

## Staying Grounded and Connected to Self, Family and Surroundings

*There are simple activities anyone can do every day to connect with others and stay present in the moment. Making these practices part of your regular routine can help you stay in touch with what matters to you most.*

Sometimes in the busyness of life, schoolwork, activities, sports and other commitments, it's easy to lose sight of what matters most to you – being connected to your self, being fully present with the things you do or people you interact with, and being actively engaged in meaningful relationships. Here are some suggestions to stay in touch with what matters most to you, including you!

- **Write a gratitude note.** Choose someone you care about and let them know what makes you thankful for them. Either mail it, email it, send a recording of yourself reading it or find a time to read it aloud to them.
- **Practice mindful eating.** As you eat your next meal or snack, pay close attention to the experience. Notice the smells, tastes, textures and colors of what you are putting in your body.
- **Listen.** Have a conversation with a family member, friend or teacher and focus all your attention on being present and hearing what is said. Share with that person something new you learned from the conversation.
- **Connect.** Ask someone in your household about their day and share something about yours.
- **Lend a hand.** Help someone in your life make a meal. Focus on being present with each step of the process and enjoy the fruits of your labor together at the end!
- **Unplug.** Take a walk this week, leaving your cell phone at home. Notice the things around you including sounds, smells, nature and objects you may not have paid attention to before now.
- **Take a break:** Devote 20 minutes to reading a book without interruptions – leave your phone in a different room!
- **Be present.** Pick one day this week and leave your cell phone at home when you go somewhere. Go the entire day without being connected to technology. Take time to notice your feelings, emotions and observations without the interruption and distraction of your phone.

- **Get some rest:** Commit to getting at least seven hours of sleep three nights this week. If you feel up for it, jot down how you feel each morning and reflect back on your notes at the end of the week.
- **Take a deep breathe:** Practice deep breathing once a day. Count to three as you inhale and count to four as your exhale, repeating as many times as you want.

\*adapted from [changetochill.org](http://changetochill.org)

Change to Chill is a free, award-winning, mental well-being resource offered by a subdivision of Allina Health. Our interactive website is tailored to both teens and the adults who work with them. Change to Chill helps teens become more aware of the things that stress them out and equips them with relevant tools and resources to better manage stress and anxiety, so they can live happier, more resilient lives.