Top 10 Tips for Managing Stress and Anxiety Related to COVID-19
From: Camosun's Counselling Department

For employees and students, it can be difficult to remain calm in a time with so much uncertainty and unpredictability. It is natural to feel scared, stressed, confused, and angry. If you are having a difficult time, remember that you are not alone. Here are some tips for how that you can help yourself cope with stress related to COVID-19.

1.   Take care of your body
One of the best antidotes to stress is taking care of your body. This includes eating well, taking time to exercise, getting outside, sleeping, and engaging in leisurely activities.

2.   Practice Mindfulness
Notice anxious thoughts, feelings, or sensations that arise and then bring your attention back to the present moment. Focus your awareness to your breath and what you notice around you. Notice what you hear, what you see, what you smell, and what you can sense with your body (like your feet on the ground). Bring your awareness back to the present moment—what you are doing and what is around you. Notice (without judgement) if the anxious thoughts surface again, and remember that you don't have to latch on to them!

3.   Stay connected
Be creative in the ways that you can stay connected with family and friends while still maintaining social distancing. Share your concerns about how you are feeling and experiencing with the people you care about.

4.   Keep a routine
Create intentions about how you will maintain a routine that involves self-care, getting the work done that you need, supporting the people around you. Consider the positive coping strategies that are helpful when you are stressed and implement them into your schedule.

5.   Avoid too much exposure to news
While it is important to stay informed, it is crucial to set boundaries about how often you are exposed to news about the pandemic. Remember to take breaks from listening, reading and watching news stories about COVID-19.

6.   Take breaks
Breathe. Take the time out to engage in activities that you enjoy. Go outside and engage in creative pursuits.

7.   Be kind to yourself
Self-compassion is crucial in times like these. Comfort yourself like you would a friend. Do something kind for yourself, like eating something healthy or engage in an activity you enjoy. Remember that you're not alone and doing the best you can in unprecedented circumstances.

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8.   Focus on areas you can influence

Anxiety and stress are heightened when things feel out of our control. Refocus your attention on the areas you can influence. Reach out to support a friend or colleague. Practice social distancing and good hand hygiene. Avoid touching your face. Stay home if you have any symptoms. Maintain self-care.

9.   Keep things in perspective

Reminding yourself about what matters most will help to cope with stress and anxiety. You might do this by connecting with a spiritual group or community, spending time outside, or whatever helps you to realign with the bigger picture.

10.   Reach out for support when needed

If you notice that stress or anxiety is starting to impact your daily life (sleeping, eating, feeling irritable or so overwhelmed that you can't cope with day-to-day tasks). If this continues for several days or weeks, reach out for support. This might be a friend, a family member, or counsellor.

Adapted from:
- **Anxiety Canada**
- **Centers for Disease and Prevention**
- **University of Victoria** – **Coping with Anxiety**

More resources for Camosun students:
- **Camosun Counselling Centre**
- **Student Mental Health & Wellbeing**

For more information about Camosun College's response to COVID-19:
Visit: camosun.ca/COVID-19
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