

Taking Care of Our Collective Mental Health During Extreme Times of Stress: COVID-19 Pandemic

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Presentation Overview

- Coping during times of extreme stress

- What you can do for...
 - Self
 - Family
 - Clients/Patients
 - Peers/Colleagues
 - Community

- Resources

Health vs. Wellness/Wellbeing

Health

- Static state of being
- Physical health
- Diseases/Illness
- Genetics
- Tends to be more of a dichotomy

Wellness/Wellbeing

- Ongoing state of being
- Multiple dimensions
- Behaviors and practices
- Harmony between various aspects of your being
- Spectrum

SAMHSA'S Eight Dimensions of Wellness



Attending to all components of our wellbeing





COVID-19 Pandemic

- “out of the blue”
- Immediate threat
 - Prolonged
 - Rapidly changing
 - Many unknowns
- Uncertainty
- Loss of routines
- Colliding of worlds
- No end date
- Expectation and need of “moving forward”

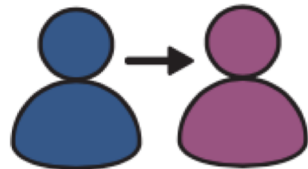
Acknowledge

YOUR CONCERNS ARE VALID

There are many reasons that you might be concerned or worried about COVID-19. Some of the most common are:



Getting sick



Passing the virus onto others,
especially those that are high-risk



Adjusting to a new reality for
an uncertain amount of time



Taking care of and
supporting your family



Concern about the health
of your friends and family



Financial stress



Not being able connect with
friends and family the way you're
used to



Shortages of certain
common supplies

REALIZE WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

One of the most frustrating things about COVID-19 is that so much about the virus and the limitations on where you can go are out of your control. However, there are things that you can control, and focusing on those things can provide you with some comfort. Some of the things you can control include:

YOUR MIND AND BODY



- Keep a healthy diet
- Exercise at home
- Get enough sleep
- Do not smoke or drink alcohol excessively
- Take care of your mental health
- Maintain self-care and personal hygiene

YOUR IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT



- Your house, your bedroom, your closet, your kitchen – now is the time to clean and get organized
- Make responsible choices about when to leave the house and only go out if necessary
- Limit the number of people you come into contact with
- Work from home if you are able to

WHAT YOU CONSUME



- Don't overdo your news and information intake
- Get your information from reliable sources like the CDC or WHO
- Watch TV, movies, and videos that make you feel good

HOW YOU PREPARE



- Keep 2-4 weeks of food on hand
- Avoid overstocking on supplies that are in high demand so other people can have enough of the essentials too
- If you take medication, get refills and keep a month's supply at home if possible

HOW YOU PROTECT YOURSELF



- Regularly wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Avoid greeting people by shaking hands, kissing or hugging
- Keep 6 feet of distance between you and anyone who is coughing or sneezing

HOW YOU PROTECT OTHERS



- Stay home if you are sick aside from getting medical care
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces



Media

- Consume media appropriately for your needs
- Use trusted sources
- Continue to be aware of and follow county and state orders, best practice guidelines, social distancing, etc.



Trusted COVID-19 Sources

- **Los Angeles County Department of Public Health**
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov>
- **California Department of Public Health**
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
<https://www.cdc.gov>

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) What You Need to Know

Public Health is urging everyone to take precautions to slow the spread of COVID-19.

How is it spread?



Through droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes



Close personal contact, such as caring for an infected person

The novel coronavirus is a new type of virus that recently started making people sick. It started in mainland China but is now infecting people around the world including those here in Los Angeles.

What are the symptoms?



Fever



Cough



Difficulty Breathing

What can I do to protect myself and others from respiratory infections like COVID-19?

- Everyone particularly those who are 65 and over, those with underlying health conditions, and pregnant women should avoid any non-essential travel, public gathering, or places where large groups of people congregate.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Limit close contact with people who are sick.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If you do not have a tissue, use your sleeve (not your hands).
- Use facemasks only if you are sick or have been instructed to do so by your health care provider.
- Get a flu shot to prevent influenza if you have not done so this season.

