

# Feeling Anxious About Coronavirus? Here Are Some Coping Tips.

Is there anyone who's not feeling a little stressed these days listening to news about coronavirus? Thinking about our health and our safety, worrying about our kids or whether we have enough toilet paper in the house...we're all anxious and we're all having similar stress reactions.

*Do you recognize any of these feelings?*

- Feeling overwhelmed or helpless
- Anxiety, fear or sadness
- Feeling lonely or isolated
- Withdrawing from others/fear of going into public spaces
- Rapid heart rate, stomach upset, low energy
- Frustration, irritability or anger
- Difficulty concentrating or sleeping

If you or a loved one is having any of these feelings, it's not healthy (emotionally or physically) to keep it to yourself. Acknowledging your feelings is the first step toward dealing with them. Anxiety is normal and expected in these situations.

Keep in mind, we may all be in for an extended period of upheaval as officials work to get the spread of coronavirus under control and develop vaccines and medicines to manage it. Meanwhile, the healthiest thing you can do for yourself and your loved ones is to take some steps to cope with your feelings and take control where possible.

Here are a few things you can do to *better cope* with the *stress* you may be feeling:

**Be vocal.** Talk about your feelings with family and friends. Being open about your anxiety is the first step to relieving it. You'll probably find that they're having similar feelings and supporting one another is good for everyone's emotional health.

**Keep to your routines.** School and work closings may make this challenging, but as much as you can, stick to your routines. Plan meals, eat at the regular times, maintain your sleep schedule, get fresh air and exercise, and practice good hygiene and self-care. During times of chaos or uncertainty, maintaining routines goes a long way toward helping you feel more in control of your life.

**Lean on family and friends/stay connected.** We're all in this together and we need to support one another! Keep in contact with friends and family by phone, texts and email. Your support system is especially critical in times of crisis; focus on being there for each other in whatever ways feel comfortable and safe to you.

**New Directions is here for you.**

We're available to support you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Set limits around news and social media & choose reliable sources for information.**

Constantly tuning into the news and combing through social media posts to read about coronavirus can be overwhelming and confusing. Rely on quality sources like the CDC to get key facts and advice but try to limit other news viewing habits. In fact, think of your TV and your tablet as great ways to escape into a good movie or book.

**Practice healthy habits and the kinds of self-care that most benefit you.** Routines are important to maintain and that includes personal routines. Vow to be good to yourself by eating healthy foods, getting enough rest, limiting alcohol and engaging in active fun. Escape to a bubble bath, give everyone in the family a facial, or find a meditation video on the internet and give it a try.

**Look for the positives and embrace them!** Don't view staying home as being trapped. Think of it as an opportunity to spend more quality time with your children, spouse, friends...even the family pets. And remember, not everything is cancelled. Getting outdoors, listening to music, enjoying family, reading, singing laughing, hope—all *NOT* cancelled!

If you feel you need more emotional support for yourself or for your family, don't hesitate to call your **EAP at 800-624-5544** or **visit [ndbh.com](http://ndbh.com)**.

**IMPORTANT:** If you're having chest pains or radiating pain to jaw or left arm, trouble breathing, high fever or any unusual symptoms, contact your physician immediately or call 911.

**This is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation. For the latest information visit [CDC.gov](http://CDC.gov)**

*New Directions maintains a Business Continuity Plan that includes procedures for epidemic/pandemic illness for all New Directions service center areas. New Directions is monitoring the state of the Coronavirus outbreak through the CDC and WHO and will begin to implement internal procedures if the outbreak reaches a point deemed an epidemic and/or absenteeism affects more than 25% of the employee workforce. New Directions has the capability to re-distribute contact center calls within minutes using established protocols which designate backups for clinical care management activities. Current education and regular communication is available to members and partners through account management, social and web distribution channels.*

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