



Psychological Association of the Philippines

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Mental Health During COVID-19: A Guide for Coping and Wellness

Feeling worried and anxious is an expected reaction to the current crisis. It is normal to worry about our health and that of our loved ones, our work, and finances. There are ways to lessen our stress and anxiety so that we can better care for ourselves and our family members.

1. Focus on what is under your control rather than what you cannot control. Take concrete steps to follow the recommendations of the Department of Health and other local agencies:
 - wash or sanitize your hands frequently
 - clean and disinfect frequently used or touched objects and surfaces in your home and work space
 - practice correct coughing and sneezing
 - stay home if you are sick
 - avoid crowded places
 - practice social distancing

If you are practicing these recommendations, then you are already doing your part in helping to keep yourself, your loved ones, and the public, safe.

2. Heavy consumption of news and social media can increase distress and anxiety. Limit your exposure to news and social media to only specific hours or times of the day. Avoid arguments as these will make you feel worse. Be cautious about fake news and follow only reputable news sources.
3. Do your best to adopt a regular routine at home or at work (for essential services). This can give a sense of purpose and order to your day.
4. Maintain good health and increase your resistance to illness by eating nutritious food, staying well-hydrated, sleeping at least 6 hours at night, and exercising regularly.
5. Set aside time to do things that you enjoy. Watch a favorite show, engage in hobbies, listen to your favorite songs, dance, pray, or do other things that make you feel good.
6. Stay connected to others and to valued social groups even in the midst of social distancing. Use phone, video, or online tools to check in on each other and share emotional support.
7. Practice empathy and compassion and find ways to contribute or assist those who need the most support in this crisis. This could be in the form of buying basic needs for persons who are living alone, the elderly, or disabled; or providing medical supplies and personal protective

gear to health workers and hospitals. Agencies are seeking monetary or in-kind donations to supply these needs. If you are an employer, check on your employees and find ways to support them.

8. Reach out to a trusted friend or seek additional support from mental health/counseling services in your area if you are finding it very difficult to cope. For instance, if you are having trouble sleeping, eating, or doing anything to help yourself or others in your household. Inquire with mental health care providers for assistance or online / tele-counseling services during the community quarantine. The PAP is discouraging face-to-face interventions at this time.

REMEMBER:

MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WHO CONTRACT COVID-19 WILL RECOVER.

SCIENTISTS AND EXPERTS ARE CURRENTLY WORKING HARD TO FIND A CURE AND VACCINE FOR COVID-19.

THERE IS HELP COMING FROM GOVERNMENT, NON-GOVERNMENT, AND PRIVATE SECTORS.

WE ARE TOGETHER IN KEEPING EACH OTHER PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY WELL!