

COPING WITH UNCERTAINTY DURING COVID-19



FAIRFAX - FALLS CHURCH

**Community
Services Board**

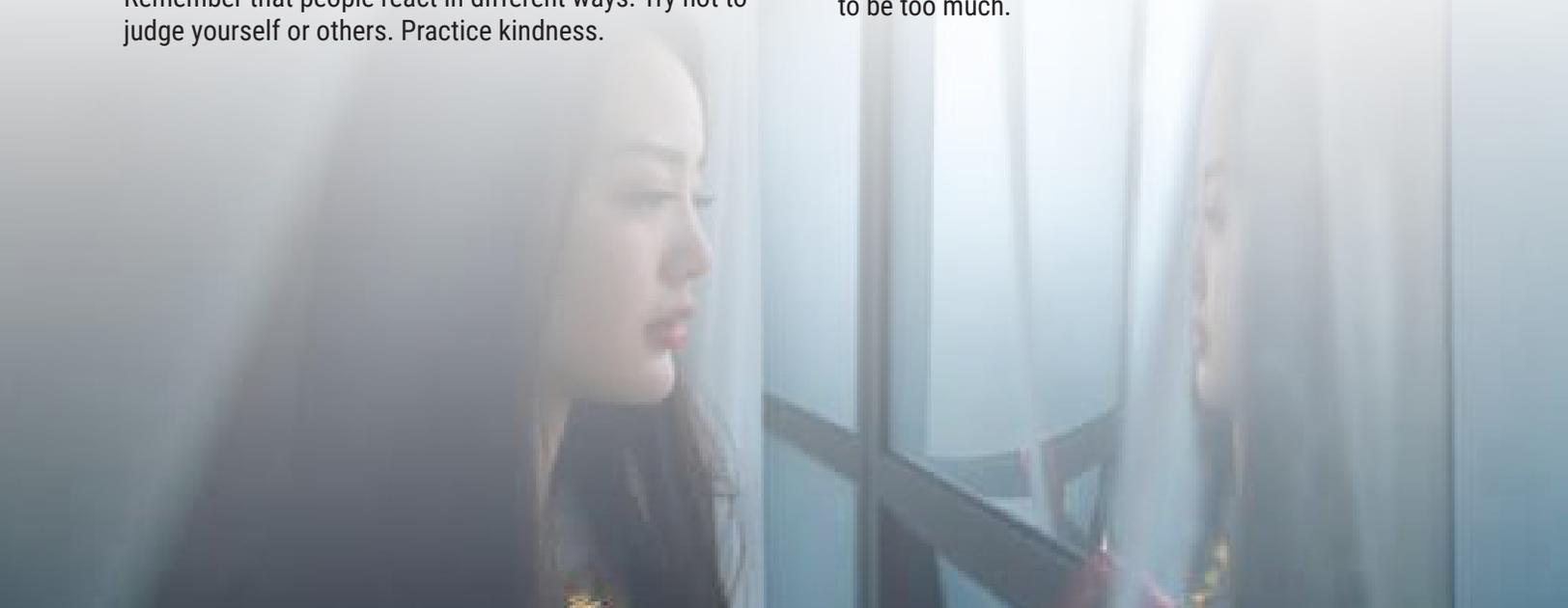
Anxiety and the uncertainty around COVID-19 can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Taking care of yourself, your friends and your family can help you to manage the stress. Helping others to manage their stress can also make our community stronger and strengthen our resilience.

NORMAL REACTIONS TO FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY

- Anxiety, increased worry
- Not wanting to be separated from loved ones
- Irritability, anger
- Fatigue, exhaustion
- Sadness, crying
- Changes in appetite
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Inability to concentrate
- Forgetfulness
- Frequent errors
- Difficulty making decisions
- Confusion
- Hyperactivity
- Physical complaints, headaches, diarrhea
- Nightmares
- New or increased use of tobacco products, alcohol or other drugs

TIPS FOR COPING

- Keep informed but also limit excessive media exposure. If you are feeling anxious, consider turning off social media feeds, automatic notifications, and updates on COVID-19.
- Understand that people have strong, often complex, and sometimes different points of view. Respect these emotions and differences and take it as an opportunity to strengthen our support of each other.
- Identify the feelings you are experiencing. Understand that your feelings are normal and talk about them with others.
- Remember that people react in different ways. Try not to judge yourself or others. Practice kindness.
- Don't isolate yourself. Personal relationships are important to wellness, keeping a positive mood and can be a healthy distraction. Combat loneliness and keep talking by phone or video chat.
- Drink water, get plenty of sleep, don't overdo the caffeine, avoid alcohol and other drugs, exercise, meditate, eat healthy and breathe.
- Relax by doing things you enjoy, even if you need to change where and how you do them.
- Maintain a routine.
- Laugh, have fun and let yourself cry. Ask for help if it gets to be too much.



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DEEP BREATHING

- At times of stress and anxiety, shallow breathing or hyperventilation are common. Mindful, regular breathing can reset the normal stress response and prevent or reverse the onset of the unpleasant physical symptoms associated with anxiety.
- This is also true for exercise, which can help reduce the excess adrenaline build-up associated with anxiety. It can also give you time to calm your mind and thoughts.
- To practice deep breathing, take a slow deep breath through your nose to the count of five. Hold your breath for another 5-count then exhale through your mouth for a 5-count.

ANTI-STRESS STRETCHES

- **Finger Fan:** Extend your arms straight out in front of you with palms up. Spread your fingers as far apart as possible and hold for 5 seconds.
- **Upper-back Stretch:** Sit up straight with your fingers interlaced behind your head. Keep your shoulders down, lift your chest and bring your elbows back as far as you can. Hold for 10 seconds.
- **Ear to Shoulder:** Lower your right ear to your right shoulder and hold for 10 seconds. Repeat on the other side.
- **Overhead Reach:** Raise your arms over your head and interlace your fingers with your palms facing up. Keep your shoulders down and stretch upwards. Hold for 20 seconds.
- **Knee Pull:** While seated, pull one knee up to your chest as high as possible. Hold with both hands for 10 seconds then repeat with the other knee.
- **Waist Bend:** Reach arms overhead with finger interlaced. Bend at the waist, keeping shoulders down.

If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others, 24/7 help is available.

Call the PRS CrisisLink hotline at 703-527-4077 or text "connect" to 855-11.

Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

- Veterans – Press 1
- En Espanol: 1-888-628-9454

Call the Children's Regional Crisis Response (CR2) at 844-627-4747 or 571-364-7390.

Call REACH for crisis stabilization for individuals with developmental disabilities at 855-897-8278.

In an emergency 24/7 call CSB Emergency Services at 703-573-5679.

Call CSB Entry & Referral M-F from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 703-383-8500.

During this time, CSB has transitioned mainly to telehealth services via Zoom for Healthcare, by phone or video.

Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb for more information about CSB services.

For more information about the coronavirus, visit fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19.

