

▶▶ Maintaining Health and Stability During COVID-19



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
MENTAL HEALTH
hope. recovery. wellbeing.

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) presents us with challenging circumstances we have never experienced before. Widespread health concerns, isolation, financial insecurities and modified daily routines can have a profound impact on mental health. Some days will be easier – or harder – than others. Within such uncomfortable and confusing constraints, it is important to develop healthy methods of coping with the influx of stressful factors.

Here are some healthy ideas for managing anxiety and maintaining stability:

- Read a book and play games – even virtually with friends
- Pick up a new hobby or rediscover one you haven't had time to enjoy
- Start watching a new show with friends who live apart from you
- Cook and bake using healthy ingredients
- Meditate, engage in physical activity and exercise
- Stay virtually connected to family and friends – especially those who are isolated and alone
- Structure your days by implementing routines
- Help or do something kind for someone else

During stressful times, it's easy to lapse into harmful behaviors that can exacerbate anxiety, fear and depression. Whenever possible, avoid these unhealthy ways of coping:

- Using recreational drugs and alcohol
- Overeating or eating unhealthy foods
- Excessive sleeping
- Extreme isolation
- Inactivity
- Excessive use of TV
- Excessive use of video gaming
- Unnecessary online shopping
- Online gambling
- Pornography

It's important to stay informed and connected to the larger global conversation surrounding COVID-19 but remember that excessive amounts of alarming news and information – such as daily case rates and death tolls – can have an adverse effect on mental health.

- Stay informed with trusted news sources and focus on essential facts that directly impact your life.
- Maintain a good balance with your media consumption.
- When you start to feel overwhelmed, take a break from the news and focus on other activities.
- When appropriate, have conversations with others you trust about your observations and concerns.
- If you have children in the house, answer their questions simply and precisely in an age-appropriate manner, being mindful not to overwhelm them with non-essential details.

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.