Get reacquainted with yourself
What's your “why?” The answers to this question can help you increase your self-awareness and live a more purposeful life. Having to be at home more frequently during COVID-19 provides an excellent opportunity to get reacquainted with yourself and understand your “why,” which can improve your confidence, ability to manage stress and feel more empowered. Try these self-awareness exercises:

Think of three things in your life for which you are grateful. Make sure at least one of them is something about you. For example, “I’m grateful for my ability to handle stressful situations.”

Try meditating. One benefit of meditation is improved self-awareness. The most basic form of meditation is deep breathing. Practice meditative breathing with slow, deep breaths that extend into your lower abdomen. Focus on each inhalation and exhalation and how this makes you feel.

Take 5 to 10 minutes daily to self-reflect. Consider all of the things that are going on in your life, how you plan to respond to them, or how you did respond to them.

Interview yourself. Ask yourself questions and answer them as you would in an interview. Try questions like: What are your strengths? What things would you like to improve about yourself?

Keep a journal. This is a great tool to help you self-reflect as well as provide a record to consult and look back on to gain even more self-awareness.
Timely tips for smoother money talks

For many couples, talking about money is not always the easiest discussion even in the best of times. During periods of economic uncertainty brought on by the pandemic, the conversation can be even more challenging. Here are some suggestions that can help make the discussion go more smoothly during this difficult time.

Be extra sensitive to the timing of discussions. Plan the “money talk” when you both feel calm and there are no interruptions or distractions (turn off your phones and TV and wait until the kids are in bed or are occupied).

Omit non-financial issues from the discussion. Take a time-out if things get overheated, and make a commitment to revisit the money talk later.

Check in more often about your financial situation. When the economy is consistently up and down, a bi-monthly or even weekly discussion may make sense.

Figure out a spending plan together for what works now. The word “budget” can feel like “deprivation” to some people. Instead, think about reassessing and setting financial goals for your current situation. Things that seemed like a priority a few months ago, like saving for a vacation, may not qualify as a necessity if your finances have become unstable recently.

Track your spending. Together and separately, know exactly where your money goes each day. Check your bank and credit card websites for online features that show you the breakdown of expenses.

Stick to a regular time for bill paying and conducting a spending review. Sum it up and decide on the next steps. Schedule something fun for after the meeting like a bike ride or playing a game.

Communication at a standstill? Seek help from a licensed counselor who can help you and your partner with problem resolution and finding resources.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Other than skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer among American women, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Learn about the risks, symptoms and how screening helps find cancer when it's easiest to treat.

https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/resources/features/breastcancerawareness/index.htm

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