

## **Mental Health/ Emotional Well being Tips for COVID-19**

- Remember that everyone responds differently to a stressful situation due to a variety of reasons. Don't compare yourself to another person and judge yourself for your reaction.
- Know that it is common for people to have fear, anxiety and worry during these circumstances.
- If you already have mental health issues such as anxiety and/or depression, those issues *could* potentially get worse or become harder to manage. Expect it and plan on managing it.

### **How to take care of yourself?**

- **Have a routine as much as possible.** Groom yourself, take a shower and try to create a structure for your day that includes work, sleep, study, exercise, eating etc.
- **Get enough sleep.** As you already know, sleep helps with immunity (fighting off illnesses and recovering from them) and is essential to regulating our moods.
- **Share your thoughts and feelings about this situation** and how it's affecting you. Post it on your social media, write a blog, create a journal or simply talk about it to a friend on the phone. ***Social distancing doesn't have to mean emotional isolation.*** Call your friends or do video calls with them. Don't just restrict to texting. Face to face communication can be more powerful and fulfilling.
- **Limit** watching the news or constantly reading about the coronavirus situation.
- **Try not to spend the time excessively binge watching television or being on your phone or playing video games.** See if you can develop another hobby or interest that calms you down such as coloring, painting, playing music, doing puzzles online, crochet, digital art/animation.
- **Exercise:** even though we are not able to go outside to the gym etc. we could still do some simple routines at home. Look up videos on yoga routines you can do at home, or even at your desk at work (home office or work office). Go for a walk while maintaining social distancing (6feet distance from others) with others.
- **Managing difficult family life:** If you are stuck with difficult family members/room mates, find a way to create your own healthy bubble.

Sometimes families come together in crises and sometimes they don't. Figure out if having a conversation about how you are going to get through these next weeks will work for your family. Maintain healthy boundaries and distance yourself emotionally from conflicts by practicing self-soothing skills. What are these skills?

- **Self-Soothing skills:** these are things we can do to manage our stress when we can't necessarily change others or our situation.

**Express yourself:** vent about it to a friend, write about it, draw about it.

**Deep breathing:** helps to relax and manage the physiological arousal that can occur when we get very upset such as increased heart rate, blood pressure. See if you can find some helpful you tube videos on guided deep breathing.

**Meditation or mindfulness-** look for an app or you tube video that can help you through guided meditation or mindfulness sessions.

**Free apps:**

Insight Timer, Smiling Mind, Stop Breathe & Think, 10% Happier.

**Paid apps:** Headspace is a popular one. You can subscribe for their two-week free trial and see if you like it.

**Practicing Gratitude:** each day or week think of 2-3 things that you are thankful for in your life. These could be simple and small. Share it with someone in your life if you can and ask them to share too! Keep a journal and note these down somewhere so you can look over them when you are feeling low.

- **Help others:** helping others often helps in rising above your own struggles and can end up making you feel happy, resourceful and needed. Of course balance it with your needs and don't over do it. Just reach out to others and offer a listening ear or support them in small, simple ways. Volunteer in the community if it is safe for you to do in the current environment as per COVID-19 guidelines. Volunteering can have significant mental health benefits if you have the time and resources right now.
- **Managing pre-existing mental health issues:** continue your treatments and see if your therapist can do phone counseling. Check with your doctor about your prescriptions and follow his/her advice with regards to medications.

### **Local Resources**

- **Crisis Text Line:** Text "COURAGE" to 741741 (24 hours a day/ 7 days a week)

- **Grossmont Student Health Services** Bldg. 60, Room 130, (619) 644-7192
- [Mental Health Services \(Links to an external site.\)](#) (distance consultations available via website)- **Grossmont Student Mental Health Services**
- **San Diego Access & Crisis Line:** (888) 724-7240 (24 hours a day/ 7 days a week)
- **Youth Talkline:** (877) 450-LINE/(877) 450-5463
- **Family Supportline:** (877) 470-LINE/(877) 470-5463
- **NAMI San Diego Helpline:** (619) 543-1434; <http://www.namisaniego.org/>
- **Domestic Violence Hotline & Resources:** (888) DV-LINKS/ (888) 385-4657
- **San Diego Sexual Assault & Rape Hotline:**1-888-724-7240
- **San Diego County Mental Health:** <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/hhsa/programs/bhs/>