



## LTBB Health Department Behavioral Health

### Help to Deal with the Stress of Covid-19

We are all experiencing the Covid-19 crisis. Facing the uncertainty of the future, we feel the pins and needles of angst and anxiety. Who else ran to the store when they heard that there was a shortage of toilet paper? We are stocking up on food, using sanitizer and wearing masks to protect ourselves from an unseen foe. We fill up on news about the Covid-19 crisis like an empty cup until our cup is over-flowing and we feel overwhelmed and may panic. This is a normal reaction to a situation we have not faced before!!

Keeping calm and cool is the ideal but not always realistic. As decision makers, providers, caretakers, teachers, parents - we take on the responsibilities to help and give to others. This allows us to retain a sense of focus and control but, we often neglect ourselves in the process. Taking care of ourselves, all aspects of us, is needed and necessary. If we haven't cared for ourselves, we become vulnerable to infection and less able to complete our daily responsibilities.

Remember that your well-being is the product of how you take care of your mind, body, emotions and, spirit. Here is a list of things you can do to help manage the stress and anxiety in the time of Covid-19.



Take care of yourself physically:

- Go ahead and exercise – take a walk outside in the fresh air and sunshine
- Be creative in your workout – try yoga, "planking" or do a workout video on YouTube
- Go back to the basics – Do sit-ups, push-ups, run in place or jump rope
- Take a hot bath or shower
- Practice relaxation techniques
- Don't abuse alcohol or other substances



#### Maintain a healthy diet:

- Stick to traditional and whole foods
- Eat meals with family or a friend at regular mealtimes
- Avoid processed foods that leave you wanting more
- Fight the tendency to seek comfort in food
- Eat in moderation – Don't over-eat

#### Maintain healthy sleep habits:

- Maintain your sleep routine
- Go to bed and arise at your regular times
- Prepare for sleep by reading a book or meditating
- Turn off your device! Stop all screen time 30 minutes before retiring
- Avoid the urge to over-sleep



#### Be kind to your mind:

- Keep your mind busy by reading a book
- Work a crossword or Sudoku puzzle
- Listen to a podcast
- Listen to a meditation and try a mindfulness exercise
- Take a power nap of 15 minutes or less
- Avoid checking news feeds more than twice a day – you won't miss a thing

#### Take care of your mental health by focusing on others:

- Try a random act of kindness to a family member
- Create a gratitude list
- Send a compliment or positive note by email to a co-worker or friend
- Cook a meal for family or a friend who is in need
- Write a letter





Avoid social isolation:

- Use technology to stay in touch with people through video or Facetime
- Play a game or cards with family or a friend
- Phone an old friend
- Text (in moderation)
- Use your family and community support systems

Resist “panic mode”:

- Give yourself a break from the action
- Focus on what you know, not what is unknown
- Distract yourself by doing a chore
- Exercise the control you have by maintaining all reasonable safety measures
- Walk away from the data stream – put down the phone or get off the computer or TV



Practice your spirituality:

- Pray
- Smudge
- Reach out to your spiritual advisor
- Meditate
- Commune with nature – sunshine lightens the spirit

Remember that there are community supports available to you.

We are all in this together!

If the information provided here isn't doing the trick, please feel free to contact Behavioral health at LTBB Health Department to speak with a counselor or Cultural Advisor. We welcome all and we are here to help, especially those experiencing crisis (231) 242-1640.