03/13/20 Infographic (English)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

1. What is a coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Many of them infect animals, but some coronaviruses from animals can evolve (change) into a new human coronavirus that can spread from person-to-person. This is what happened with the new coronavirus known as SARS-CoV-2, which causes the disease known as COVID-19. Diseases from coronaviruses in people typically cause mild to moderate illness, like the common cold.

2. How are coronaviruses spread?

Like other respiratory illnesses, such as influenza, human coronaviruses most commonly spread to others from an infected person who has symptoms through:

- Droplets produced through coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as caring for an infected person
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands

3. What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Reported illnesses have ranged from people with mild symptoms to people becoming severely ill, requiring admission to the hospital, and dying.

Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing

4. What should I do if I have these symptoms?

Evidence suggests that like the flu, most people will have mild symptoms and should stay home at least 3 days (72 hours) after recovery, which means your fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications and there is improvement in your respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), **AND** at least 7 days have passed *since your symptoms first appeared*.

Older adults, pregnant women, and those with compromised immune systems or underlying medical problems who experience these symptoms should call their doctor early. If you are having difficulty breathing or keeping fluids down, go to an emergency room or call 911, otherwise call your doctor before going in to seek care.



Key Points

- COVID-19 is spread through close personal contact or by touching an object or surface with the virus on it.
- Everyone should stay home unless you need to access essential services or are an essential worker.
- Always stay home and self-isolate from all others if you have a fever and cough or shortness of breath
- Public Health needs your help practicing social distancing to slow the spread of novel coronavirus in LA County.
- Call 211 if you have additional questions

For more information:

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Call 2-1-1

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>



Media Boundary Setting

- Be aware of “overconsumption” signs for you and your family
 - “losing time”
 - Repetitive
 - Opinion and commentary or facts
 - Time of day
- Set boundaries with others regarding talk about the virus, misinformation, etc.

Working from home

Environment

- Necessities
- Focus
- Realistic
- Comfort and safety
- Pleasant

Routines with flexibility

- Take regular breaks including lunch
- Stick to defined start and end times
- Differentiate between “set in stone” meetings and tasks with flexible scheduling



Working from home (continued)

Setting Boundaries

- Define, share and hold boundaries with others in your household
- Universal “signals” for do not interrupt
- Delegating responsibility for household tasks
- Household meetings to address concerns, needs, etc.

Check in with yourself

- How is your body feeling?
- What is your level of concentration?
- What might you be avoiding and why?



MOVEMENT

GOAL: connect with your body

- Walking/running/hiking
- Yoga
- Breathwork
- Stretching
- Dancing
- Biking

** No team or group sports at this time*

Online movement resources

The Tree South LA <https://www.thetreesouthla.org>

- Online yoga sessions livestreamed on Instagram
 - Multiple classes throughout the day
 - Family focused sessions



YouTube.com videos

- Dance, yoga and stretching videos
- Videos for kids and family

UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center (MARC)

<https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/>

free mindfulness and meditation recordings, exercises and information



ART and CREATIVITY

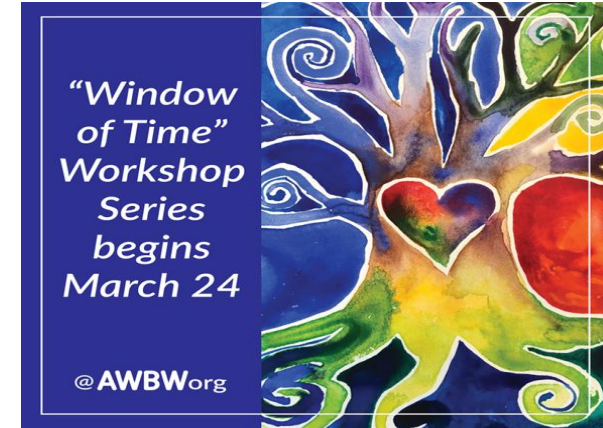
GOAL: expression

- Virtual art classes
- Online tours of museums
- Journaling and writing exercises
- Mandalas and adult coloring books
- Knitting, crochet or sewing
- Music (playing, listening, writing)

