Tips for Managing Concerns and Emotions about Coronavirus

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)

News reports about the Novel Coronavirus, together with concerns that the virus could become more widespread, are raising a number of concerns and may contribute to increased emotional distress. Here are some tips to help you put information and concerns in perspective, manage your anxiety, and maintain a positive outlook.

**Tips for managing emotional distress:**

- **Seek accurate information** (e.g. [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html) or [https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019)) and limit exposure to social media and news reports that provide no new information or inaccurate information.

- **Keep things in perspective and balance.** Take a deep breath. There is a great deal of news coverage on this issue and while important, take a moment and realize other things going on in your day, life, and the world. Pay attention to positive news instead of only focusing on negative and fear-producing reports.

- **Acknowledge reactions.** Allow yourself time to reflect on what you are feeling and how you may be reacting to any fears and uncertainties.

- **Maintain your normal day-to-day activities and keep connected.** Resist withdrawing and isolating yourself from the support and caring that others can provide. Maintaining social networks can foster a sense of normality and provide valuable outlets for sharing feelings and relieving stress.

- **Follow the prevention and protection tips given by medical professionals** such as SHU’s Health Services, national medical authorities and your own medical doctor ([https://www.shu.edu/health-intervention-communication/index.cfm](https://www.shu.edu/health-intervention-communication/index.cfm)).

- **Seek support & use campus resources.** Reach out to friends and family and learn about campus resources that are available. If you or someone you know is showing signs of high distress that do not seem to be lessening, talk about it with others or contact the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). Your campus community is here to help.

**Mutual Trust, Respect, Civility & Dignity:**

Fear and anxiety can lead to mistrust, discrimination, stereotyping, and micro-aggressions which we are committed to combating.

- **Be aware and mindful of your attitude, thoughts, behaviors, beliefs and/or biases towards others from another country and avoid stigmatizing.**

- **Avoid making generalizations about anyone who is sick as potentially having the Coronavirus.**

- **Examine irrational or rigid thoughts that can exist when there is uncertainty.**

- **Listen and treat others with empathy, kindness and compassion.**
Recognizing Distress - A Self-Check List

- Increased anxiety, worry, fear, and feelings of being overwhelmed
- Persistent sadness, tearfulness, and/or loss of interest in pleasurable activities.
- Inability to focus or concentrate accompanied by decreased academic or work performance or performance of other daily activities
- Increased anger, irritability, agitation and/or disruptive behaviors.
- Significant changes in sleep, appetite and/or self-care.
- Isolating or withdrawing from others, excessive fear of going into public situations
- Unhealthy coping (e.g., increased alcohol or drug use, engaging in risky/impulsive behaviors).
- A feeling of hopelessness and/or a paralyzing fear about the future.
- Thoughts about dying and/or suicide*.

*If you are experiencing a psychological emergency please contact CAPS at 973-761-9500 or go to your local emergency room.


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