



VELEY FOUNDATION

PO BOX 3434

EST. 2019

ALLENTOWN PA, 18106

(267) 362- 4310

COPING WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Common Reactions: **What you're feeling is normal**

It's important to know that feelings of fear, loss of control, panic, anxiety, and excessive worry are normal reactions to a pandemic. Many people experience fear of the unknown as they navigate through this strange and unusual time. Some have difficulty concentrating, or are hyper-vigilant, some experience trouble sleeping, or are more irritable than usual. Physical symptoms might emerge such as

headaches, gastrointestinal issues, increased heart rate, muscle tension and changes in appetite. Remind yourself that while your feelings are normal and valid, excessive worry is not helpful. At times when we feel helpless, it seems the only thing we can do is worry. Sometimes people feel guilty for not worrying at all. It is important not to judge your reactions to those of others. Everyone processes and reacts to stress differently. Give yourself

time to gather information and to consider the needs of your family and also give yourself breaks from news and other media related to the pandemic. Overexposure can lead to increase in stress. It is vital to know that your fears about yourself and loved ones are understandable. However, taking care of ourselves is the most important thing we can do during this time of increased stress and anxiety.

SELF-CARE IMPROVES HEALTH OUTCOMES

- Stay in a routine, this can increase feelings of control and predictability
- Talk with friends, family members, a faith mentor, a therapist, or someone else you trust
- Get creative with interacting with friends over video chat, play card games, hangman, or do an art activity together
- Eat a healthy diet and consume plenty of water, and get 7-9 hours of sleep per night
- Exercise every day even if it is just a walk, look up exercise videos online and follow them
- Be positive, encourage others and take time to have fun!
- Do simple, achievable tasks that can give you a sense of accomplishment
- Alcohol and drugs can wear down your immune system, avoid as much as possible
- Caffeine and nicotine are stimulants that can increase stress, avoid as much as possible
- Relax, try breathing exercises, stretching, yoga, meditation, prayer, etc
- Remind yourself of your ability to navigate unknown and difficult situations in the past

