

The *Focus* is Mental Health

- MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGIES
- MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR PARENTS
- COVID-19 BILL ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILIES

“The best way out is always through.”

-Robert Frost POET

Mental Health Strategies

The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may bring stress, anxiety, and fear. Information regarding the disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Good coping skills can assist with your stress, build resiliency and can help the people you care about, and make your community stronger.

To reduce anxiety, it is recommended to limit exposure to coronavirus news to no more than 30 minutes per day. If this is not possible, take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media (2). Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting. Be sure to get your information from a trusted source and stay with the facts. When you are sharing accurate information about COVID-19, you can help make people feel less stressed and this will allow you to connect with them (3).

Being aware of the care of your body, mind, and soul can be essential during stressful times. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, stay hydrated, and get plenty of sleep (3). Keeping your immune system strong is important to reduce the risk of getting sick with other illnesses (we're still in cold and flu season) and to help manage stress (4).

Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Do something that makes you happy. Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Giving and getting affirmations can bring positivity and hope to our daily routine.

Build healthy emotionally supportive relationships with loved ones, family and friends. Touch base through your

usual daily activities; if that doesn't include in-person get-togethers, try phone calls or video chats. Keep in mind that everyone is going through this now. With all of us in essentially the same situation, you can achieve a sense of “we'll figure this out together.” This mindset can be empowering and uplifting (4).

Keep to your routine as best you can, while following the guidelines provided by the CDC, state and local health departments, and your local hospitals. Routines can be soothing because they are familiar.

Look out for these common signs of distress and seek help when needed: Feelings of numbness, disbelief, anxiety or fear. Changes in appetite, energy, and activity levels. Difficulty concentrating. Difficulty sleeping or nightmares and upsetting thoughts and images. Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes. Worsening of chronic health problems. Anger or short temper. Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs (1). If distress impacts activities of your daily life for several days or weeks, talk to a clergy member, counselor, or doctor, or contact the SAMHSA helpline at **1-800-985-5990**.



Mental Health Resources for Parents

Blogs:

- [Panic Sells, Calm Saves - ADAA Blog Post](#) - ADAA member Dr. Shane Owens
- [Health Anxiety: What Is It and How to Beat It](#) - ADAA Blog Post - ADAA board member Ken Goodman, LCSW
- [COVID-19 Lockdown Guide: How to Manage Anxiety and Isolation During Quarantine](#) - ADAA Blog Post, Aarti Gupta, PsyD

Videos and Webinars:

- [Quick Expert Tips and Strategies to Manage Coronavirus Anxiety](#) - ADAA 5 minute Video - ADAA member Dr. Debra Kissen
- [Quick Expert Tips to Manage Coronavirus Anxiety Part Two](#) - ADAA video - ADAA members Ken Goodman, LCSW, Drs. Debra Kissen, Reid Wilson, and Sally Winston share expert tips to manage coronavirus anxiety.

Addressing Coronavirus Anxiety:

- [What Coronavirus Fears are Doing to People with Anxiety Disorders](#) - Ken Goodman, LCSW, Dr. Krystal Lewis and Dr. Shane Owens
- [Coronavirus Anxiety Reports up, Doctors say; Encourage Public to Stay Calm, Keep Perspective on COVID-19](#), ABC7.com, Karen Cassiday, PhD and Debra Kissen, PhD
- [How to Manage Your Coronavirus Anxiety](#), Wall Street Journal Debra Kissen, PhD, MHSA and Shane Owens, PhD, ABPP

Additional Media Articles:

- [Pandemic Panic? These 5 Tips Can Help You Regain Your Calm](#)
- [How to Manage Your Anxiety About Coronavirus](#), Time.
- [As Fear of Coronavirus Spreads, Here's How to Keep a Cool Head](#), Vogue.com

Direct Support:

- Maricopa County AZ Warmline (602) 347-1100 (520) 770-9909 or (877) 770-9912 available 24/7; Tucson AZ Warmline (844) 733-9912 available daily, 8am-10pm
- Contact the SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline (800) 985- 5990 that provides 24/7, 365-day-a- year crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.
- Call the NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) HelpLine at 800-950-NAMI (6264) Monday through Friday, between 10:00 am and 6:00 pm EST for mental health resources.
- <http://www.211.org/> allows you to conduct a zip-code-based search for local resources including affordable medical and mental health clinics. You can also dial 211 from your phone to access information on local resources.
- National Association of Free & Charitable Clinics <https://www.nafcclinics.org/> is a safety-net health care organization that utilizes a volunteer/staff model to provide a range of medical, dental, pharmacy, vision and/or behavioral health services.
- 7 Cups: <https://www.7cups.com/> Free online text chat with a trained listener for emotional support and counseling. It also offers fee-for-services online therapy with a licensed mental health professional. The service/website also offered in Spanish.

