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## **Stay Well at Home with The Well Project**

Submitted on Oct 19, 2020

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**JOIN US**  
as we launch  
our new  
wellness  
series!

Every other  
Wednesday,  
starting April 8  
at noon ET

# STAY **Well** AT HOME



with  
 the**well**project

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In response to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, The Well Project launched ***Stay Well at Home with The Well Project***, on April 8. We created the program at a time when it felt like the whole world was being shut down to address the extraordinary and challenging times we found ourselves in. This bi-weekly video/chat series featured women living with HIV sharing positive approaches to help navigate the isolation and other challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Sessions included exercise, meditation, yoga, cooking, art, and more, providing us with a way to stay connected to each other while taking a collective mental health break. As cities and states have begun to at least partially reopen and many of us have returned to work, we have put the series on hold, but may reopen it as the circumstances around the pandemic continue to evolve.

If you weren't able to join us, it's not too late! Please check out the links below.

## Sessions

### [Session 14 – October 7, 2020: Nutrition as Self-Care](#)

([view the chat](#) that took place during the session)

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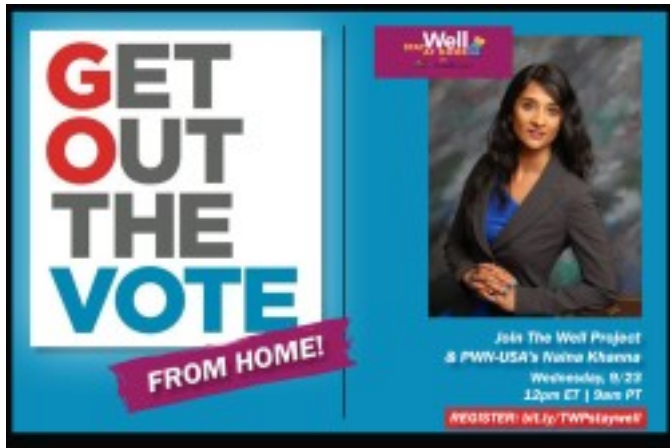


Registered dietitian nutritionist [Maya Feller MS, RD, CDN](#) hosted a session focusing on the importance of diet and nutrition, especially during times of stress. She shared basics about the link between diet/nutrition and inflammation and the gut. The session was specifically geared toward women living with HIV and included lots of Q&A, giving us information to make informed food choices that support health and longevity. Maya is a nationally recognized nutrition expert and the author of *The Southern Comfort Food Diabetes Cookbook: Over 100 Recipes for a Healthy Life*.

### [Session 13 – September 23, 2020: Get Out the Vote from Home](#)

([view the chat](#) that took place during the session)

Image



At a moment that was only weeks away from the most consequential election in our lifetimes, Naina Khanna, executive director of [Positive Women's Network – USA](#) led a discussion about getting out the vote from home and shared resources to help us do so.

She addressed vital issues including what's at stake in this election? And how to vote safely and mobilize our community to vote safely?

## **Voter Resources**

- [Check voter registration](#)
- [Request a mail-in/absentee ballot](#)
- [A state-by-state guide to voting in the age of COVID-19](#)
- [Pledge to vote and find ways to volunteer with Vote Positive USA](#)

[Image](#)



September 9, 2020  
12pm ET | 9am PT  
Creating Pampering Skin Products  
*with Angelena Cortello*

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## [Session 12 – September 9, 2020: Creating Pampering Skin Products](#)

([view the chat](#) that took place during the session)

In an effort to encourage some fun self-care, Angelena Cortello led us in creating a homemade face mask, hand scrub, and body butter, showing us how to cook up products to use in order to give ourselves the pampering break we need during these difficult times (especially given that so many salons are still closed). To follow along with Angelena, gather the following supplies: mason jars/kitchen containers, a butter knife, hand mixer (optional), 3 bowls, banana, plain yogurt, honey, sugar, coconut oil, lemon juice, cocoa butter, essential oil (for fragrance, optional). Angelena is a blogger with *A Girl Like Me*.

[Image](#)



Parenting in the time of COVID-19  
with *Masonia Traylor*

Wednesday, 8/26  
12pm ET

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## [Session 11 – August 26, 2020: Parenting in the time of COVID-19](#)

([view the chat](#) that took place during the session)

As summer wound down and we prepared for kids returning to school this fall (whatever that looked like), Masonia Traylor led a very interactive discussion around parenting during COVID-19. She provided insights into her experiences parenting her daughter and son, ages 9 and 16, and delved into the pros and cons of strategies she has used over the past several months to maintain a sense of normalcy and care for her children. Community members also weighed in, sharing struggles, strategies, coping tools, and their own personal experiences for a very lively conversation. Masonia is a Well Project CAB member, blogger for *A Girl Like Me*, and CEO/founder of [Lady BurgAndy](#).

[Image](#)





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August 12, 2020:

**Mindfulness,  
Finding Peace in the Storm**

with **Mel Rattue**

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## [Session 10 – August 12, 2020: Mindfulness, Finding Peace in the Storm](#)

([view the chat](#) that took place during the session)

Mel Rattue demonstrated how cultivating present moment awareness can support and nourish us during times of stress. We cannot change or control the world (especially now!), but we always have power over the choices we make. This session focused on the sensations of being, rather than doing, planning, comparing, and worrying. Mel described how we can change our relationship with thoughts that do not serve us and physical sensations that can be painful. This session demonstrated that mindfulness is available to all women! While watching the recording of the session, wear comfortable clothes that are not restrictive and choose in space that provides a little room to move (and ideally some privacy). Mel is a blogger with *A Girl Like Me*.