ART and CREATIVITY online resources

A Window Between Worlds

<https://awbw.org>



Virtual Museum Tours

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner?hl=en>

LA County Library online access

<https://lacountylibrary.org/audiobooks/>

Inventory of Online Art Therapy Exercises

<https://www.expressiveartworkshops.com/expressive-art-resources/100-art-therapy-exercises/>



Faith, Gratitude and Spiritual Connection

GOAL: connection, support, fellowship

- Livestream church, prayer and meditation sessions
- Adopt/renew a daily gratitude practice
- Connect with others outside of your immediate household
- Attend virtual support groups
- Reach out to phone, text and chat lines for support



Faith, Gratitude and Spiritual online resources

- Online faith services
- Numerous 12-step meetings are online lacoaa.org
- National Alliance on Mental Illness nami.org
- TeenLine talk, text or chat teenlineonline.org
- UC Berkeley Greater Good Science Center ggsc.Berkeley.edu
- National Parent Helpline [1-855-427-2736](tel:1-855-427-2736)
nationalparenthelpline.org

Nature and Environment



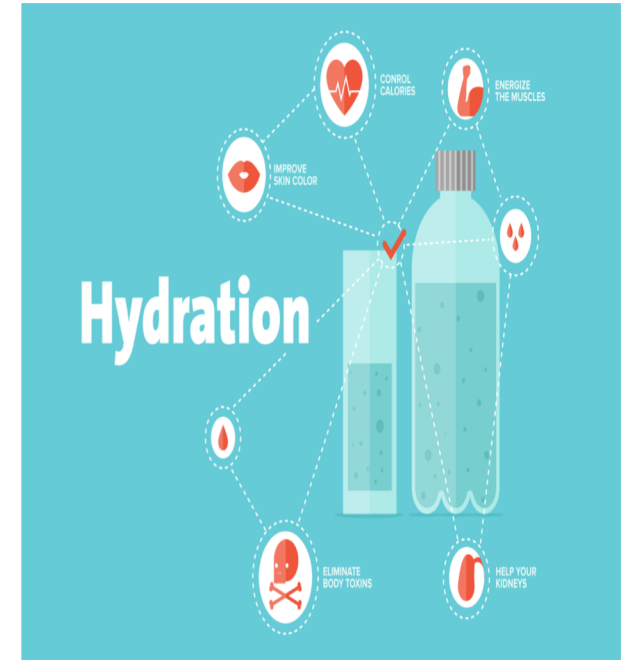


Nature and Environment online resources

- Zoo live cams <https://zoo.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams>
- Virtual tours of national parks
<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/watchingwildlife/webcams.htm>
- Get outside every day
- Social media sharing video of hikes, walks, etc.
- Feel the sun
- Listen to birds, wind, etc.
- Star gazing

Nutrition

- Maintaining regular meal schedules
- Recipe sharing and experimentation
- Family cooking "assignments", meal planning
- Virtual shared meals



- Acknowledging fears and worries around food insecurity
- Emotional responses to food, eating, and body image, alcohol and other substances



Nutrition online resources

- Online cooking "classes"
- Recipe apps, swaps, etc.

- LAUSD and many school districts meal programs
<https://achieve.lausd.net/resources> 213-443-1300
- LACOE <https://www.lacoe.edu/Home/Health-and-Safety/Coronavirus-Resources>
- Local food banks <https://www.lafoodbank.org>
- Faith based food pantries, grocery vouchers, meal delivery, etc.

- NEDA www.nationaleatingdisorders.org 800-931-2237

Sleep





Relationships

- **Self** – give yourself something each day (10 -15 minutes)
- **Colleagues** – have patience, connect beyond just work
- **Partner/spouse** – find a way to connect each day
- **Children** – support, share concerns, hold boundaries for self, also ask for help from other family members, older siblings, grandparents and aunts/uncles
- **Parents** - support, share concerns, hold boundaries for self, remember your limitations

Signs of Anxiety

SIGNS OF ANXIETY

It is normal to be worried and stressed during times of crisis. While worry is a part of anxiety, people with anxiety tend to experience more exaggerated feelings of worry and tension. Some common symptoms include:



Uncontrollable worry or dread



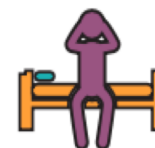
Stomach and digestion problems



Trouble with concentration, memory, or thinking clearly



Increased heart rate



Changes in energy and difficulty sleeping



Irritability and/or restlessness

In extreme cases of anxiety, people may experience a panic attack. Panic attacks are often mistaken for heart attacks at first, but usually go away when people are able to talk to someone else to calm their fears and practice deep breathing.



