



AFFORDABLE
COUNSELING
THERAPY

Taking Care of Your Mental Health in the Face of Uncertainty

In today's climate of political unrest, new strains of COVID-19, economic uncertainty and upcoming elections, many of us are experiencing anxiety, depression and fear of the unknown. When things feel uncertain or when we don't generally feel safe, it's normal to feel stressed.

Stress can be a normal reaction, but sometimes it can also take a toll on our mental health. We don't always know it's happening. You might feel more on edge than usual, angry, helpless or sad. You might notice that you are more frustrated with others or want to completely avoid any reminders of what is happening. For those of us who already struggle with our mental wellness, we might feel more depressed or less motivated to carry out our daily activities.

It's important to note that we are not helpless in light of current news events. We can always choose our response. If you are struggling, here are some things you can do to take care of your mental health in the face of uncertainty:

1. **Separate what is in your control from what is not.** There are things you can do, and it's helpful to focus on those. To avoid the latest virus, wash your hands and remind others to wash theirs, take your vitamins and eat healthy. Limit your consumption of news. We don't want to bury our heads in the sand, nor do we need to be on constant alert for the sky to fall. Watch your spending and save what you can, without turning into a hermit.
2. **Get outside in nature.** Take a walk, enjoy the sunshine, get some fresh air. Exercise helps both your physical and mental health.
3. **Challenge yourself to stay in the present.** Perhaps your worry is compounding—you are not only thinking about what is currently happening, but also projecting into the future. When you find yourself worrying about something that hasn't happened, gently bring yourself back to the present moment. Notice the sights, sounds, tastes and other sensory experiences in your immediate moment and name them. Engaging in mindfulness activities is one way to help stay grounded when things feel beyond your control.
4. **Stay connected and reach out if you need more support.** Talk to trusted friends about what you are feeling. If you are feeling particularly anxious or if you are struggling with your mental health, it's ok to reach out to a mental health professional for support. You don't have to be alone with your worry and it can be comforting to share what you are experiencing with those trained to help.

We are in this together, and help is always available. If you're feeling alone and struggling, you can also reach out to The Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741741 or National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK.

Everyone needs a little help now and then...that's what we do! Call us at ACT, Affordable Counseling Therapy.

205-933-7442.