

Ways to Manage Coronavirus Stress

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1. Limit your exposure to depressing or stressful content. This means in the media, books, movies, newspapers, and TV shows. No more than one hour per day - and yes, that includes information about the coronavirus. Limit screen time, and increase reading; visuals are much more powerful emotionally. Increase content exposure to pleasant things.
2. Focus on what you can control, and try to let go of what you can't.
3. Start a gratitude journal. Write down 3 things each day you are grateful for, and write down different ones every day. Do this for at least 3 weeks. 21 days of gratitude journaling has been found to be an effective antidepressant.
4. Limit junk food intake. When you are stressed, sugar, salt, and fat taste much better; unfortunately, they also make your body feel worse.
5. Focus on what you can do now, and don't worry about what you have to do tomorrow. It will come anyway, and you can focus on it then.
6. Be kind to yourself. Remind yourself that you are doing as much as you can.
7. Get 3-4 hours of aerobic exercise every week, split into at least 3 different days. Exercise is a natural antidepressant.
8. Practice mindfulness meditation every day. Daily meditation lasting 20-45 minutes for 8 weeks has been shown to change your brain, leading it to become calmer in the face of stress.
9. Get 6.5-7.5 hours of sleep each night. Less sleep than that makes you irritable, tired, less productive, and less effective.
10. Plan at least one pleasant thing to do every day. If you don't plan it, it won't happen.
11. Self-soothe with your senses. Look at pretty pictures or pictures of people you love. Listen to calming or uplifting music. Fill your home with smells like from candles, scents, and foods. Take long baths or get massages. Savor your favorite foods.
12. Engage in a hobby that has nothing to do with work or relationships. That way, when other things in your life are stressful, you can still enjoy your hobby.
13. Practice yoga. It has both physical and mental health benefits.
14. Have at least one person in whom you can confide: a family member, friend, minister, priest, rabbi, or therapist.
15. Ask yourself what gives you joy and what gives you meaning? Increase the amount of time you spend doing both.
16. Develop a self-care action plan. Split it into five sections: mental, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual. Do at least one thing from the plan each day, and one thing from each category each week.