Grounding Yourself When Anxiety Hits

Employ your senses!

- Positive statements/affirmations
- Visualizing a safe or comforting space, time, experience
- Making contact with the ground, feet on floor, tapping, etc.
- Smell something comforting (candle, oils, perfume, flowers, etc.)
- Drink a hot or cold beverage
- Reach out for support and connect with others!

Managing Anxiety

MANAGING ANXIETY

There are small things that everyone can do while practicing social distancing or self-quarantine to help reduce the amount of anxiety they are experiencing.

Ask someone to be your support buddy. Call, text, or video chat as needed.

Exercise at home

Use resources like online support groups or the Crisis Text Line (Text MHA to 741741)

Set boundaries with your phone

Use a mindfulness or meditation app

Set a timer for every hour to get up and stretch or take a walk

Create a new routine

Take 10 deep breaths when you feel stressed



Signs of Depression

- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
- Decreased energy or fatigue
- Moving or talking more slowly
- Feeling restless or having trouble sitting still
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Difficulty sleeping, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
- Appetite and/or weight changes
- Thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempts
- Aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems without a clear physical cause and/or that do not ease even with treatment



Addressing symptoms of depression

Maintain regular routines

- Sleep
- Hydration
- Movement
- Nutrition
- Connection
- Medications/Vitamins

Reach out for support

- Trusted family, friends and colleagues
- Faith leaders
- Hotlines
- Online support groups
- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255](https://www.nationalsuicidepreventionlifeline.org/)

*Remember you are not alone,
we are all in this together!*



Reaching outside of ourselves

How can you be of service to –

- Family, friends, loved ones?
- Colleagues and peers?
- Neighborhood?
- Community?
- Larger society?
- Online presence?



Take-Aways...

- **COMFORT** – what can you do in the moment to feel a sense of comfort
- **COMPASSION** – for yourself and others
- **CONNECTION** – with others, self, nature
- **CONSISTENCY** – what can you do on a regular basis



LA County Resources

- LA County Employee Assistance Program (213) 738-4200
- LA County Department of Mental Health Access Line
1.800.854.7771 (24/7)
- LA County Community Resources Information Line 2-1-1
- LA County DV Hotline 800-978-3600
- LA County Department of Social Services 866-613-3777
- LA County Child Abuse Hotline 800-540-4000
- LA County Elder Abuse Hotline 877-477-3646
- LA County Substance Abuse Service Helpline 1-844-804-7500 (24/7)



Mental Health Support Hotlines

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24/7):**
1.800.273.TALK (8255)
 - Veterans: press 1 or text 838255
 - Para español, oprima el numero 2
 - **Crisis Text Line (24/7):** Text LA to 741741
- **TeenLine:** 310.855.4673 (6 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily)
 - Text TEEN to 839863 (6 p.m. to 9 p.m. daily)
- **The Trevor Project for LGBTQ Youth (24/7):**
 - 1.866.488.7386 or Text START to 678678



Hotlines

- **NAMI HelpLine: 1-800-650-NAMI**
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233**
- **National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-4673**
- **Trans Lifeline: 877-565-8860**
- **SAMHSA Treatment Referral Hotline: 1-877-726-4727**
- **National Parent Helpline: 1-855-427-2736**
- **Peer-Run Warm Line: 855-845-7415 non-emergency support**



Additional Online Resources

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** - basic guidance on managing mental health stressors during COVID-19.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**- information for clinicians, treatment providers and consumers.
<https://www.samhsa.gov/coronavirus>
- **World Health Organization (WHO)** - contains suggestions for coping with COVID-19 for the general population and specific groups including health care workers, caretakers of children and older adults, and people living in isolation. <https://www.who.int>
- **Each Mind Matters** - <https://www.eachmindmatters.org/action-items/covid19update/>

QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TODAY!

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PLEASE EMAIL
DVC@PH.LACOUNTY.GOV**

