

Personal Resilience and COVID-19

Quick Tips

COVID-19 has turned our world upside down. Countries have gone into lockdown, with governments and doctors seemingly powerless to curb the spread. You open the newspaper, turn on the TV, scroll through your social media...all you see is the virus is devastating populations and killing thousands.

We're all being asked to "social distance" to help slow infections. This means staying home and avoiding contact with others as much as possible. We are uncertain about what might happen next: Will I have a job when this is over? Will our schools even open this year? Will there be a food shortage? How will I pay the rent? Will this illness strike my family? So many questions, with no answers.

It is normal to experience many different emotions during this time: fear, anxiety, anger, stress, overwhelm, irritation, confusion, helplessness, boredom, exhaustion...

Whatever you are feeling, know that all emotions are normal right now, and it is ok to feel however you feel.

Let yourself be aware of your emotions and find a way to release them that works for you. Talk with others. Sing, dance, meditate, pray. Make or listen to music. Make or look at art. Sleep. Look out the window at something to find the beauty in it. Tell stories. Think of happy memories. Distract yourself from thinking about the virus however you can. As long as whatever you choose to do doesn't hurt yourself or others, it's a good strategy. Use it as often as you need.



You have strengths you can use to handle these situations & emotions.

No one can ever take these away from you, no matter what else happens. You have kindness, love, humor, creativity, persistence, gratitude, and so many other strengths. You can draw on these to help yourself and others. Let's use our:

- ➔ **kindness** to call our friends, family, or colleagues. Let's ask them how they are feeling and listen to them with an open heart.
- ➔ **love** to take care of not just each other but also *ourselves*. Let's treat ourselves with the same love that we would a friend or family member.
- ➔ **creativity** to find ways to connect with those whom we can't see in person. Call or message them, write letters to mail or to give to them later, come up with a special knock on your neighbor's wall to say hi when you're thinking of them...
- ➔ **gratitude** to take a break at the end of the day and think about all of the things we're grateful for.
- ➔ **humor** to play a game with friends or family.
- ➔ **persistence** to take each day just one at a time, staying at home to keep ourselves and others safe, and do it over and over again tomorrow and the next day and the next day...for as long as it takes.

It's not a weakness to ask for support. If you are feeling so anxious, sad, or upset that you can't function, if you think you might do something that could hurt yourself or someone else, or if you know anyone else who is feeling this way, contact your local help line. In Kenya, you can call 1199.*