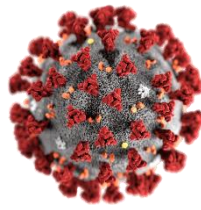


# Supporting People's Mental Health Regarding COVID-19



The impact of news related to the illness is making the value of mental health support clear. The New Mexico Crisis and Access Line (NMCAL) and Peer-to-Peer Warmline are here to support people's mental health concerns during this challenging time brought on by the recent COVID-19 concerns. We also want to take this opportunity to highlight some tips for supporting ourselves and others during this time.

## Our Role is Simple

- Refer people to medical professionals when they are seeking advice or medical info
- Support the emotion behind the concern including validation, normalizing and psychoeducation
- Provide Solution-Focused Interventions to identify supports and coping strategies
- Monitor your own reactions for countertransference

## Common Symptoms and Concerns

- Uncertainty or frustration about how long the situation will continue and the future
- Loneliness/Isolation associated with feeling cut off from the world and from loved ones.
- Anger when thinking about potential exposure to the disease.
- Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), such as intrusive distressing memories, flashbacks (reliving the event), nightmares, changes in thoughts and mood, and being easily startled.
- An increase or decrease in energy and activity levels
- An increase in alcohol, tobacco use, or use of illegal drugs
- An increase in irritability, with outbursts of anger and frequent arguing
- Having trouble relaxing or sleeping

- Crying frequently
- Worrying excessively
- Blaming other people for everything
- Having difficulty communicating or listening
- Having difficulty giving or accepting help
- Inability to feel pleasure or have fun
- Physical symptoms such as stomach aches, diarrhea, headaches, changes in appetite

## Ways to Support Oneself

- **Understand the Risk**-Seek information from healthcare providers regarding specific risk factors and prevention
- **Avoid Unhelpful Sources of Information**-Find the news source that you trust and avoid monitoring it 24/7, as this can increase anxiety
- **Seek connection with family and friends**-Utilize any technology available to prevent isolation and maintain perspective
- **Take Care of Your Basic Needs**-Think about your positive coping skills and



## Sources for Reliable Outbreak-Related Information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) <http://www.cdc.gov>

World Health Organization 202-974-3000 <http://www.who.int/en>

For questions about COVID-19, please call the NM DOH Coronavirus Hotline at #855-600-3453

If you need someone here to hear you for mental health concerns, please call NMCAL at #855-662-7474