

## Self-Care during COVID19

The current public health crisis has led individuals to feel more anxious amid the many unknowns. Additionally, as we move to more modified work arrangements, individuals may find themselves more socially isolated and feeling alone. There are a variety of skills that allow people to better regulate their emotions, increase distress tolerance, and work to accept our current reality.

### Self-Care Skills:

It is essential that people care for both their emotional and physical health throughout this crisis. During this time, it is imperative that supervisors encourage employees to integrate self-care into their daily work schedule or take a self-care day.

1. Positive Experiences: Engaging daily in something that brings joy.
  - Walking your dog, taking a walk with family, call/FaceTime a close friend
2. Accomplishment: Set small goals and achieve them.
  - People thrive on feeling a sense of accomplishment! Set a small goal to organize a manageable area of your home or work on a hobby that you often do not have the time for.
3. Manage your Physical Wellbeing: Physical and emotional health are intertwined.
  - Eat healthy foods, exercise, and get quality sleep nightly
4. Create Structure: Formulate a new schedule to create routine.
  - If working from home, create a work schedule for yourself that includes waking up at a certain time, lunch breaks, and self-care breaks.
  - Supervisors can create morning and afternoon briefings for their teams to video conference and maintain connection. Topics can be work related or simply a time to connect.
5. Practice Mindfulness: Engage all of your senses and refocus on your current activity.
  - Sight: Notice 5 things you can see.
  - Touch: Notice what you are doing.
  - Sound: Notice 5 things you can hear.
  - Taste: Notice what you taste.
  - Smell: Notice what you smell.

**Operate with Facts:**

There is a lot of information being communicated through the media and other various sources (i.e. social media) which can heighten anxiety. It is necessary that people manage their emotions by responding to facts. It is easy for individuals to quickly be triggered and 'hooked' by misinformation. If someone is anxious around something they've heard, help them fact check the information. The most accurate information can be found via the World Health Organization and Center for Disease Control.

**Radical Acceptance:**

Radical acceptance is fully and completely accepting the current situation. It is at this point that a person is able to acknowledge their feelings and fully assess their current state. We are operating in a new reality, and we all must acknowledge and accept our current feelings toward the situation.

We should do this while displaying compassion towards ourselves for the emotions that we are feeling. The emotions that we are experiencing will vary hourly, daily, and weekly. They will continue to change as our reality changes. Emotions may range from anxiety, sadness, and frustration to hope, comfort and gratitude. Allow yourself to feel the feels.

Podcast: [Unlocking Us by Brené Brown](#)

**Communicate your Needs:**

Our needs both at work and home will change as we continue through this new reality. It is essential that you communicate to both your family and supervisor what you need during this time. If you need to spend more time with family or integrate more breaks into your work schedule, ask for this. If you need more validation for your accomplishments during this time, communicate this to your supervisor.

**Practice Kindness:**

It feels good to help someone! Even small acts of service can bring joy! Say "Hello" as you pass someone in the hall and offer a smile. Contact a vulnerable or isolated person in your community and check-in with them. Buy your co-worker a cup of coffee. Practice kindness towards yourself by engaging in positive self-talk.

**Sources**

"DBT Skills for a Pandemic," Augusta DBT, 2020

"FACE COVID," Dr. Russ Harris, 2020

"Managing Fears and Anxiety around the Coronavirus (COVID19)," Dr. Catherine Sykes, 2020