



Grandville Calvin Christian Schools

Hello Calvin Christian High School Community,

Wow, what a weekend! A lot has changed in the days since we last saw each other, and it all can feel a bit overwhelming. We want to make sure that you are doing well in this time of uncertainty and that you have the resources that you will need while away from school.

First of all, it will be important to keep a routine while you are at home. Please see the below tips that we think will be helpful during the next few weeks:

- **Stay connected.** It will be crucial to socially distance ourselves right now, so unfortunately it is not a time to get together with groups of friends. What you can do is have phone conversations, play board games with your family, spend time with your pets, and reach out to friends and loved ones via Facetime or other video platforms.
- **Set a schedule and get dressed every day.** This will be important for good mental health. It's tempting to live life in pajamas... and certainly there is a role for sweatpants... but a life in pajamas can become depressing, and we really want to minimize depression. Also, **engage in good hygiene habits** - even if you don't have to see your friends keep taking care of yourself!
- **Rework how you exercise.** You could use your new daily schedule to sleep a bit later, do a short workout in the morning to get yourself going, then do a more relaxed exercise toward the end of the day. YouTube has some great (free) workouts that you can do from home. There are also many apps that you can download on your phone that can help keep you moving!
- This will also be a great opportunity to **head outside and enjoy some sunshine** (away from others of course). Sunlight and fresh air can be extremely therapeutic and we could all use a little bit of stress relief right now!
- **Have a place in your house that will be your regular work space.** This will help you have a routine. You might consider rededicating a space currently used for something else, or sprucing up an existing desk/work area. The point is to commit to a work space. Common wisdom is that it shouldn't be one's bedroom, as that should only be a place for rest, but it depends on how your house is set up and who lives with you.
- **Keep in contact with outside therapists** and try to keep appointments for mental health treatment. Ask if your providers can do a "telehealth" or "Zoom" video conference with you.
- **Be mindful of media intake.** Temporarily limit exposure to sources that increase anxiety, depression, loneliness, fear, and anger. Stick to content that helps you feel hopeful, happy, calm, connected, inspired, and uplifted. Download apps that can help you stay in a good space (these are all free and some of my favorites).
 - Virtual Hope Box

- MindShift CBT
- Self-help for Anxiety Management (SAM)

Some other coping skills that you can use are drawing, coloring, journaling (you will want to look back on these times when you are older!), listening to music, reading a good book, and watching movies that make you feel good. Use this time off to reconnect with your family, reset your mind, and rest.

This will be our new reality for a little while and it will be an adjustment. We look forward to hearing from you all, even if that is just a quick email to say hello. Counselors will be available to talk to students or parents during school hours via email, text, phone call, or video call. Our contact information is listed below:

Email:

Miss Karel: rkarel@gccsmi.org
Mr VanderWal: nvanderwal@gccsmi.org

Text:

(text the following @_____ to 81010)
Seniors - @gcchs20
Juniors - @gcchs21
Sophomores - @karel2022
Freshmen - @karel2023

Phone Call:

Miss Karel phone: 616-257-4206
Mr. VanderWal phone: 616-257-4205

Video Call:

During school closures the counselors will be providing video counseling to all students during regular school hours. Video calls will take place on a secure, private video conference on "Zoom". Go to <https://www.gosquires.org/hs/counseling-office/> to schedule an appointment, or email the counselor with the time you would like to video call.

Hopefully we will all be back at school soon. Take a deep breath and be well.

God Bless,

Rebekah Karel (9th/10th Counselor)
Nate VanderWal (11th/12th Counselor)