

Tips for Overcoming Emotional Fatigue During COVID-19

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Quarantines of human populations have been used to decrease the spread of infections to others since the times of the Plague. Research shows that people forced to live in quarantine conditions face a greater risk of anxiety, depression, anger, irritability, insomnia and post-traumatic stress symptoms. The longer the quarantine lasts, the worse its impact on psychological well being and more for those who are already isolated and vulnerable. Most adverse effects come from the imposition of a restriction of liberty; voluntary quarantine is associated with less distress and fewer long-term complications.



In these difficult times, it is normal to have worries, fears and anxieties in dealing with the unknown threat of this global pandemic. In order to keep our body and mind healthy we need to have as much control over our lives and environment as possible.

1. Give yourself permission to identify and respect your feelings and fears.
2. Recognize that you have been through other difficult situations.
3. Remember that we have normal reactions to abnormal situations as humans.

We have all experienced loss due to this crisis and it's important to:

- Understand it is normal to have anxiety about safety concerns for yourself, your family, your friends and even other people.
- Realize emotions of grief and loss, anger and sadness are very normal reactions.
- Own your feelings, and then connect them to actions to make things more manageable.
- Focus on your strengths and opportunities for growth. Focus on the areas within your control.
- Remember—we are in this together! It's okay to accept help from others and you will get the chance to pay it forward in the future, so use community programs and resources available for the moment.

How to Beat Quarantine Fatigue

We all have different coping skills and ways to get our needs met. Here are some tips for how you can take care of yourself during this stressful time.

For Your Emotional/Mental Health:

- Try to follow as many routine activities and habits as possible, which gives one a sense of predictability and control, such as waking up at the same time, exercising, bathing, eating, meditating, etc.
- Connect with nature—get outside of your four walls to get some fresh air every day.
- Focus on the positive things going on in your life—write down two things you are grateful for every day. Think about other difficult times you have been through, and the positive coping strategies that worked then that you could adapt to the current situation.

- Reach out and maintain your connections with others. Talk to your support system about your emotions and feelings as meaningful connections help to build resilience.
- Consciously choose to be where you are for the moment at home—take advantage of the time to complete projects, learn a new skill, hobby, language, etc.
- Manage your risk of exposure!
- Having information is key, but to decrease your stress and anxiety, limit the time you spend on media coverage of COVID-19 and be sure it is from valid sources such as the CDC and WHO.
- Eat a healthy balanced diet, try to get 7-8 hours of sleep each night, get some form of physical exercise daily, and don't forget to take time to relax. Try using deep breathing, meditation, prayer and other relaxation techniques that work for you in order to decrease the feelings of frustration and boredom.
- Seek help from a counselor to process your feelings and reactions if needed or work with a certified coach on creating a new life path to achieve certain goals. Your VITAL WorkLife Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers in-the-moment behavioral health support, available 24/7, as well as virtual or face-to-face counseling and coaching sessions.

What Have We Gained from This Event?

It might not always seem like it, but it's important to recognize and highlight the things we've gained from this experience.

- We are having more time with our immediate family and loved ones.
- We are being forced to slow down and consider what is really important to us. Practice an attitude of gratitude!
- It is an opportunity to appreciate what we have and to help others.

Together We Can and Will Get through This Difficult Time

We Can Help

As part of your VITAL WorkLife EAP, you have access to in-the-moment behavioral health support, available 24/7, as well as virtual or face-to-face counseling and coaching sessions. You also have access to a wealth of resources on your [Member Website](#), including financial and legal articles, calculators, tip sheets and more. Access your EAP resources by contacting us at **800.383.1908** or through the **VITAL WorkLife App**.

Sources:

CDC: Center for Disease Control and Prevention website at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>

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Lancet, February 26, 2020. "The Psychological Impact of Quarantine and How to Reduce It"