

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Mental Wellbeing Resources**

As we go through this unfolding public health situation the Seattle Central College Counseling Center is providing information and resources to remind us all how to take better care of ourselves and others.

We encourage you to make time to manage the stress that is a normal reaction to the uncertainty and concern for ourselves, our loved ones, and our larger communities. This can be difficult to do when our everyday patterns and access to resources are disrupted.

The current situation is impacting us all and has more severe impacts on specific populations vulnerable due to health and/or healthcare access as well as financial and community resources. Consider how you can care for yourself and how you may support others.

Resources for stress relief and mental well-being:

- [Care for Your Coronavirus Anxiety](#)
- [JED Foundation Managing Stress and Worry](#)
- [How to Manage Anxiety and Isolation during the Quarantine](#)
- [Community Resources](#)
- [King County Covid-19 Updates](#)

From the Center for Disease Control, [Managing Anxiety and Stress](#) related to Covid-19:

### **Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include**

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

**People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment and be aware of new or worsening symptoms.**

Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with stress. Helping others cope with their stress can also make your community stronger.

## **Things you can do to support yourself**

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

## **Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.**

The National Alliance on Mental Illness [NAMI provides updated information and resources](#) and recommends:

- To help overcome uncertainty, normality and routine that mirrors the office life's daily patterns and practices can be helpful. If you are working remotely, we encourage you to create a structured, dedicated work environment and build in self-care as well as daily benchmarks of achievement.
- Structure and routine may be helpful for people with mental health vulnerabilities, especially during times of uncertainty. Encourage each other to maintain a regular routine with the work hours that are usually worked, including keeping up with morning rituals. Dressing in regular work attire and taking regular breaks, including lunch time, may also be helpful.
- Research highlights the benefits of exercise to improving mental, physical and cognitive health. Scheduling some physical activity into your day will benefit your work from home experience.
- Encourage each other to be mindful about working too little or too much. Resisting the temptations of household chores, binge news watching or entertainment as well as the urge to work late into the night can be helpful.
- Research tells us that 7% of communication is accomplished through our words, including email. 38% is voice and a staggering 55% is body language and visual cues. For people with mental health vulnerabilities, and even for those with extroverted personalities, the lack of face time can be challenging. Using technology to simulate this can offer a solution to bridging this gap.
- Taking steps to mitigate the potentially negative impacts of social isolation can be a proactive approach to promoting self-care. This may be especially important for those who live alone. Encourage people to schedule short "water cooler" video calls with their friends, family and colleagues, including checking in on one another as they would in the

office. Use technology for informal texting when appropriate as an additional strategy. If you are a manager, keep, or if you don't have, set, regular check-in times with your team, collectively, to reinforce the benefits of team, in this case the new virtual team.

- **Take Care of Yourself.** Many people with mental health conditions, and other health conditions, rely on medications as a key component to treatment and health management. Concerns about adequate supply or ability to obtain refills can be addressed. Check with your insurance carrier about the possibility of getting a one-time extra prescription refill to have on hand just in case this vital supply chain is interrupted.

### **Suggested news articles to explore further**

VICE (3.5.20) – [How to Deal With Coronavirus If You Have OCD or Anxiety](#)

Rolling Stone (3.4.20) – [Coronavirus Is Wreaking Havoc On Our Mental Health](#)

Today (3.3.20) – [How to survive coronavirus anxiety: 8 tips from mental health experts](#)

CBS This Morning, via YouTube (3.10.20)— [How to manage anxiety over Coronavirus](#)

CNBC (3.10.20)— [WHO gives advice on handling mental health toll from the Coronavirus](#)

NYTimes (3.5.20) - [How to work from home with children](#)

Unicef (3.11.20) - [How to talk to your child about COVID-19](#)