

Feature Article

Stay Calm & Reduce Fear During the COVID-19 Pandemic

With coronavirus (COVID-19) now a global pandemic, anxiety and stress levels may be higher than normal for many people. If you already struggle with mental health problems, you may worry about the impact of COVID-19 on your condition. Here's what you need to know about COVID-19 and mental health, and how to keep yourself calm during the outbreak.

Why COVID-19 is tough on your mental health

There's so much uncertainty around what's going to happen with COVID-19 that people are understandably feeling anxious. Jobs may be at risk, elderly family members are vulnerable, and many of us are now forced to change our daily routines. What's more, we're constantly flooded with news, statistics, and fresh emergency guidelines, and it's mentally draining for everyone. So, how do we combat all this stress and stay calm?

1: Practice self-care

With so much beyond our control right now, focus on what you can control. Get more sleep, read a new book, have a warm bath, or take a walk somewhere quiet – whatever you do, now is the time to prioritize your well-being.

2: Limit social media use

Set limits on how often you use social media, especially if you're at home where it's tempting to check in more often. Don't let a constant stream of tweets, status updates, and conflicting opinions overwhelm you.

3: Read only reliable news sources

Stay informed by reading only reliable sources, such as government websites, the WHO, and the CDC. Other news sources may be less accurate, and they may cause feelings of panic and concern.

4: Talk it out

Acknowledge any stress or anxiety you're feeling right now, and ask others how they're coping. Talk to family and friends, and make sure you check in with how your kids are feeling.

5: Reach out to coworkers

Now is the time for coworkers to come together. Focus on maintaining positive morale at work, and if you're working remotely, set regular meetings.

Handling self-isolation and quarantine

If you're showing flu-like symptoms, working remotely, or simply self-isolating, here are some specific tips to get your through the next few weeks and months.

1: Maintain your routine

It's important to maintain a sense of normalcy, where possible. If you're working remotely, check in with coworkers, and try to stick to a typical daily routine. You never know – you might even be more productive than usual!

2: Stay in touch where possible

Whether you use video chats, emails, or voice calls, check in with family, friends, and colleagues regularly. Send each other memes, have virtual movie nights, and keep your spirits up.

3: Ask for help

If you're feeling lonely, or you need help getting supplies during the isolation period, reach out to coworkers and your local community. You'd be surprised how many people are willing to help at a challenging time like this.

4: Look after your body

Don't neglect your body just because you're stuck at home. Try out meditation, yoga, or other at-home workouts, and eat nutritious meals – your body needs all the support it can get right now.

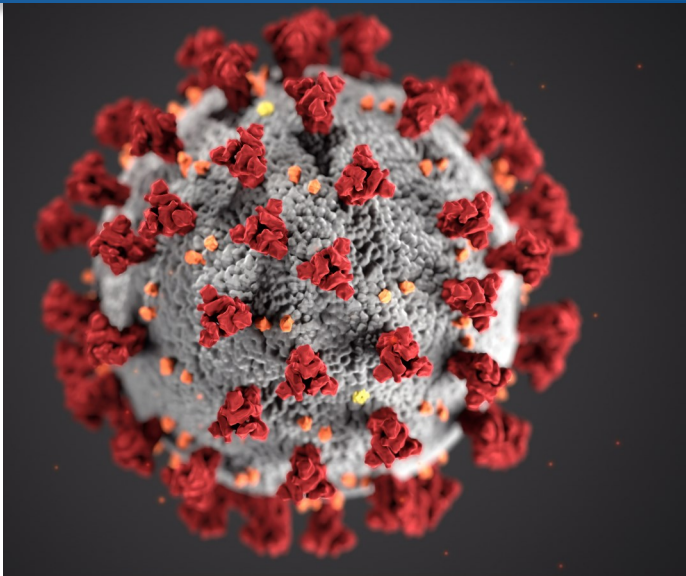
Conclusion and Using the EAP

Everyone reacts to stressful situations and changing circumstances differently, and it's natural to feel overwhelmed right now. Your employee assistance programs is a go-to source for help and support. Keep them in "top-of-mind" for when the going gets tough with any life concern.

Take care of yourself, your family, your friends, and your coworkers, and don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it. Remember, we're all in this together – stay connected to those around you, focus on what you can control, and don't allow yourself to burn out.

Key Resource: [Coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov)





This Month's Webinar: Two Special COVID 19 Webinars!

There are two free webinars available on the Impact website this month: COVID 19: Facts You Need to Know, presented by Dr. Ellen Contente and Calm Is Contagious: Mindfulness Strategies for Responding to COVID-19, presented by our Mindfulness Coach, Daron Larson. To access these webinars, simply log on to your Impact website at www.MyImpactSolution.com.

Watch this webinar any time throughout the month of April when you log in to IMPACT on the Web at www.MyImpactSolution.com.

Monthly Highlights



News Alert Section

Be sure to access the News Alert Section on your IMPACT website for all of the latest up to date information regarding

COVID 19. Resources include handouts, instructions for accessing unemployment, and helpful videos like how to work from home with children around.



Tess: A Mental Health Chatbot

Tess offers support if you are feeling worried about the Coronavirus and need help to reduce anxiety. Tess also helps you access CDC and WHO resources related to COVID-19. Learn more **or start chatting now at:** <https://www.x2ai.com/impactsolutions>

Visit www.MyImpactSolution.com
Forgot your login information?
Give us a call at 800-227-6007.

Eldercare Spotlight

Responding to COVID-19 as a Caregiver

News about COVID-19 fills every airwave, but there has been little discussion about what to do if you are the caregiver for an older adult or someone in a high-risk category. How can you best manage their physical and emotional needs during this time?

