



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Windsor-Essex County

Managing Stress and Anxiety During COVID-19

Presented by

Mental Health Defined

- Mental Health is “the capacity of each and all of us to feel, think and act in ways that enhance our ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face. It is a positive sense of emotional and spiritual well-being that respects the importance of culture, equity, social justice, interconnections and personal dignity.” — Public Health Agency of Canada
- It’s about having a balance in life
- Mental Health and Physical Health are intertwined



What is Stress?

- Stress is the body's reaction to a change that requires a physical, mental or emotional adjustment or response
- Stress can come from any situation or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, nervous, or anxious
- Stress doesn't always look stressful
- Stress impacts all of our mental health





Stress During COVID19

- We're currently experiencing a number of different types of grief
- We are experiencing grief in the forms of our collective loss of normalcy, fear of the economic toll, and the loss of social connection.
- Our minds are being protective – we start thinking about the worst





Coping with Increased Work Demands

- Feeling like you're being put under more pressure is normal. Feeling stress is not a reflection of what you can or cannot do in your work
- Managing your mental health and wellbeing especially during this time is as important as managing your physical health
- Take care of yourself – try to use coping strategies such as ensuring you get enough rest, eat healthy foods, engage in physical activity, and stay in contact with family and friends





Stress Overload – Warning Signs

Emotional:

- Increased worry about health
- Irritability or short temper
- Agitation
- Depression
- Isolation

Cognitive:

- Memory problems
- Inability to concentrate
- Poor judgement
- Anxious or racing thoughts
- Increased attention to physical processes
- Constant worrying



Stress Overload – Warning Signs

Physical:

- Headaches
- Stomach pain, nausea, diarrhea
- Dizziness
- Rapid heartbeat, sweating
- Increasing tension or pain
- Loss of sex drive
- Decreased energy levels

Behavioural:

- Isolating oneself
- Eating less or more
- Risky behaviour
- Decreased productivity
- Have trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Nervous habits



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What is Resilience?

- Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress — such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems or workplace and financial stressors. It means "bouncing back" from difficult experiences.

American Psychological Association (2016)

10 Ways to Build Resilience

- 1. Make connections.** Good relationships with close family members, friends or others are important.
- 2. Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems.** You can't change the fact that highly stressful events happen, but you can change how you interpret and respond to these events.
- 3. Accept that change is a part of living.** Certain goals may no longer be attainable as a result of adverse situations.
- 4. Move toward your goals.** Develop some realistic goals.
- 5. Take decisive actions.** Act on adverse situations as much as you can.



10 Ways to Build Resilience

6. **Look for opportunities for self-discovery.** People often learn something about themselves and may find that they have grown in some respect as a result of their struggle with loss.
7. **Nurture a positive view of yourself.** Developing confidence in your ability to solve problems and trusting your instincts helps build resilience.
8. **Keep things in perspective.** Even when facing very painful events, try to consider the stressful situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective.
9. **Maintain a hopeful outlook.** An optimistic outlook enables you to expect that good things will happen in your life.



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10 Ways to Build Resilience

10. Take care of yourself. Pay attention to your own needs and feelings.



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Focus

- Focus on what's strong rather than what's wrong
- We are always trying to fix what is wrong, let's look for what is right
- Know the difference; between what you can change and what you do not have an effect on
- We can't change other people's responses to events, but we can change our own

Do What Feels Good - For You!

- Keep things in perspective – challenge intrusive thoughts but don't ignore them.
- Practice self care – whatever that is for you
- Bring yourself back to the present
- Limit news consumption / seek reliable information only
- Take the recommended precautions by Health Canada and your local Public Health Unit
- Set reasonable goals for yourself every day
- Make a to-done list instead of a to-do list
- There is still help available – reach out!



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