



Thoughts and Tips from your TMA SF Staff

If you are reading this and are working from home, you are probably in a landscape that is unexpected, slightly un-welcome and completely unknown. Our team at TMA SF Connects, Jeff, Jen, Shirley and Kim have also been working remotely the past three weeks. Now, as we settle in for at least three more weeks, we wanted to share some ideas for making this temporary transition better.

Most of these ideas are based on our experience, thoughts that others have shared, and some things that we are frankly just trying to avoid. We hope this is helpful and would love to hear your own tips at team@tmasfconnects.org.

Our first thought is your loved ones -- Let them know how grateful you are to be able to be together during this period. It will come to an end at some point. As you continue to read, here are some of our tips, thoughts and researched activities to help you feel more productive and hopefully more tranquil as you navigate working from home. We have learned from working at home, to plan for improving the experience and optimism about what is possible.

Kimberly B. Martinson, CAE and Chief Executive Officer, offers her ideas about exercise.

I feel that stress can leave us feeling starved for food, restless and anxious. A [good workout](#) can make all the difference. It can also help alleviate loneliness through virtual exercise classes or specific types of workouts.

An exercise fiend for many years, I recently purchased a Pilates chair designed for home use. It was not expensive and came with a cadre of CDs that allows me to design my own exercise program. Although it doesn't take up a great deal of space, there are many ways to exercise in [small quarters](#) - holding on to your [kitchen counter](#) and doing squats or plies will probably improve everything about how you feel.

Exercise bands are very cost effective for an isometric workout. Also, great for travel when world conditions improve. Two weighted books can easily replace a couple of 5 lb. hand weights. A throwback workout might offer great music to keep you going – or remember simpler times. If not, make your own jam!

Something as simple as using a medicine ball or mini stepper as you watch or listen to the news can help vastly improve your mood and help keep you strong. Yoga and stretching are easily done in [smaller spaces](#).

I guess it's not so much what you do that is important – it's that you do something and find a safe way to keep moving, stretching and looking ahead to better days...



Jennifer Pollard, our Chief Operating Officer, is an avid reader. She shared her thoughts during these trying times.

During these trying times, many of us can feel isolated and miss social interactions. [Reading](#) can be a richly rewarding activity that broadens your horizons and introduces you to brave new worlds. It doesn't have to be a completely solitary experience, though. Most of us want to read more but trying to find the time or the motivation to it. Book Clubs are an excellent motivator while expanding the worth you get from reading a book on your own. If the idea of an in-person book club doesn't appeal to you, you can still connect with other readers by forming a book club that [meets online](#).

Jeff Lee, our Program Manager, is passionate about all things gaming. He shared his thoughts on how he's keeping sane day-to-day.

Being an avid gamer, having to shelter-in-place and keeping to myself is not completely outside my comfort zone. And while it might not be financially efficient to suggest purchasing a brand new console like the [Nintendo Switch](#) to pass the time, board games have definitely evolved beyond the classics of yesteryear like Monopoly, Risk, and Sorry! With sources like [Target](#) and [Amazon](#), getting your hands on a game to pass the time has never been easier!

Board games available today not only offer higher "replayability", but they can also be rich in storytelling and have expansions that further build upon the world! A personal favorite of mine at the moment is Disney's Villainous, by [Ravensburger](#). In it, each player takes on the role of a Disney villain as they try to accomplish their respective character's unique goals. Or perhaps the befitting [Pandemic](#) game, where players take on roles of scientists trying to contain viruses and find cures, might interest you more? Regardless, exploring or reexploring the world of gaming might help you, your family, and your friends spend and pass the time together.

Shirley Lin, our Marketing Coordinator, is determined to declutter and organize her home.

How many times have you look around the house and thought to yourself that you will clean this tomorrow? Yet, it never gets done. I am guilty of this. Since the shelter-in-place is in effect, why not make the most out of it? Decluttering can not only help us organize our home but can also help destress. Look into your closet and see if there are clothes that you no longer wear. You can either donate or try selling them online. As creatures of excess, is it time to clean up our acts and pass on our no longer valued or loved treasures?

The time for second guessing ourselves for no longer liking, needing or remembering why we bought something has passed. We can start making piling of clothing to donate after we no longer are confined at home. The clothes you donate will make someone else's life so much easier and to them – it is new!



Source Sites: [Buzzfeed](#), [Forbes](#), [USA Today](#), [University of Michigan](#)

FOOD is Key (we are a team of foodies)

1. Eat your normal diet of tasty and healthy food by making food that you'll typically eat but try new recipes as well!
 - CNN has a [grocery list](#) to buy for your pantry and freezer as well as easy, healthy recipes
2. Don't forget to stock up and indulge on snacks and drinks that you normally enjoy like coffee, tea, chocolate, and chips too!
3. Experiment with new cooking ideas! Learn some new tasty meals and treats you can create in your own kitchen
4. Plan a virtual refreshment hour at home with co-workers and friends

