

# MINES & ASSOCIATES Stress & Anxiety Reduction



The month of April is National Stress Awareness Month and this April, there are so many reasons to share stress management strategies. The outbreak of the Coronavirus has brought a mental health crisis next to the medical crisis. In a recent Gallup Study published on April 14, 2020, life ratings plummeted to a 12-year low. The cause of the decline is due to “current satisfaction” and not looking forward to the future. The respondents’ daily stress levels have reached an “unprecedented magnitude.”

Here are some tips that can help manage stress and anxiety during this time:

1. Consider past coping strategies - You may not have been here before, but you have likely experienced difficult situations before where you had little to no control. What were some ways that you coped? It is good to think through which strategies worked well before and try to engage in some version of those strategies now. As you think through the strategies that worked well before, you may recall some that did not work well or were not healthy, make note of those too and try to avoid them.
2. Engage in a gratitude practice - Consider starting a gratitude log. Write down at least one thing that you are grateful for each day. After you have written down what you are grateful for, say it out loud and allow yourself to feel yourself cultivating gratitude. Noted benefits associated with gratitude include (Wellness Society, 2020):
  - Positive mood
  - Better sleep
  - A stronger immune system
  - Reduction in anxiety and stress
3. Limit media/social media - You can check updates on the virus from credible resources such as the CDC.gov and WHO.int. There are less than informed and polarizing perspectives throughout the media as well as our social media which can leave us feeling sad, frustrated, and powerless.
4. Practice centered breathing - Take a deep, slow breath filling up your abdomen. Allow the breath to inflate your abdominal area. As you exhale out all your air, hollow out the abdomen. Become mindful of your breath and how it transforms your mind, body, and emotions.
  - **Being centered:**
    - is a psycho-physiological state that is strengthened through practice
    - allows you to be more authentic, sensitive, and open
    - produces emotional and physical stability
    - has a positive effect on relationships and the surrounding environment
    - has a great impact on developing trust
    - enables you to appreciate the nature of conflict
    - brings you to a point of clarity, the point of power
    - is always your choice, at any time

5. Make certainty statements - In a time where so much feels uncertain, making clear certainty statements can be a way to reduce anxiety. Examples include, "I am certain that I am a mother of three beautiful children," "I am certain that I am a runner," "I feel certain that the weather is sunny today."
6. Check-in with friends and family- Checking in and extending yourself to others through texts, over the phone, video connections, emails, etc. This will not only help you feel less isolated and better connected but no doubt will be impactful to those who you are connecting with. You will boost their mental health as well as your own.
7. COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING EXERCISE

### **Irrational Beliefs: A - B - C - D - E**

Based on the work of Albert Ellis, Ph.D., human beings cause themselves grief, worry, and heartache based on a series of irrational beliefs.

**A**ctivating event such as a statement or comment

**B**elief that becomes self-talk

**C**onsequence- emotional response

**D**ispute- what is the evidence?

**E**ffect

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If you or a household member is experiencing stress, anxiety, hardships, or just want to talk about dealing with new responsibilities involving homeschooling or anything else, please remember that your employee assistance program is here for you. MINES counselors are experienced and available. We offer counseling with licensed mental health professionals via telephone, video, and online text/message-based platforms.

**The EAP is available 24/7 at 800-873-7138 or visit [www.minesandassociates.com](http://www.minesandassociates.com)**

For more resources related to COVID-19 and remote working please click [here](#).

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