

Staying Calm in the Midst of the Storm

“ANXIETY DOES NOT EMPTY TOMORROW OF ITS SORROWS, BUT ONLY EMPTIES TODAY OF ITS STRENGTH.” Charles Spurgeon

Suddenly and without much warning our lives have been turned upside down and many of us face anxious moments as the stress builds and we try to adjust to the impact of the Coronavirus. Here are a few tips to minimizing anxiety while taking care of your mental and physical health:

- 1. Focus on what you can control:** Despite this situation we all face you are still in the driver's seat. Identify your stressor/s – Identify what about this situation is stressing you out and rather than focus on I can't, take a deep breath and try rephrasing your thoughts with a solution focus process, such as, what can I control in this situation etc. Journaling can help you with this process. If you practice a faith or some form of spirituality, this too can help you gain a sense of control as you learn to release and let go.
- 2. Limit how much news you take in daily:** As much as you may want to stay up to date with current events, the constant, negative bombardment that you see, read and hear raises your anxiety level, thus draining you of the ability to think and act pro-actively. So, limit media. Overexposure does more harm than good. Get your information from accurate sources, (CDC, WHO) and limit your news to one or two hours per day. Yes, it's okay to turn off social media.
- 3. Practice deep breathing:** Below are a few links/apps to guide you:
 - <https://koiffeinated.com/inspiration/breathe>
 - Paced breathing <https://pacedbreathing.blogspot.com/>
 - Relax: Stress and Anxiety Relief_ <https://www.saagara.com/apps/breathing/relax>
 - Prana Breath: Calm and Meditate_ <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.abdula.pranabreath>
- 4. Exercise regularly and get plenty of sleep:** Exercising helps your body release good endorphins in your brain that helps improve your mood, relaxes your body and improves your sleep. This can help relieve/reduce your anxiety. Social distancing is required but you can still go out and take a walk/run. If you prefer to stay indoors there are numerous, free online resources. Good sleep will help you feel refreshed and in a better mood to face the day.
- 5. Reach out and connect:** This is an opportune to build relationships. Reach out to your loved ones, your friends and your neighbors. Talk to them about your experiences, fears and concerns and listen to their. We are all in this together!