

Psychological Tips for Managing COVID-19 Concerns

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Check List to Recognize Signs of Distress

- Feeling stressed or overwhelmed
- Increased feelings of anxiety, worry or fear
- Sadness, tearfulness, and/or loss of interest in enjoyable activities that persist and/or intensify
- Sleep difficulties or inability to focus or concentrate
- Feelings of hopelessness and/or a paralyzing fear about the future
- Isolating or withdrawing from others, fear of going into public situations
- Hyper-vigilance to your health and body
- Racialized communities feeling frightened by the increase in microaggressions and microassaults
- Racialized communities feeling angered by the prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping, and racism that COVID-19 has uncovered

Avoid Stigmatizing or Generalizing

- Self-awareness and situational awareness are important to not stigmatize others. Avoid making assumptions about community members from affected areas of the world.
- Avoid generalizing anyone who is sick as potentially having COVID-19
- Examine any irrational or rigid thoughts that can arise when we are faced with uncertainty
- Stigma affects the emotional and mental health of stigmatized groups and the communities they live in. Stopping stigma is important to make communities and community members resilient.

Psychological Health Tips

- **Acknowledge reactions and feelings.** Allow yourself time to reflect on how you are feeling and how you may be reacting to any fears and uncertainties of the future. Listen to your gut and internal sense of right and wrong with respect to self-preservation measures (e.g., elbow bump instead of a handshake, wash hands after social contact, limit larger group interactions, etc.).
- **Stay connected to individuals and communities that affirm your emotional response.** Receiving support and care from others has a powerful effect on coping with challenges. When you feel adequately supported, pay forward the kindness by extending support and validation to others.
- **Maintain your day-to-day normal activities.** Focus on one breath and one step at a time. Focus on your goals. Finish your projects. Do your best at work, school, and home.
- **Practice calming rituals:** Stay grounded in the present moment, which can help you maintain an internal sense of stability and balance when outside events feel threatening.
- **Focus on what you can control.** When things feel scary and unpredictable, it can be helpful to focus on what you can control including following hygiene practices and staying home when you are sick.
- **Set limits around news and social media.** It is understandable you want to keep informed, and at the same time constantly paying attention to news coverage can unnecessarily intensify worry and agitation. Take a break from news or social media. Pay attention to positive news instead of only focusing on negative and fear-producing news reports.
- **Seek accurate information and seek out campus resources.** Seek information from reputable sources including the Center for Disease Control & Prevention, the Oregon Health Authority, and Pacific University's COVID-19 Website at <https://www.pacificu.edu/coronavirus>
- **Follow the protection and prevention tips given by medical professionals** such as the CDC, Oregon Health Authority, and Pacific University's COVID-19 Website