- Create a household plan based on the needs and routines of your loved one. Discuss the plan with family members, address emergency planning and create an emergency contact list. Ask your loved one's physicians to fill prescriptions to cover more days.
- Practice prevention now. Wash hands and clean surfaces frequently. Self-isolate, and only go out when needed. Identify a separate room in your home to be used should someone become sick.
- Develop a contingency plan should your loved one's day programming be canceled, the home health aide become sick, or if you, the primary caregiver, become ill.
- Manage your loved one's emotional health: Outbreaks can be stressful for older adults. Talk with them about your efforts to keep them safe.
- Find ways to remind loved ones about hygiene: Post written reminders around your home to help them remember.
- Be informed – but avoid overconsuming information on the pandemic.
- Contact IMPACT Solutions if you feel overwhelmed with emotions and need help and support.

For additional information: <https://www.benrose.org/covid-19>

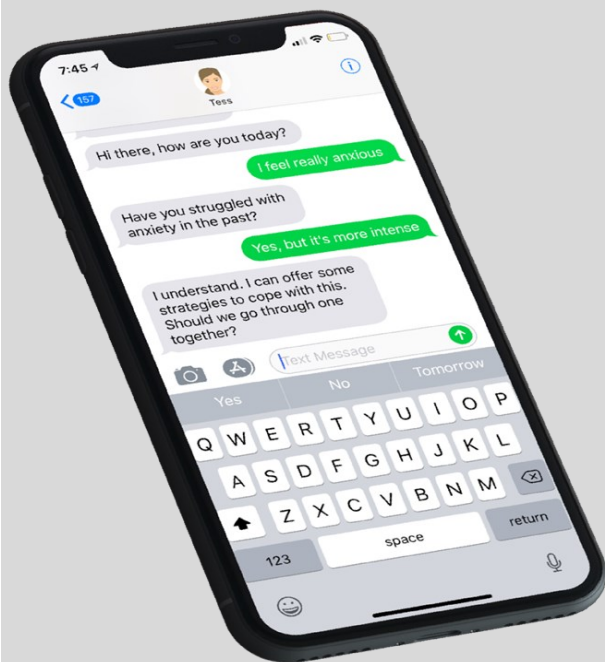
Contributed By: Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging

Information in IMPACT on Wellness is for general information purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health professional.

You can contact IMPACT Solutions for professional counseling and guidance 24 hours a day at 800-227-6007.

IMPACT EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Tess - IMPACT's Mental Health Chatbot



Tess—Mental Health Support Using Artificial Intelligence

1. SAY Hi

Start chatting with Tess by texting “Hi” to +1 (415) 360-0023
Start Code: *your IMPACT Username*

2. Tess ASKS

Like a coach, Tess works to understand your needs by asking “How are you?”

3. Tess HELPS

Tess delivers coping strategies based on the emotions you express

Did You Know... IMPACT offers Tess, a NEW 24/7 mental health chatbot that coaches people through tough times to build resilience, by having text message conversations – similar to texting with a friend or coach.

Tess simulates how a human would behave as a conversational partner while providing clinically proven coping skills and strategies based on expressed emotion, similar to a self-help book. Research findings show that Tess is proven to reduce depression by 28% and anxiety by 18%. If at any time during a chat session with Tess you wish to speak to, or schedule an appointment with a counselor, Tess will provide the IMPACT phone number and/or emergency response services depending on your need.

- **Tess is completely confidential.** You can stop a conversation whenever you are ready by simply texting “stop” and/or ask Tess to delete your conversation at any time - It’s that easy!
- **Tess is a great resource for teens, college students and adults** who prefer technology as a communication tool or method for learning.
- **Tess is a great way to supplement counseling** and gain access to strategies and techniques that can help you manage stress in the moment.

Watch an informative video testimonial to learn more about Tess by logging on to your IMPACT website at www.MyImpactSolution.com and click on the Tess Tile.

Questions? Forgot your username? Give us a call at 800-227-6007.

IMPACT Employee Assistance Program

Mental Health & Coping with COVID-19



Fear and anxiety about the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children.

The onslaught of news, information and misinformation can be very stressful for those with excellent coping and resiliency skills and can also be debilitating for those with pre-existing mental health concerns.

How Your IMPACT Program Can Help

24/7 In the Moment Phone Support

Immediate access to a licensed mental health professional offers you peace of mind that there is always someone to talk to when you are experiencing heightened anxiety, depression, difficulty attending to daily activities, trouble sleeping, and other emotional concerns.

Online Counseling Sessions

Online counseling (defined as live scheduled video, phone, text and chat sessions) is a convenient way to utilize your counseling sessions without leaving the safety and security of your home. Average time from initial request for service to getting help from an online counselor is typically within 24 hours.

IMPACT on the Web

Your IMPACT website is an excellent way to access vetted, up-to-date information on COVID-19 AND a variety of other tools to help with anxiety, depression, resiliency and other issues you may be dealing with.

Telephonic Coaching with an Eldercare Specialist

According to the CDC, older adults and those individuals with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk for COVID-19. This can create heightened anxiety and worry for caregivers and their elderly loved ones. You can connect with an Eldercare Specialist for support and guidance on how to best prepare and protect your loved one during this challenging time.

Financial Counseling

Has COVID-19 caused you financial stress? You can now schedule a video conference with a financial consultant to help guide you through this challenging time.

Visit us on the web at www.MyImpactSolution.com for more great resources.
Forgot your username? Give us a call at 800-227-6007.