



# ALL STRESSED OUT AND NO PLACE TO GO?

## COPING WITH COVID-19

AllOne Health

Susie Owen, LCSW, LISW-CP, CEAP

susie.owen@allpointseap.org

### WHOLE PERSON CONCEPT

- Family, Mental, Spiritual, Community, Social, Financial, Professional and Physical

### WHEN IS FEAR HEADED OFF THE RAILS?

- It is natural to be fearful – it is part of the survival instinct
- 3 factors that contribute to increased fear: Unpredictable, Uncontrollable, Sustained
- When we feel out-of-control we want to gain control and there are various behaviors to attempt this: Irrational fears, or reactions, Micromanaging in other areas, and Gathering info excessively

### WHEN IS WORRY TOO MUCH?

- When we become preoccupied (what if's excessively)
- Can't function due to the rumination (not sleeping, becoming immobilized, appetite disturbance)
- Watching the news 24/7
- Panic attacks
- If already experiencing or prone to anxiety, phobias, depression can exacerbate
- Need to realize if trying to help someone you cannot talk someone in or out of something -need to listen, support and encourage

### DO'S AND DON'TS

- **Expect range of emotions** – vacillating from fear, sadness, and feeling ok,
- **Grief reaction** to all losses of things not occurring (expect tearfulness – graduations, weddings and other milestones)
- Identify and **talk about your feelings** and encourage family to do the same
- **Manage expectations** – expect “cabin fever,” remind yourself “I am doing the best I can,” consider what you can and can't control at this time and let go of perfectionism
- **Positive self-talk** – pay attention to your own language
- **Don't allow fear to take over** – counter thoughts
- **Communicate** – if you don't talk it out will act it out (important with family in close proximity), give each other space
- **Stay Informed** and not overload – use reliable resources like the CDC and be careful of social media posts
- **Physical distance vs Social distance**
- **Help others**– reach out appropriately via phone and social media to family, those living alone and elderly
- **Keep routine and structure** – modified version if necessary
- **Healthy distractions**
- **Regular exercise** – online resources in place of going to the gym
- **Eat healthy** for immune system (mushrooms, broccoli, and tomatoes)
- **Get fresh air** – if ok in your community to go outside while still practicing physical distance
- **Get creative** – teaching kids life skills, pull out your procrastination list, and Italians singing from their balconies
- **Gratitude**
- **Focus on positive**
- **Mindfulness**
- **Journaling**
- **Utilize resources**

**MAINTAIN SENSE OF HUMOR AND REMEMBER TO RELAX, BREATHE AND BE CALM – POST NOTES**

### **LOOK AROUND YOU AND FIND:**

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

Repeat as many times as needed  
Grounding exercise for anxiety and panic

### **KEEPING IT SIMPLE -DAILY QUARANTINE QUESTIONS:**

- What am I grateful for today?
- Who am I checking in on or Connecting with today?
- What expectations of “normal” am I letting go of today?
- How am I getting outside today?
- How am I moving my body today?
- What beauty am I either creating, cultivating or inviting in today?

FROM: CENTER FOR MINDFULNESS AND JUSTICE

### **REMEMBER**

- This too will pass and we may grow from the experience
- EAP here to support you and utilize the My Life Expert Website – ask your HR rep or contact your EAP for passcode

### **RESOURCES:**

**The Feeling Good Handbook** by David Burns, MD

**Authentic Happiness** by Martin Seligman, PhD (book and other resources on his website)

**The Power of Vulnerability** by Brene' Brown

#### **Podcasts –**

Search topics of stress, anxiety or depression

Search your APP Store for “anxiety relief” – many apps for anxiety, depression and sleep disorders

Apps like “Headspace” and “Calm”

**Classcentral.com** – free online courses from colleges

**Audiblestories.com** – free stories for young readers and the classics