

# CBMHS WEEKLY REFLECTION

## Maintaining Mental Health During Challenging Times

**Dear Friends,** As we move into week 10 of social isolation, we may be noticing patterns of behavior in our lives, some helpful and some maybe less helpful. When you think about the things that are difficult and how you respond to them, you may notice tension or achiness somewhere in your body. Spend some time this week befriending that ache and reflecting on what you might need to ease that feeling. Maybe its rest, maybe connection with a loved one, or a mental health professional, maybe its to remember to drink water and stay hydrated. Helping the body let go of tension can involve many things—but an easy place to start is with Progressive Muscle Relaxation. It’s a great way to listen to you tension and see what, if anything, it may be trying to tell you.

### Progressive Muscle Relaxation

1. Sit or lie down comfortably. Starting with your feet, tense your muscles slowly while taking a deep slow breath through your nose.
2. Hold your muscles and your breath for 5 seconds, then breathe out slowly through your mouth while releasing the muscle tension in your feet.
3. Next, tense your legs slowly while taking a deep slow breath. Hold for 5 second, and breathe out slowly through your mouth while relaxing.
4. Move slowly up the body, tensing and relaxing each part—your torso, arms, hands, shoulders, neck, and face.
5. Notice where there are areas of tension or soreness and spend extra time breathing there. See what you notice.

“ Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit; the sun does not shine on itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. Living for others is a rule of nature. We are all born to help each other. No matter how difficult it is...Life is good when you are happy; but much better when others are happy because of you. ”

Pope Francis



### PRAYER FOR A PANDEMIC

May we who are merely inconvenienced  
Remember those whose lives are at stake.  
May we who have no risk factors  
Remember those most vulnerable.  
May we who have the luxury of working from home,  
Remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.  
May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close,  
Remember those who have no options.  
May we who have to cancel our trips  
Remember those that have no place to go.  
May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market,  
Remember those who have no margin at all.  
May we who settle in for a quarantine at home  
Remember those who have no home.  
During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other,  
Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors. Amen.

**The CBMHS Warm Line is open and anyone can call:** If you are experiencing emotional stress, side effects of the COVID19 pandemic and shelter-in-place order, reach out. Call Monday through Friday between 10am and 4pm and a licensed counselor will call you back within 24 hours! Call the Warmline to speak to a professional counselor who will listen and provide useful guidance to help you feel better. Receive information about resources and social services needs including depression, grief, anger, parenting support, substance abuse, shelter needs, and more. Request that an outreach call be made to someone who is isolated, lonely, or may not reach out on their own. But remember that the Warm Line is not a crisis hotline— If you need immediate assistance, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

**Middlesex, Somerset & Union County: (732) 867-8647**  
**Monmouth & Ocean County: (732) 784-3394**