

Looking after your Mental Health During COVID-19

The coronavirus continues to dominate conversations both in workplaces and our wider world. With such an overwhelming amount of information being presented, dissected and discussed, it's natural for us to feel a sense of unease or anxiety. At this time, it's just as important to consider our mental health and wellbeing as it is our physical health.

With that in mind, please see below advice given by the **World Health Organisation** on mental health and coping during COVID-19.

For all:

- Avoid watching, reading or listening to news that causes you to feel anxious or distressed; seek information mainly to take practical steps.
- Seek information updates at specific times during the day, once or twice. The sudden and near-constant stream of news reports can cause anyone to feel worried. Get the facts.
- Protect yourself and be supportive to others. Assisting others in their time of need can benefit the person receiving support as well as the helper.



For those taking care of older adults:

- Older adults, especially in isolation and those with cognitive decline may become more anxious, angry, stressed, agitated, and withdrawn. Provide practical and emotional support through informal networks (families) and health professionals.
- Share simple facts about what is going on and give clear, understandable information about how to reduce risks. Repeat the information whenever necessary. Instructions need to be communicated in a clear, concise, respectful and patient way. Engage their family and other support networks in providing information and helping them practice prevention measures (e.g. handwashing etc.)

For those in isolation:

- Stay connected and maintain your social networks. Even in situations of isolations, try as much as possible to keep your personal daily routines. If health authorities have recommended limiting your physical social contact, you can stay connected via e-mail, social media, video conference and telephone.
- During times of stress, pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in healthy activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly, keep regular sleep routines and eat healthy food.
- Keep things in perspective. Public health agencies and experts in all countries are working to ensure the availability of the best care to those affected.
- A near-constant stream of news reports can cause anyone to feel anxious or distressed. Seek information updates and practical guidance at specific times during the day from health professionals and avoid listening to or following rumours that make you feel uncomfortable.



For the full article, visit:

www.cnbc.com/2020/03/10/who-gives-advice-on-handling-mental-health-toll-caused-by-coronavirus.html

www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2

As the coming days and weeks unfold, it will be natural to feel a sense of unease. By taking sensible measures and by following the advice given by health authorities, we can limit the potential impact it can have on our wellbeing.

Below are some useful links for looking after our **emotional and mental wellbeing** during this time:

Centre for Disease Control and Prevention:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/coping.html

Health Service Executive Ireland

www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/minding-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak.html

Mental Health Organisation:

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak

Change Your Mind NI

www.changeyourmindni.org/latest-activities-news/2020/march/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing

For more **general coronavirus health-related information**, visit:

Public Health Agency

www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus

Health Service Executive Ireland

www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/coronavirus.html

For tips and advice on **working from home**:

www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-51868894



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Remember, if you are in distress or despair you can call Lifeline in NI on 0808 808 8000 or Pieta House in ROI on 1800 247 247.

