

# Managing Concerns and Emotions During COVID-19

## Coping with Uncertainty, Change, and Fear

News reports about the coronavirus, together with concerns that the virus could become more widespread, is raising a number of concerns and making some people worry. **Learn more about taking care of your mental health in the face of uncertainty here:** <https://afsp.org/taking-care-of-your-mental-health-in-the-face-of-uncertainty/>

Here are some additional tips to help you put information and concerns in perspective, manage your worry, and maintain a positive outlook.

- **Crisis Resources**
- **Seek accurate information** and limit exposure to social media and news reports that provide no new information or inaccurate information. Here are some reliable sources of information:
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
  - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
- **Keep things in perspective.** Take a deep breath and stay focused on what the situation actually is, rather than the worst-case-scenario. It can be helpful to shift your focus to things within your control rather than things outside your control.
- **Acknowledge reactions.** Allow yourself time to reflect on what you are feeling and how you may be reacting to any fears and uncertainties.
- **Create a new “normal” day-to-day routine and keep connected.** As your day-to-day activities are disrupted by college closings, create structure in your day by scheduling a normal bedtime and wake up time; structuring your time with hobbies, exercise, homework, reading, etc.; scheduling regular phone/video contact with friends and family.
- **Follow the prevention and protection tips given by medical professionals** such as the Northern Michigan University Health Center, national medical authorities, and your own medical doctor.
- **Practice calming rituals.** Stay grounded in the present moment, which can help you maintain an internal sense of stability and balance when outside events feel threatening.
- **Avoid stigmatizing or generalizing.** Remember to keep in mind the kindness and empathy with which we strive to treat one another at all times as we address this challenge together. Be aware if your behavior or attitudes change toward others from another country or ethnic origin, and avoid stigmatizing anyone who is sick as potentially having the coronavirus. We can choose to become more compassionate and less fear-based.

## Recognizing Distress - A Self-Check List

- ✓ Increased worry, fear, and feelings of being overwhelmed
- ✓ Depressive symptoms that persist and/or intensify
- ✓ Inability to focus or concentrate accompanied by decreased academic or work performance or performance of other daily activities
- ✓ Sleep difficulties

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- ✓ Excessive crying
- ✓ Not maintaining any communication with your support system
- ✓ 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

### Seeking Support

It is not unusual to experience some – or even several – of the types of distress listed above during times of uncertainty and stress. If you notice these signs in yourself, reach out to family and friends for support, and engage in your usual healthy coping strategies (e.g., moderate exercise, eating well, getting adequate sleep, practicing yoga, meditation, or some other mindfulness activity, take time for yourself, engage in a hobby or other fun activity, etc.).

### Northern Michigan University Campus Resources

Counseling and Consultation Services  
3405 Hedgcock // 906-227-2980

Dean of Students Office  
2001 Hedgcock // 906-227-1700

Northern Michigan University Health Center  
Gries Hall ground floor // 906-227-2355

### Online or call-in resources

- **Therapist-Assisted Online (TAO):** Using their NMU email address to log in, students have access to free mental health training online at <https://thepath.taoconnect.org>. The use of TAO videos, activity logs, and mindfulness tools have been shown to be effective in managing a wide array of mental health symptoms. Log in today to engage with pathways that will help to reduce anxiety and depression while supporting overall mental wellbeing.
- **CCS Webpage** - Includes resources, crisis hotline contact information, and helpful websites to explore: <https://www.nmu.edu/counselingandconsultation/>
- **SAMHSA's National Helpline** - also known as the Treatment Referral Routing Service. They are a confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year, substance use and information service, in English and Spanish. More information about their services can be found at <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline> They can also be reached via phone at 1-800-662-HELP (4357), or TTY: 1-800-487-4889.
- **NAMI HelpLine** - National Alliance on Mental Illness. NAMI provides advocacy, education, support and public awareness so that all individuals and families affected by mental illness can build better lives. More information can be found at <https://www.nami.org/> They can also be reached Monday through Friday, 10am–6 pm, ET. 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) or [info@nami.org](mailto:info@nami.org)

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- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** - The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals. Contact them by calling (800) 273-TALK (8255). More information can also be found on their website at [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)
- **Dial HELP Crisis Hotline** – available 24/7 for free, confidential, nonjudgmental crisis intervention and referral services for all residents who reside in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan: CALL: (906) 482-4357, TEXT: (906) 356-3337, CHAT: [dialhelp.org](http://dialhelp.org)
- **The Trevor Project** – the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer & questioning (LGBTQ) young people under 25. Available 24/7. CALL: 1-866-488-7386, TEXT: START to 678678, CHAT: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

### **Options for connecting with a Community Mental Health Provider**

We recognize that some students would prefer to meet with a community provider during this time. If this is the case, we encourage you to seek the services that fit your needs. If you need to find services in your hometown there are several options.

- Requesting support from your insurance company to find an in-network provider list and understand what services may be covered is a way to get started.
- APA's Psychologist locator tool can be accessed at <https://locator.apa.org/>
- Psychology Today's *Find a Therapist* tool can be accessed at <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists>

Adapted from: University of Indianapolis – “Psychological Tips for Managing Coronavirus Concerns” (<https://www.uindy.edu/studentcounseling/scc-news-updates>) & American Psychological Association- “Five Ways to View Coverage of the Coronavirus” (<https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/bird-flu>)