

Taking Care of Your Mental Health

It is normal to experience a wide range of emotions during and after a disaster. Here are a few tips to follow for good mental health. Talk to a mental health professional if you feel unable to cope, have suicidal thoughts, or use drugs or alcohol to cope. Contact SAMHSA helpline at 1-800-985-5990.

Stay Connected

Physical distancing does not mean self-isolation. Social connection is important for our mental health. Stay in touch with family and friends over the phone or virtually. Your call might make someone else's day as well as your own.

Share your feelings with loved ones and trusted people from your community and invite them to share with you.

Limit your visits with your family and friends. If you do visit, practice physical distancing and keep 6 ft. apart, and maintain good personal hygiene. Don't visit if you're unwell.

Take a Break

Take a break from the newsfeed and social media, these can help you stay connected, but too much time can make us feel stressed.

Observe your energy levels throughout the day; if you notice that you feel tired or are getting distracted, it is a signal that it's time to get up and step away from the task at hand.

Breaking up your workday and engaging in a mood boosting activity like going out for a walk can improve your health and quality of work.

Engage your Mind

Mindfulness practices for just a few minutes at different times during the day can help your days be more fulfilled.

Setting your intention: Take three long, deep breaths and ask yourself: What is my intention for today? How might I feel more connected and fulfilled? For example, "Today, I will be kind to myself; be patient with others; have fun; eat well."

Mindful activity. Choose one daily task to do mindfully, like taking a sip of your tea or coffee, putting your phone aside, and paying attention to the aroma, flavor, temperature, or going for a walk mindfully by listening to all the different sounds or enjoying your surroundings.

Check-in

Check-in and monitor your mental health and wellbeing. It is also good to be aware of your family, friends, and neighbors who may be worried or stressed.

Signs to look for include difficulty concentrating, poor sleep, and feeling distressed or overwhelmed.

Do not be afraid to reach out and talk to someone if you are experiencing stress or anxiety or if you know of someone who may be feeling this way. Talk to friends and family about your feelings.

It's good to remind ourselves and others that we are not alone.

Set a Routine

Maintaining a regular schedule is crucial for your mental health.

Set a routine for you and your loved ones to help build consistency. Setting a regular bedtime routine, keep consistent times for meals, bathing and getting dressed, work or study schedules, and exercise will help structure your day and manage your time.

Don't forget to set aside time for activities you enjoy. This predictability can make you feel more organized and in control.

Help Others

Helping others is also a great way to help yourself. Even with physical distancing, there are still many ways to help others in your community:

Make a donation of money, supplies, or time to a cause you care about.

If you're going to the grocery store, pick up some items for a high-risk neighbor or family member who might not be able to leave their home.

Find local community-based organizations where you can volunteer and help during and after a crisis.