



# ►► Understanding the Mental Health and Emotional Aspects of COVID-19

As the world continues to combat the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), you may find increased concerns, anxieties and fears surround your health and safety, and that of family and friends. You may find that isolation, job insecurities and more remain pervasive in daily life – and understandably so. Adjusting to the current conditions can bring about many stressful challenges, which require periods of adjustment. Pay attention to increased signs of distress, especially when circumstances evolve quickly and unpredictably.

## **Here are some common reactions you or people you know may be experiencing:**

- General apprehension, anxiety and fear of the unknown.
- Fears around your health and the health of loved ones.
- Sadness, loss of interest, hopelessness and apathy.
- Financial and economic concerns.
- Stress and irritation towards those around you.
- Feelings of grief, detachment and tendency to distance from people and activities.
- Confusion and indecision surrounding decision-making and lifestyle adjustments.
- Existential stress, self-doubt or thoughts and feelings related to decreased sense of self-worth.

**Remember:** You are not alone.

Emotional stress and fear related to COVID-19 can be just as debilitating as any physical symptom. In fact, your emotional health can have a direct impact on your physical health. Excessive worrying can affect your sleep, appetite and desire for activity; any and all of these will negatively affect your physical health and ability to fight infection. This correlation between mind and body only reinforces the importance of proactively caring for your physical and emotional well-being.

## **Here are some tips for managing stress and maintaining your emotional health:**

- Stay virtually connected to family and friends (physical distancing does not mean social isolation).
- Get lots of rest and eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. Keeping a healthy body will help maintain a healthy mind.
- Regularly meditate and exercise.
- Preserve personal hygiene and clean living spaces.
- Maintain structure in your days by implementing routines.
- Find new ways to engage in some of your favorite activities.
- Keep yourself informed but do not allow yourself to be bombarded by too much media coverage.

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**Help is available 24/7: If you or someone you know is having difficulty coping with the added stresses of COVID-19, call the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) Help Line at 1-800-854-7771 or text “LA” to 741741.**

## **LACDMH is here to help if any of the following applies:**

- You feel isolated, anxious, fearful and/or depressed, and your symptoms worsen or become unmanageable.
- You find yourself having severe depressive thoughts due to fear and/or isolation, and you are afraid you might, intentionally or unintentionally, harm yourself or someone else.
- You are in a relationship where there is domestic violence that risks your safety and well-being and/or that of the children in your home.
- Someone you know is being harmed or neglected.