

Managing the Stress of COVID-19

The spread of the COVID-19 virus and the attempts to control the spread are unlike anything we have experienced in recent times. As such, this is likely an extreme source of stress and fear for many of us. While the coming weeks will be far from what we typically expect on a day to day basis, there are some steps we can all take to reduce the impact of these trying times.

- Stay Present in the moment. The sheer magnitude of this situation will create many opportunities to be overwhelmed. Resist the urge to react to fears, concerns, and factors that are out of your control. Take the time slow down and regroup.
- Honor your experience. Acknowledge your 'state' and take the time to process and express your concerns.
- Limit media overexposure. We have all heard of the recommendations to limit exposure to the virus, however we also should limit overexposure to media coverage and allow time to process. Get news from a trusted source and only in small doses. Limit exposure to opinion or conjecture on social media. There are many stories that are false and misleading. It may be helpful to structure a time to get your news and explore social media.
- Remember that we are all in this together. While it is easy to make assumptions, point fingers, and place blame, nothing good will come of it. We will need to stand together and be mindful we do not use this situation to "other" those of difference.
- Self-care is essential. While we may be limited with regards to accessing our preferred modes of self-care such as going to the gym, movies, and restaurants, it is important we find alternative methods. Be sure to engage in regular physical activity: perhaps google yoga instruction, go for a walk/run, go outside and enjoy nature. Additionally, consider trying one of the many self-care apps such as Calm or Stop Breathe Think.
- Keep a daily structure. When working from home, practice your daily routine, keep structured hours, and maintain a dedicated space.
- Be sure to get enough sleep; eat a healthy diet.
- Use care not to increase alcohol use.
- Remain socially connected with others. Although social distancing is a barrier, reach out to friends and loved ones by telephone, facetime, or another video messaging app. Social media can be a great tool: practice interacting with others online with the same social expectations you practice in person.
- Be kind and be patient with both yourself and others.

Please share with both staff and the people we serve. We hope that you are well and have the resources you need to navigate this difficult time.

Thank you for all your hard work and dedication,

Sharon, Michelle, and Marc
Vinfen Directors of Clinical Services

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**We're All in This Together:
Caring Through the Crisis.**

