



COPING WITH THE STRESS OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

*Information provided courtesy of the State of Michigan
Civil Service Commission Employee Service Program (ESP)*

COMMON STRESS REACTIONS

- Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations
- Some common reactions may include:
 - Anxiety, worry, or fear
 - Confusion, decreased memory and concentration
 - Irritability, frustration or anger
 - Uncertainty and concerns about the future

COMMON STRESS REACTIONS

- Tension (e.g., headaches, jaw clenching, teeth grinding)
- Body pain (e.g., headaches, muscle spasms)
- Reduced energy (e.g., tiredness, weakness, fatigue)
- Sleep Issues
- Changes in appetite

STRESS REACTIONS

RELATED TO COVID-19

- Social distancing and self-quarantine may bring additional reactions such as:
 - Loneliness
 - Helplessness
 - Boredom
 - Decreased motivation
 - Depression

STRESS REACTIONS

RELATED TO COVID-19

- There may be specific anxiety, worry, or fear related to:
 - Your health and that of your family and friends
 - Potential challenges of securing the items you need, such as medication, personal care items or groceries
 - Finances

COPING STRATEGIES: GATHER THE FACTS

- Stay up to date on what is happening, but avoid watching the news 24/7
 - Have a set time for updates (Ex: 2:00 pm, and 7:00 pm)
 - Awareness helps us feel more in control
 - Too much exposure to negative news can increase anxiety

COPING STRATEGIES: GATHER THE FACTS

- View credible news sources only
 - Avoid getting updates from unverified sources
 - Avoid rumors, and direct others to reliable resources
- Consult with your health care provider as needed
 - Do not be afraid to ask clarifying questions
 - Ask for written information or instructions

COPING STRATEGIES FOR WORK

- When working at regular work location or site
 - Follow safety protocol and guidelines
 - Try to focus on the facts and known information not the uncertainty of the rapidly evolving situation
 - Take scheduled lunch and breaks
 - Consult with HR as needed

COPING STRATEGIES FOR WORK

- When working remotely
 - Maintain a consistent routine if possible
 - Keep same sleep schedule. Get dressed for work
 - Have work location in house (office, spare bedroom, kitchen table)
 - Take scheduled lunch and breaks
 - Get up and move. Eat healthy. Drink lots of water
 - Stay connected to supervisor, work team, and colleagues

COPING STRATEGIES FOR WORK

Most Importantly:

Take pride in the valuable and important work that you perform!

COPING STRATEGIES

STAY ACTIVE

- Keep your brain active and positively occupied
- Engage in activities that require focus and provide distraction
 - Puzzles, board games, reading
 - Video games, scavenger hunts, arts and crafts
 - Cooking new recipes, trying new hobbies
 - Now is a great time to explore self-care strategies that we were always “too busy” to try

COPING STRATEGIES

STAY ACTIVE

- Avoid being consumed by unknowns and “what if” thinking
- Stay physically active
 - Walk outside around your house, exercise, chair yoga

COPING STRATEGIES CONNECT WITH OTHERS

- Utilize technology to stay connected with others
 - Telephone, texting, emails, social media
 - Stream live classes/activities
 - Share something positive with your online social network



COPING STRATEGIES

CONNECT WITH OTHERS

- Continue to have “face to face” conversations
 - Using facetime or video chat services
 - Get creative!

COPING STRATEGIES

RELAXATION AND MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES

- Make an effort to relax your mind and body
 - Mindfulness and breathing techniques
 - Stretching, yoga at home, work out videos online
 - Meditation, pray, guided imagery exercises
 - Walking in nature (keeping 6 ft social distancing in mind)

COPING STRATEGIES

RELAXATION AND MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES

- Other stress management activities
 - Focus on good nutrition and healthy eating
 - Listen to music
 - Watch movies or tv shows
 - Sing, dance, laugh
 - Limit alcohol and caffeine
 - Practice daily gratitude*

*<https://dailyhealthpost.com/gratitude-rewires-brain-happier/>

LOOK FOR THE HELPERS

“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, “Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.” Fred Rogers

- Focus on your resiliency and the resiliency of others
 - Free lunches being offered to school children
 - Free tables of cleaning supplies
 - Courtyard workout classes
 - Dancing on balconies

LOOK FOR THE HELPERS

Finally...

Help others, be kind

IT'S GOOD FOR YOU!*

**www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-athletes-way/201602/3-specific-ways-helping-others-benefits-your-brain*

RESOURCES

- The State of Michigan and CDC have excellent regularly updated resources
 - www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus
 - www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019
- Statewide Covid-19 Hotline
 - 1-888-535-6136 8am – 5pm, M-F
 - Covid19@Michigan.gov (Staffed 8am – 5pm M-F)