Covid-19 and Your Mental Health

While we are familiar with viruses like the common cold and the flu, the coronavirus (COVID-19) is new and presents a situation that none of us could have imagined a few short months ago. The fact that it is extremely contagious has resulted in business closures, social distancing, and quarantine measures which have disrupted our daily lives. It is more important now than ever to pay attention to mental health during this time of isolation and uncertainty.

Your Concerns Are Valid

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

- Your house, your bedroom, your closet, your kitchen – now is the time to clean and get organized.
- Avoid greeting people by shaking hands, kissing or hugging.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

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:

- Keep a healthy diet
- Exercise at home
- Get enough sleep
- Do not smoke or drink alcohol excessively
- Maintain self-care and personal hygiene
- 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.
- Stay home if you are sick aside from getting medical care.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces

Signs of Anxiety

It’s 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:

- Increased heart rate
- Changes in appetite or difficulty sleeping
- Initial fear or agitation

When Anxiety Won’t Let Up

If you’re taking steps to manage worry and anxiety during the COVID-19 crisis but they don’t seem to be helping, there are additional resources you can take advantage of.

Mental Health Screening

If you feel like you are struggling with your mental health, visit mhanational.org to check your symptoms.

- If you are in crisis or thinking about suicide, get connected to a local crisis center and get in touch with someone immediately.
  - Call 1-800-273-8255 (TALK) or text “MHA” to 741741.

Mental Health Screening

Crisis Hotlines and Textlines

Find more information and resources about COVID-19 and mental health at mhanational.org/covid19.