

Coping With Stress During COVID-19

The Counseling Team International

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In Many Ways Our Lives Have Been Changed...

- Lost jobs/reduced hours at work
- Working from home
- Isolation
- Children are home
- Elderly loved ones are in danger

As the novel virus spreads,
so do the stress, fears and
anxiety surrounding it...

What to Expect...

Anxiety

- Over your own health or others health status
 - Children & parents
- Potential time off from work or layoffs and the financial effects, financial insecurity, guilt from having resources

Other Normal Reactions

- Uncertainty
- Loneliness
- Anger
- Boredom
- A desire to use alcohol or other substances
- Symptoms of depression
- Symptoms of PTSD

Why Are We Feeling This Way?

- Perception is EVERYTHING!
- The perception of harm, makes us feel anxious
- Have gratitude and look for the positives
 - Slow down!
 - More family time

Is Feeling Anxious a Bad Thing?

- No, but when the anxiety interferes with our day to day life, then it becomes a problem

Reminder:

How we manage our own reactions, can have a large impact on how our children respond.

So, How Can We Help
Our Children Manage
Their Stress?

Things You Can Do

- Validate and normalize their feelings and worries
- Stay calm
- Be available
- Have age appropriate conversations about their fears and concerns
- Remind them they are not alone

Stress Management for the Whole Family

Find Stress Reducing Activities

- Play games with the family
- Exercise
- Watch fun TV shows
- Have a movie night!

Practice Healthy Self-care Techniques

- Muscle relaxation
- Meditation (use apps like headspace, Insight Timer, etc.)
- Yoga
- Mindfulness
- Prayer
- Deep breathing
- Gratitude

Deep Breathing Technique

- Breathe in for a count of 3 then breathe out for a count of 6
- Take about 3 or so of these breaths to help your physiological response

What Other Things Can You Do?

- Give yourself calming messages that focus your attention on the current moment
- Pay attention to what you can control

Managing Stress in Your Relationship

- Take care of yourself
- Be patient with yourself and each other
- Give each other benefit of the doubt
- Do what works for your relationship (try not to compare)
- Remember you're on the same team
 - Don't get caught in competing for pain- we're all trying to manage!

- Work together to be solution focused
 - No winner or loser- we win together or lose together
- Use bedtime or naptime to decompress- alone or together
- Trust your partner
- Trust your own resiliency
- Communicate- ask questions, let them know how you're feeling and use active listening

Other Tips...

Use Practical Ways to Cope and Relax

- Pace yourself! After doing a stressful activity, do something fun!
- Talk about how you feel with your friends and family
- Stay positive and hopeful!

Limit Your News Intake

- Stay informed, but not obsessed
- Remember, your kids may be listening too

Remain Connected to Your Social Network

- Schedule regular calls with your friends and family like you would a work meeting
- Start a text/email chain with your friends
 - Send articles
 - Videos
 - Podcasts
 - Songs, etc.
 - Memes
- Play online games
 - Words with friends

Stay in Touch...

(While still maintaining necessary social guidance guidelines)

- If you know someone affected, call and see how they are doing
- Have meals delivered to someone you know would appreciate it

Do Not Sacrifice Your Health

- Exercise
- Nutrition

Pay Attention to Your Diet!

- Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables
- Determine an ideal weight for your build, age and gender, then work to get within five pounds of that goal and stick to it!
- Drink LOTS of water!

Get Enough Sleep

- Sleep is underrated
- Sleep is paramount
- Do not ignore amount of sleep needed
- Get power naps

How Do I Know When
To Reach Out for
Support?

Get support when any of these signs begin to affect your day to day life...

- Cognitive Signs
 - Trouble concentrating
 - Forgetfulness
 - Confusion
 - Trouble making decisions
- Emotional Signs
 - Anxiety
 - Anger
 - Guilt
 - Sadness/depression

Get support when any of these signs begin to affect your day to day life...

- Physical Signs
 - Stomach problems
 - Sore/tight muscles
 - Headaches
- Behavioral Signs
 - Irritability
 - Sleep issues
 - Crying spells
 - Worrying
 - Wanting to isolate

Resources

- Family Support
- Peer Support
- Clergy
- EAP

After Quarantine/Social Distancing/Isolation

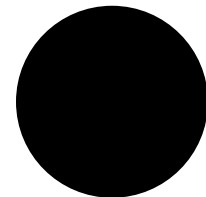
- You may feel mixed emotions – including relief
- If you were isolated because you had the illness, you may feel sadness or anger because friends and loved ones may have unfounded fears of contracting the disease from contact with you, even if you weren't contagious
 - The best way to end this common fear is to learn about the disease and the actual risk to others and share it with others!

(cont'd)

After Quarantine/Social Distancing/Isolation

- Talk to a health care provider if you're still experiencing anxiety, trouble sleeping, having trouble carrying out your normal day to day, etc.

Breathing with Marsha



Resources

- NAMI
- CDC
- EAP

Psychology Today

Thank you and stay safe!

