



# Tips to Cope with COVID-19 Pandemic

## CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Reaching out to people you trust is one of the best ways to reduce anxiety, depression, loneliness, and boredom during social (physical) distancing, quarantine, and isolation. You can:

- Use the telephone, email, text messaging, and social media.
- Talk “face to face” with friends and loved ones using video.
- Try an online support group such as NAMI.
- Write letters.
- Remember frequency is more important than duration- try to reach out to others several times a week.

## Use Practical Ways to Cope and Relax

- **Take stock.** As routines drastically change, health choices may falter. Ask yourself how you are doing in regard to daily health behaviors: the quantity and quality of sleep, exercise, nutrition, and hydration.
- **Relax your body** often by doing things that work for you- take deep breaths, stretch, meditate or pray, or engage in activities you enjoy.
- **Pace yourself** between stressful activities, and take regular brain breaks.
- **Talk** about your experiences and feelings to loved ones and friends, if you find it helpful.
- **Maintain a sense of hope** and positive thinking. Consider keeping a journal where you write down things you are grateful for or that are going well.
- **Name what is known.** If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed by everything we do not know, identify what you do know. This can be naming objects around you and/ or identifying who is healthy/ supportive.
- **Have compassion for yourself and others.** Recognize that everyone is doing his/ her/ their best in this time of crisis, including yourself. Remind yourself that everyone is navigating uncharted territory without a playbook. Anchor yourself and avoid reacting to the emotional instability of others.
- **If you are experiencing overwhelming emotions/ panic attacks, try the TIP(P) skills:** temperature- hold ice on the face or right side of neck; intense exercise- try jumping jacks or speed walking; paced breathing; progressive muscle relaxation.
- **Find personal space in isolation.** Paradoxically, physical distancing is forcing people and families in close proximity for extended periods of time. During a stable time of emotional neutrality, discuss individual needs for personal space and develop a plan.

### Special note to parents

Many parents are now struggling to balance work, childcare, schooling, and managing worries- both yours and your children's.

Skills to try:

1. Schedule 1:1 time, even for five minutes
2. Keep it positive- identify the behavior you want to see and reinforce.
3. Create consistent but flexible routine.
4. Redirect unwanted behavior, take a pause, use consequences.
5. Be honest and open to questions.
6. End each day with a positive/ gratitude.

## Helpful Resources

### Hotlines

SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline

1-800-985-5990 (English and español)

SMS: Text TalkWithUs to 66746

SMS (español): "Hablanos" al 66746

TTY: 1-800-846-8517

Website (English):

<http://www.disasterdistress.samhsa.gov>

Website (español):

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline/espanol>

SAMHSA's National Helpline

1-800-662-HELP (24/7/365 Treatment Referral)

Information Service in English and español

Website: <http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

English: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Español: 1-888-628-9454

TTY: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)

Website (English):

<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Website (español):

<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/gethelp/spanish.aspx>

### Treatment Locators

Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator

Website:

<https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov>

FindTreatment.gov

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

<https://findtreatment.gov/>

SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center

1-800-308-3515

Email: [DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov)

Website: <http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac>

## FINANCIAL STRESS

If you're unable to work during this time, you may experience stress related to your job status or financial situation. Provide your employer with a clear explanation of why you are away from work if you have had to take a leave. Contact the U.S. Department of Labor toll-free at 1-866-487-2365 about the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which allows U.S. employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for serious medical conditions, or to care for a family member with a serious medical condition. Contact your utility providers, cable and Internet provider, and other companies from whom you get monthly bills to explain your

## AFTER SOCIAL DISTANCING, QUARANTINE, OR ISOLATION

You may experience mixed emotions, including a sense of relief. There may still be fear present and thoughts of being contaminated. Continue to educate yourself and follow guidelines from the health department. Talk with your treatment provider about your feelings including fears.

Continued patience may be needed as we wait for a vaccine.

If you are feeling overwhelmed with emotions such as sadness, depression, anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or someone else, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).