

ADAPTING TO UNCERTAINTY

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAYING
HEALTHY DURING TIMES OF STRESS



MANAGING THE CHAOS

During times of peak stress and uncertainty, it is common for us to feel disorganized and out of control. One of the most basic needs that we have is to feel some sort of control over what is around us. It's the reason why we clean when we should be focused on a school or work project, it's the reason why we hear negative news media and think "that wouldn't happen to me because...", it's also one of the reasons why the vast majority of us feel confused and helpless during times like this; we are struggling to find our control. Listed on this handout are some of the things that YOU CAN CONTROL. Items that you can choose to focus on to help restore a sense of calm during what can seem like chaos. We know that the recommendations listed here are not going to take away the stress of what is happening around you, but it can help.

If you find yourself still searching for your control, or if you are experiencing overwhelming feelings of sadness, grief, depression, helplessness, or just need to talk, we encourage you to pick up the phone and connect with us.

WHAT CAN I DO TO FEEL SOME CONTROL?

Focus on what you can actually control. We have become so pre-occupied with our fears, our anxieties, and our stressors that we lose sight of what we can *actually* control.

- Mindset: choose to control how you frame things. Are you choosing to say to yourself "I'm stuck at home" or are you choosing to say to yourself "I'm safe at home"? Both of these thoughts tap into the same thing, but from completely different points of reference. One of them might bring up anger and frustration while the other might bring up feelings of gratitude.

- Set Healthy Work Boundaries: with so many people working from home, it can be difficult to set boundaries. Set a time limit and when that limit is reached choose to disconnect from work and plug-in to your family.

- Routine: create a new routine that works for you, one that fits into your lifestyle and the things you want to accomplish on a daily basis. This routine should not be the same one you had before, it should be based on your needs today. When we have a routine in place, our brain feels some control because our day becomes more predictable.

- Self-Care: now is the perfect time to teach yourself how to care for yourself. We are often so worried about others that we forget to care for ourselves. Find what helps you de-stress and DO IT!

- Connect: if you are feeling isolated and alone, reach out. Technology, more now than ever before, has given us the ability to connect with people clear across the globe. Pick up the phone, or the computer, or your tablet, and connect to those you love, those you miss, and those that make you laugh.

- Laugh: the more time we spend enjoying the good things in life, the better those good things get. Unfortunately, the opposite is also true. The more time we spend focused on the negative and our fears, the more negative and fearful we become. So take the power back and laugh!

- Surround Yourself With Helpful Resources: find resources that help provide you with useful, unbiased, supportive information. A few of our favorites are listed below:

- 1.Center for Disease Control and Prevention - www.cdc.gov
- 2.The Counseling Team International training videos - <https://thecounselingteam.com/blog/>
3. Cordico - First Responder Wellness Mobile App - Cordico.com
4. Engaged Mindfulness Institute - engagedmindfulness.org
5. Medline Plus - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder- medlineplus.gov/posttraumaticstressdisorder.html