Emotional Wellness and Coronavirus

In times of uncertainty, it is important to keep a close eye on your emotional and mental wellness. Some days, you may feel overwhelmed with the news or the restrictions to daily life. To help you through these times, below are top tips you can use to care for yourself and your emotions.

Limit media exposure

It seems like every minute there is a new article or update about Coronavirus.

Staying up-to-date with factual information is important. However the frequent media coverage of the pandemic may leave you feeling anxious and overwhelmed. Try to limit media exposure by focusing on other hobbies or activities.

Practice mindfulness

In times of stress your mind can race with thoughts about the past and the future. Mindfulness is being aware of your thoughts, and focusing on the here and now. Practicing mindfulness during hard times can reduce stress and make you more accepting of yourself.

Institute researcher *Dr Gail Kenning* suggests following some simple mindfulness exercises at soundcloud.com/artofmindfulness

Get creative

Professor Jill Bennett, lead investigator at the UNSW Ageing Futures Institute, says engaging our creative side can help us understand and express our feelings in challenging times.

Get creative at home by:
- Reading books or listening to audio-books
- Visit galleries online and join those remaking famous masterpieces at home

Stick to a routine

Having structure and routine to your day is important for your mental health.

Some tips to help you include:
- Waking up at the same time every day
- Eat breakfast, wash up and get dressed as you would normally
- Take time to do your normal work, exercise, cooking and chores

Meditate

Meditation has been shown to:
- Reduce stress levels
- Improve focus and sleep
- Boost mental wellbeing

To learn how to meditate, Headspace provide some simple meditation guides at: headspace.com/covid-19

Talk to a Psychologist

A psychologist is a qualified professional who can help you manage your stress and anxiety.

You can access a psychologist by:
- Asking your GP/doctor to refer you
- Using the Find a Psychologist service by going to: findapsychologist.org.au or calling 1800 333 497

More services

The following are trustworthy organisations and sources of support during the Coronavirus pandemic:

- **Black Dog Institute** have an Online Clinic that provides a free mental health assessment. To access go to: onlineclinic.blackdoginstitute.org.au
- **BeyondBlue** provide information and support, including online community forums to support emotional wellbeing. Go to coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au or call 1800 512 348.
- **Lifeline** provides support if you are experiencing suicidal thoughts or going through personal crisis. Go to lifeline.org.au/about-lifeline/contact-us or call 13 11 14.

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