

Mental health tips for adults

(Not listed in order of importance)

1. Always take care of your basic needs to ensure you can continue to meet your responsibilities and obligations.
2. Familiarize yourself with available resources and utilize them as needed. We are in a state of emergency and nothing about our current experience is normal, so please do not hesitate to accept help. If you saw a friend in a situation you are in right now, what would you do? Now, YOU are that friend in need and people that have the capacity and ability to help genuinely want to help you.
3. Strive for routine as much as you can. Like it or not, we are 'creatures of habit' and routine and rhythm of life (as much as possible under these circumstances) positively impacts our sense of well-being.
4. Connect with others not only for resources but also for a felt sense of belonging and community. Belonging is a much underestimate human need that only grows bigger in emergencies and crises.
5. Most people experience anxiety about one thing or another right now and that's a natural response to what we all experienced and what's around and ahead of us. If that's you, give yourself permission to feel this way for the time being. This is not to say you need to dwell on your anxiety and give it permission to overtake you, but the more you ignore anxiety, the more it shape shifts or pushes back. Chances are, you will be better able to problem solve and take action if you let yourself process that anxiety instead of ignoring it. Think about it this way: problem solving and action taking -where you want to be- is on the other side of Mount Anxiety. The only way to get to problem solving and action taking is to climb that mountain. If you stand at the foot of the mountain, trying to wish it away or pretend it is not there, you will never get to the other side.
6. There is a lot to do and you can't do it all at once. Prioritize in order to lessen feeling overwhelmed and anxious.
7. With all that needs to be done and taken care of right now, it is easy to feel overwhelmed and also as if you are not making progress, which can deflate the psyche. At times, stop for a second to notice the progress you are making, the chores you are completing, and the tasks you are crossing off your list. (BTW, as silly or simple as it may sound, literally crossing items off a list keeps the momentum going, as it is very rewarding from a psychological point of view)
8. While it's important to stay informed, remember the fine line between being informed and being (re)traumatized by the news. Media loves to loop images of destruction and devastation, which can feed into anxiety and panic. Consume only as much news as you need to remain informed.

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