Living With Mental Illness During COVID-19 Outbreak–Preparing For Your Wellness

*If you or someone you know is in crisis, please **call 911**, go to the nearest emergency room, call **1-800-273-TALK (tel:1-800-273-TALK)** (8255) to reach a 24-hour crisis center, or **text MHA to 741741** at the Crisis Text Line.*

The national Disaster Distress Helpline (call 1-800-985-5990 (tel:1-800-985-5990) or text TalkWithUs to 66746) offers 24/7 emotional support & if you have any medical concerns speak to a trusted healthcare provider.

Just as individuals with pre-existing physical illness are more likely to get physically ill from the coronavirus, people whose mental health is compromised are at greater risk of experiencing worsening mental illness as a result of the coronavirus – no matter what their mental illness may be.

Clinical anxiety is a concern at times like this. It is understandable and expected that people will experience worry and stress during this time. However, for individuals living with mental health conditions, it is important to know when these natural emotions are becoming anxiety.

Anxiety is a treatable clinical condition that should not be left untreated. Testing for anxiety is simple and takes just a few minutes. It can be done at home using our free, anonymous, and confidential online tools at www.mhascreening.org (https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/rzObCNk26kFZnrRTmxkbn?domain=mhascreening.org).

It is important to know that severe anxiety can bring on a panic attack. Panic attacks (https://adaa.org/understanding-anxiety/panic-disorder-agoraphobia/symptoms) can mimic heart attacks. Individuals who have never experienced panic attacks may be inclined to go to the ER due to their symptoms, but at this time ERs are inundated. It may be helpful to try to determine what brought on these symptoms and attempt grounding exercises to alleviate the panic. If you feel your life is in danger, please get help immediately.

Mental health conditions are by nature isolating, and we want to keep people connected. Create your wellness plan to help you during this time.

- **Make sure you have enough medication on hand.**

  - **Typically prescriptions can be filled a week or so before they run out. Refill them on the first possible day, because that can buy an extra few days of lowered stress about a prescription running out and not being able to get to the drug store to fill it.**

  - **Contact your pharmacy to see if they provide delivery services or if they can provide you a longer supply (30 days versus 90 days)**

- **Keep the routines that make you feel good, and try to modify the ones that you can. For example, if you typically go to the gym or fitness class, you can exercise at home.**

  - **Check to see if local gyms are offering online classes or trial periods for their online sessions. For example, Ekhart Yoga. (https://relief.ekhartyoga.com/)is offering free yoga and mediation classes.**

- **Create a routine.**

- **Reach out to friends and schedule virtual hangouts.**

- **Find an accountability and support buddy.**

- **If you have a therapist, see if they offer telephone or video-based sessions.**

- Utilize resources like Crisis Text Line (https://www.crisistextline.org/) (Text MHA to 741741) or online support groups (Like our Inspire community (https://www.inspire.com/groups/mental-health-america/)).

- Contact a warmline. Warmlines (http://warmline.org/) are run by peers and may be a great support tool.

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Fundraise (/get-involved)
Act (/issues/action-alerts)
Work With Us (/partner-us)
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Resources

Topics A-Z (/conditions/view-all)
Living Mentally Healthy (/taking-good-care-yourself)
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Newsroom (/newsroom)
Career Center (/career-center)

CONTACT FORM (/NODE/2556)

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