Hi, friends! How are you feeling?

I know there is a lot going on in the world right now, in so many ways. I know it is having deep impact on all of us in so many ways, as well.

Something that really helps me process my emotions, feelings, and the experiences/world I am living in is writing. I wanted to put together a journaling + creativity guide for you to utilize during this time. I hope you find it nourishing, inspiring, and supportive as we navigate our current world. I'm thinking of you all -- take really good care.
Feelings

Prompts for exploring feelings & emotions

- What feelings and emotions have been arising most frequently lately?

- Where do you typically feel them in your body? What do you notice?

- Are there any frequent feelings that remind you of past experiences?

- Pick one emotion you've been experiencing often. What comes to mind when you explore it deeper? Does it point you towards a desire, response, or reminder of what matters to you?

- What supports you in moving through your feelings? Make a list. Practice!

- In terms of COVID-19, what wider themes have been arising within you based off of what you've been feeling?

- Is there anything you've realized, understood more deeply, or learned through being with your feelings during this time?

- How can you tend to yourself as you navigate the feelings arising right now?

Our feelings typically make a lot of sense when we look at the context in which they are happening. Our world is currently experiencing an upheaval of sorts - a surge of difficulty, grief, and uncertainty. It is understandable to feel afraid, confused, out of sorts, and on edge during this time. Giving ourselves the opportunity to explore our inner experience as a response to our outer circumstances can be a grounding way of honoring our experience while also allowing ourselves to process and move through it in ways that work for us.

As you journal about these questions, offer yourself a lot of compassion, grace, and kindness. Giving yourself space to process in this way is such an act of love for yourself.
Creativity

Prompts for exploring creativity

- What ignites joy, play, or excitement for you? How do you express those things?

- What activities, ways of expressing, and ways of engaging in creativity feel nourishing to you?

- Are there any creative expressions you've been putting off that you can start or re-engage in during this time?

- What is your relationship with creativity like, and how might it support you as you navigate this time?

- Who could you write a letter to, send an email to, write a song about, create a painting for, or engage in conversation with?

- How can you infuse this time with creativity as a way of honoring that part of you while navigating challenge?

- How might creativity support you in moving through this COVID-19 process with a bit more ease and energy?

- What is one creative expression you'd like to try and commit to these next few weeks?

Creativity is a life force, a way of cultivating inspiration, a form of expression, and a nourishing part of ourselves to tap into during times of hardship. While our bodies are often in safety/survival mode during pandemics (and of course they are!), being able to bring out other parts of ourselves can be a supportive way of staying grounded and finding goodness, joy, and play. We need these things to keep going, to fuel ourselves, and to also find different and fresh ways of helping both ourselves and other people. Utilizing our creative muscles can offer us an inner respite and we can also use our creativity to find new ways of connecting, offering help in different ways, and staying rooted in what matters to us.

As you explore creativity during this time, I invite you to think about how creativity might make this experience even a tiny bit more nourishing. I've found creativity to be such a natural way of moving through challenge.
Connection

Prompts for exploring connection

- Who have you been meaning to connect with that you might reach out to now?

- How can you get creative with staying connected?

- Are there any conversations you've been wanting to have that you might have now?

- Where can you find connection while at home and unable to be as publicly social?

- Which online platforms do you find community and connection on/in?

- What activities might you do with those you love during this time?

- How might connection support you during social distancing and isolation?

- Have your views of connection and community shifted at all as we move through this time?

- What are your intentions in staying connected in the coming weeks?

We need connection to thrive -- all of us. This social distancing and lessening of in-person connection and community can be really tough on many of us. I want to encourage you to seek out connection in ways you might not normally seek it out -- online, with those you enjoy talking to, in new and inventive ways... explore how connection can be maintained as we live through this period of isolation and home-based living.

When we connect, we remind ourselves and others we're not alone and we more readily find common humanity amidst all that is happening around and within us. Connection is a healing balm always, but especially during challenging experiences. I hope you find ways of staying in community in the coming weeks.
Other tips & tools

Other things to practice and implement during this time:

**Self Compassion**
None of us have experienced COVID-19 before. Have a lot of compassion for yourself and your responses to this experience. Kristin Neff is a wonderful resource on self-compassion.

**Maintain as much ritual and routine as possible.**
When so much change is out of our control, rooting into what we can do to maintain a semblance of normalcy is a way of grounding amidst the unknown.

**Nourish your body.**
Eat good foods, move, breathe, stretch, sleep, hydrate, and honor your physical self in ways that feel good for you,

**Practice mindfulness and presence.**
Guided meditations, mindful eating, and simply paying attention without judgment are all nourishing ways of showing up for ourselves.

**Shift expectations.**
You may not be able to do as much as you normally do during this time... that's okay! Shift expectations to match the current situation.

**Stay grounded**
Practice grounding exercises, limit news and social media consumption, get outside when possible, engage in activities that feel good for you, ask for help, stay connected, tap into your gifts, and honor your process.

**Look for the help**
Mr. Rogers was once told to always look for the helpers. I find this so helpful when it feels like the world is crumbling... to look around and notice all the good. Notice who's reaching out, who's creating offerings and support, who's bagging your groceries, who's working overtime, who's sharing supportive content... notice the help, the goodness, and the community that is also happening around us. It is inspiring and a beautiful way of holding space for the good and the joy right now.

**Learn something new**
Taking any opportunity to learn something new is a great way of finding solace in challenging times. Learning ignites our brain and feels good for so many reasons.
I hope this little guide offers a few supportive resources, reminders, and ideas as you navigate through the next few weeks. You are so not alone, your feelings are valid, and how you treat yourself really matters right now. I know times are uncertain, and I also know how resilient, brave, and amazing you are in the midst of it all. Sending you ease and comfort. Take really good care.

With love, Lisa