

Managing Coronavirus Anxiety



As stories about Coronavirus and its impact have dominated news outlets and social media, it is perhaps not surprising that anxiety about this illness has grown along with the number of cases. Common reactions include anxiety, worry, feelings of helplessness or anger, difficulty concentrating, difficulty sleeping, social withdrawal, and hyper-vigilance to your body and health. However, it's important not to let fears about this virus control your life. The strategies that are effective in managing anxiety around coronavirus can also contribute to overall emotional and physical wellbeing.

- **Unplug:** While it's important to be well-informed, you can limit worry and agitation by limiting the amount of time you spend plugged into media coverage.
 - Choose a small number of trusted sources of information like the CC Coronavirus Update webpage (www.coloradocollege.edu/coronavirus) or the Centers for Disease Control website (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html>)
 - Learn to be in the moment by engaging with mindfulness practices. Offices like the Chaplain's Office and Wellness Resource Center can introduce you to mindfulness practices, or you can use apps like Headspace or Simply Being.
 - Focus on things that are positive in your life and that bring you joy.
- **Focus on things that you have control over:** Often, the things that stress us the most are the things over which we have little control. So spending time worrying about what will happen gets you nowhere.
 - Identify things that you can do to prepare for uncertain circumstances, such as developing contingency plans for travel, or ensuring that you have enough of any prescription medications to carry you through the next several weeks.
 - Engage with proven prevention practices like washing your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, and avoid contact with others who are ill.
 - Stay healthy by prioritizing sleep, exercising, and eating well.
- **Be mindful of your assumptions about others:** Viruses do not respect borders and do not discriminate between different populations, and someone who has a cough or fever does not necessarily have coronavirus.
- **Stay connected to social supports:** Maintaining connections to friends, family, and co-workers provides outlets for sharing feelings and relieving stress. If disruptions caused by coronavirus have separated you from these social supports, make a point of checking in.
- **Seek help when needed:** Anyone who is feeling overwhelmed by anxiety or worry can seek professional mental health support.
 - Students can contact the Counseling Center (719-389-6093)
 - Staff and Faculty can contact the Employee Assistance Program (800-272-7255)