How to Build New Habits by Taking Advantage of Old Ones](#)

Start small

- Another way to implement new activities into your life is to start small and gradually build from there. For example, if you want to journal everyday, first start with 1 minute before bed for a week, then 5 minutes the next week, and continue to build on until you reach your goal.

Be patient

- Life happens! Especially when many things are uncertain, something out of your control may throw off your schedule. That's okay! If you've been trying to stick to a routine but just haven't been able to, try adjusting the routine to maximize your success. Everyone is different and different things work for different people!