COVID-19 Bill Assistance for Families.

APS: We are suspending the shutting off of power to our customers for non-payment. We are waiving late fees. We are setting up a Customer Support Fund for those who need assistance paying their bill that will be available starting Wednesday, March 18th. The fund will be available through our advisors by calling us at (602) 371-7171 (Phoenix) or (800) 253-9405 (other areas), weekdays from 7 am to 7 pm. [COVID-19 Coronavirus](#)

SRP: We are suspending power shutoffs for non-payment and will waive all late payment fees. This applies to both residential and commercial customers. SRP will be attempting to contact customers who are currently disconnected to facilitate a safe reconnection. If you are currently disconnected, and we were unable to reach you or you have not yet been contacted, please contact us to ensure a safe reconnection by calling us 24/7 at **(602) 236-8888**.

Southwest Gas: We have stopped service disconnections indefinitely, until the coronavirus situation improves. For customers experiencing financial hardship, we are here to help with flexible payment options: <https://www.swgas.com/en/save-money-and-energy> and mobile app.

The City of Phoenix has halted water shutoffs. Visit: <https://www.12news.com/article/news/health/coronavirus/phoenix-halts-water-shutoffs-to-give-residents-access-amid-coronavirus-spread/75-11158c18-4530-4bf1-87de-3b910e050faa>

211: Allows you to conduct a zip-code- based search for resources <https://211arizona.org/food-clothing-bills-maricopa/>

Cox Communications: Cox Communications offers a range of services and packages for the next 60 days (for example, free access to over 650,000 Wi-Fi hot spots; residential customers in the company's Starter, StraightUp Internet and Connect2Compete packages will be automatically upgraded to speeds of 50 Mbps). Visit: <https://www.cox.com/residential/internet/learn/cox-hotspots.html>.

Comcast: Comcast offers free Wi-Fi for 2 months to low income families plus all Xfinity hot-spots are free to the

public during this time. Visit <https://corporate.comcast.com/covid-19>.

Charter Free Internet offer for 2 months -

Visit <https://corporate.charter.com/newsroom/charter-to-offer-free-access-to-spectrum-broadband-and-wifi-for-60-days-for-new-K12-and-college-student-households-and-more>

AT&T: AT&T offers open hot-spots, unlimited data to existing customers, and \$10/month plans to low-income families. Visit <https://about.att.com/pages/COVID-19.html>

Verizon: There are no special offers, but Verizon is following the FCC agreement. Visit <https://www.verizon.com/about/news/update-verizon-serve-customers-covid-19>

Sprint: Sprint is following the FCC agreement and will provide unlimited data to existing customers. Starting Tuesday, March 17, 2020, Sprint will allow all handsets to enable hot-spots for 60 days at no extra charge. Visit <https://newsroom.sprint.com/covid-19-updates-sprint-responds.htm>

T-Mobile: T-Mobile is following the FCC agreement and providing unlimited data to existing customers. It will soon allow all handsets to enable hot-spots for 60 days at no extra charge. Visit <https://www.t-mobile.com/news/t-mobile-update-on-covid-19-response>.

CenturyLink: We will waive late fees & will not terminate a residential or small business customer's service for the 60 days due to financial circumstances associated with COVID-19 Visit: <http://news.centurylink.com/fccpledge>

Directv: Not terminate the service of any wireless, home phone or broadband residential or small business customer because of their inability to pay their bill due to disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Visit <https://about.att.com/pages/COVID-19.html>

References:

1. Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event. (2019, September 13). Retrieved from <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp>
2. Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19. (2020, March 14). Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/coping.html
3. Horne, L., Horne, L., Laura, Horne, L., & Laura. (2020, March 12). Coping and Staying Emotionally Well During COVID-19-related School Closures. Retrieved from <https://www.activeminds.org/blog/coping-and-staying-emotionally-well-during-covid-19-related-school-closures/>
4. Western Connecticut Health Network. (2020, March 14). Tips to Cope with the COVID-19 Pandemic. Retrieved from <https://www.westernconnecticuthealthnetwork.org/newsroom/article-listing/covid19-coping-tips>