LONELINESS is not helpful

5. Avoid being too isolated
 - Check in with your family and friends by calling or video chatting them,
 - If they are being quarantined, see if you can drop food off to show your support and let them know there is someone who cares for them
6. Indulge online
 - Now is the time to binge! Catch up on your Netflix, Hulu, HBO, YouTube, and social media outlets (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc..)
 - Despite some stores now being closed, many offer online shopping
7. Livestream aquatic habitats via the [Monterey Bay Aquarium](#)
8. [For sports fans](#): with the cancellation or postponement of most major sporting events, Jelle's Marble Runs, which features [competitive marble racing](#), might fill your void
9. Set up a game night at home with your family! USA Today has a solid [list](#) of games for families of all types
10. Start a journal or blog
 - you may be a better writer than you think, share your experience with the world with free platforms like [Wordpress](#) or [Blogger](#)



Cleaning for SPORT

11. Do some housekeeping and protect your family against the spread of viruses
12. Marie Kondo your home! Marie is an organizing consultant that wrote a book solely on cleaning, [The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up](#). She also has a Netflix series, [Tidying Up with Marie Kondo](#)
13. Work on that spring-cleaning list that you've been procrastinating on, which can also help you destress, clean out your closet and donate articles of clothing you no longer use

Better Organization – Better Life

14. Go through your phone camera roll and create a photo book through [Snapfish](#) or [Shutterfly](#)
15. Work on your financial planning
 - We should all learn how to budget, [websites](#) and apps like [Mint](#) are a great way to start keeping track your spending habits
16. Sell your stuff
 - Use platforms like [eBay](#), [Poshmark](#), and [Mercari](#) to declutter, you might able to make some profit on items as well!
17. Update & backup files
 - Our phones and laptops are so important and key to working remotely, so be sure to create backup files
 - Updating your firewall and security software is just as important
18. Rearranging your furniture
 - Designing a new space area make you feel more revitalized, be creative with your furnishings!
19. Plan out your entertainment
 - Read a book on your Kindle or from your local library (many libraries also offer e-book options)
 - Prefer listening? Audiobooks are also available via [Audible](#)
 - Indulge in things you normally wouldn't like [puzzles](#) and [Lego](#) sets



Self-Care

20. Keep a consistent routine
 - Even if working from home, make sure you get dressed, groom, eat breakfast
21. Get your fitness on and work out at home!
 - Online workouts can continue benefit your body and mental health and get you moving rather than sitting on your desk all day. Equipment like weights and yoga mats don't require too much space and is practical and manageable
 - YouTube have some great work out tutorial to follow through, both simple and easy. Here are some of our favorite YouTubers for workout tutorials:
 - [Blogilates](#)
 - [Emi Wong](#)
 - [Fitness Blender](#)
 - [Popsugar Fitness](#)
 - [Walk at Home](#)
 - [Yoga with Adriene](#)
22. Skincare – What's better than an at home facial? here are some tips from [Bustle](#) to guide you through your at-home facial
 - Don't forget to apply your [sunscreen](#) even if you're at home! UVA rays could pass through glass
23. Learn how to do your own [manicure](#)
24. Try a new makeup look
 - Ever wonder how you look with smokey eyeshadow or a bold lipstick?

Maximizing your Telecommute Experience

25. Order new furniture – there's no better time to glam up your current home/work area or create one
26. Learn to brew the best cup of coffee at home – buy that French press, gourmet coffee and creamer you want
27. Find ways to help you focus while you work or to block out all the extraneous sound and remember some days, we're just more stressed and **THAT'S OKAY**
 - Buy noise-cancelling headphones
28. Try meditating
 - [Ten Percent](#) has a series of guided meditations and podcasts
 - Here are a list of [meditation apps](#). We recommend [Headspace](#), who is currently providing free support



Think Global, while being extremely local

29. Ted Talks - get inspired by some great speakers on [Ted Talks](#), who also have great resources for [students](#)
30. Reflect: What have you accomplished in the last year? What goals are you setting for yourself for the new year?
31. Expand your horizons and knowledge by listening to relevant podcasts while you work
32. Reach beyond your normal roster of informational news sources and see how people are doing a similar job or having a shared experience

Learning is for everyone

33. For school children at home, resources like [Scholastic](#), who is offering free Learn at Home options, and [Kahn Academy](#) can continue the learning process
34. Paint, color, watercolor
 - Coloring isn't just for kids, there are plenty of [coloring books](#) out there that may appeal to aspiring colorists of all ages
 - Coloring has the ability to [relax](#) the fear center of your brain, it induces the same state as meditating by reducing thoughts of a restless mind
35. Explore new hobbies - you might not have this much time again until retirement!
36. Try learning another language! [Duolingo](#) offers free lessons available in many languages
37. Play an instrument – many of us probably played an instrument at one point or wanted to learn how to. Why not take this time to [learn](#) or relearn your favorite instrument?

Reach Out

38. Make sure your children understand and is aware of what is going on. [Child Mind](#) has an article on how to approach this topic
39. Help others that are in need and stay connected with programs such as [Meals on Wheels](#) or [Next Door](#)
 - Don't forget reach out to your families and neighbors that are at higher risk and offer to assist them with their grocery pickups
40. Write [handwritten letters](#) to family and friends - When was the last time you wrote a letter?