## **Session 9 – July 29, 2020**

This session was not led by a single community member; instead attendees were invited to bring something to share, whether something around self-care (or judgement-free "guilty pleasure!"), something to share (ie, show and tell) from your home, a favorite recipe, book, or series. We connected for a lively discussion and chat!

[Image](#)

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*July 15, 2020:  
Skin Care Routine  
with Miss Dees*

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## [Session 8 – July 15, 2020: Skin Care Routine with Miss Dees](#)

([view the chat](#) that took place during the session)

Porchia Dees taught us how to create a do-it-yourself (DIY) face mask from materials we have in our kitchen! She shared her skin care routine, while sharing some of the things she does to stay sane as a single woman living alone with no kids in the COVID pandemic. While watching the recording of the session, bring sugar, olive or coconut oil (essential oils optional), as well as a spoon and a bowl for mixing. Porchia is a member of The Well Project's CAB and a blogger for *A Girl Like Me*. She is also a Linkage to Care Coordinator for the [Black AIDS Institute](#).

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## [Session 7 – July 1, 2020: Work Those Arms, Strong Bodies, Strong Minds](#)

([view the chat](#) that took place during the session)

Susan Mull's session combined beautiful poetry and uplifting messages with arm strengthening activities and movement that anyone can do. This session helped accentuate the strength and beauty that we all have inside us and provided guidance into the ways that we can empower each other. While watching the recording of this session, you can use small (1-3 lb) weights if you have them, but if not, household items like canned goods will work too! Susan is an *A Girl Like Me* Blogger, a Speak Up! presenter, and a member of PWN-USA.

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## [Session 6 – June 17, 2020: Budget Basics with Ieshia](#)

([view the chat](#) that took place during the session)

No matter what we call it, we all make, spend, and save money. Budgeting often feels like a task, especially during the current COVID-19 pandemic. And yet, this is a great moment to take the time to prepare a budget that we can use moving forward. In this session, Ieshia Scott broke down key terms in budgeting, reviewed a sample budget, and introduced the process of creating individual plans for spending and saving. While watching the recording of this session, bring a breakdown of your monthly expenses and income; you can use [this form](#) that Ieshia walked us through to create a basic budget. Ieshia is a Well Project CAB member and the CEO of Positive Support.

## [Session 5 – June 3, 2020](#)

In lieu of our scheduled session, The Well Project board member Linda Scruggs and CAB member Gina Brown, MSW, co-facilitated a convening that provided a brave space to share and process the most recent murders of Black people by the police in the United States and the protests that have followed. Community members shared poetry, personal stories, and their feelings and experiences.

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## [Session 4 – May 20, 2020: Expression Through Word](#)

([view the chat](#) that took place during the session)

Aryah Lester led this interactive session to help us explore using creative writing as support during difficult circumstances. We created our own pieces of writing, allowing ourselves to express our emotions through paper and symbolism. In addition to her roles as a Well Project CAB member and *A Girl Like Me* blogger, Aryah serves as the deputy director of the Transgender Strategy Center.

[Image](#)



The graphic features a purple background. At the top, the text "Well" is in large white letters, with "STAY AT HOME" in orange below it. To the right is a blue house icon with an orange heart above it. Below this, a photo of Aryah Lester is shown next to the text "Up Next: Bean Cakes (Akara) On Point with Bose!". At the bottom, the Well Project logo (five stylized figures) is followed by the text "with thewellproject".

**Well**  
**STAY AT HOME**

**Up Next:**  
**Bean Cakes (Akara)**  
**On Point with Bose!**

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### [Session 3 – May 6, 2020: Bean Cakes \(Akara\) On Point](#)

[\(click here for ingredients and preparation\)](#)

([view the chat](#) that took place during the session)

Bose Olotu showed us how to make Akara, a common (and delicious!) vegetarian meal popular in West Africa and Brazil and thought to have originated from the Yoruba tribe of Nigeria. Cooking plays a communal role for many of us – in these times of isolation, we shared the experience virtually and learned how to make a new dish! Bose is a Well Project Global Ambassador, CAB member and *A Girl Like Me* blogger. She is also the southwest coordinator of the Treatment Access Movement of Nigeria and a member of the Africa Coalition on Tuberculosis.

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## [Session 2 – April 22, 2020: Guided Meditation for your Chakras](#)

([view the chat](#) that took place during the session)

Wanona Thomas led us in an introduction to opening and balancing the seven main chakras. We learned what chakras are and where they are located. The session also acted as an introduction to meditation, highlighting its benefits and helping us explore new insights into our inner beings. Wanona is a Well Project CAB member and *A Girl Like Me* blogger. She is also the CEO and founder of Live in Your Truth and a U=U ambassador.

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## [Session 1 – April 8, 2020: Vision Planning with CiCi](#)

([view the chat](#) that took place during the session)

Ciarra Covin led us in creating vision boards, with a focus on utilizing times of change as a catalyst to be more intentional with our goals. Ciarra is a CAB member and *A Girl Like Me* blogger. She is also the owner of Healing is Voluntary.



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