

From: [Meeks, Sara R.](#)
To: [Meeks, Sara R.](#)
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OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION



Live Healthy Live Well

Dear Challenge Friends,

As we start the “Calm Down” challenge we hope you find a few tips over the next several weeks to help you reduce stress, embrace gratitude, practice mindfulness, and overcome setbacks to have a healthy holiday.

If you haven't already completed the pre-challenge survey, now is the time. Go to <https://go.osu.edu/Fall18Pre>. Over the course of the challenge feel free to email in with your ideas and suggestions so that others can have a “Calm” holiday too.

Be Well!

Sara

Sara Meeks
Program Assistant
Family and Consumer Sciences
OSU Extension Wayne County

Finding Your Quiet Place

Do you find yourself surrounded by the pressures of work, school, relationships, finances, or the current political climate? Have you ever experienced a [panic attack](#)? Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in the U.S., affecting [40 million adults](#) or 18% of the population every year. With the internet, social media, work, taking care of family, and now the approaching holidays, daily life can begin to feel overwhelming. It is important that you identify some quiet places where you can go to get centered and calm.

1. Your home. If you don't live alone, this can be problematic, but not insurmountable. Your bedroom, the bathroom, and the basement are usually rooms where you can find peace and quiet. I put a sleeping bag in the attic when I was in high school and would go in there often to read. I had my own bedroom, but there was just something about removing myself from the main house that felt comforting.

2. Your car. The inside of our cars are beginning to resemble our homes with all of the gadgets and technology. Put your phone away when you are driving and put on soothing music with no talking radio hosts or commercials. You will experience a lot less road rage if you have quieted your mind and body.

3. Go outside. Being outdoors is my #1, go-to, spiritual place. Walking outside always makes me feel less anxious. My most favorite times to walk are during a quiet snowfall, a windy day, and early evening. I live a couple of blocks from Lake Erie, so walking to the beach is almost always my destination.

However, as much as I love looking at the water, it was a mundane venue that provided the experience of a lifetime. I was walking the track of our high school stadium on an October day when the fall leaves were at their peak color. The sun was setting, and its reflection on the colorful leaves made it look like the trees had been dusted in gold and diamonds. It was one of the most magnificent sights I have ever seen; it felt like an early glimpse of heaven. I cried when the sun finally went below the horizon and the vision was gone. I don't usually walk the track because it's kind of boring, but I'm forever grateful that I was there on that particular day to witness that spectacle.

The take-away? Your quiet place doesn't have to be perfect. Other quiet place options you might consider include a forest, park, library, she-shed, man-cave, or sanctuary. We all need quiet places, both grown-ups and kids

alike, where we can take a time-out. If you model this need for quiet time, your children will also learn skills they can use to calm themselves.

Writer: Donna Green, Extension Educator, Family & Consumer Sciences, Ohio State University Extension, Erie County, green.308@osu.edu

Reviewer: Shannon Carter, Extension Educator, Family & Consumer Sciences, Ohio State University Extension, Fairfield County, carter.413@osu.edu

Michelle Treber, Extension Educator, Family & Consumer Sciences, Ohio State University Extension, Pickaway County, treber.1@osu.edu

Sources:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org/>

<https://adaa.org/>

<https://www.hcp.med.harvard.edu/ncs/>



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