



Center for Student Health & Counseling  
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## COVID-19 and Depression

In the midst of the ongoing pandemic, it is not surprising that we might feel a sense of sadness, hopelessness, or depression. There are many adjustments, concerns, and unknowns that we are facing in our day to day lives. Listed below are some resources that may be helpful in coping with feelings of depression, particularly related to COVID-19. We have also listed a few basic tools for coping with these difficult emotions, as well as feelings of isolation that may arise due to the need for physical distancing from others at this time.

### Practice:

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**Connect:** In this time of physical distancing, it can be difficult to feel connected to others. Work to maintain connection with your loved ones and your community in a way that is safe and fulfilling. Try video chats, phone calls, or texting; perhaps even set up a time each day to talk with a friend, coworker, or family member. Consider shared streaming activities like watching the same movie while on video chat, or play video games with online platforms.

**Care for yourself:** Transitioning to physical distancing, working from home, and spending more time at home may disrupt the schedule we are used to. Aim to develop a structure for your day that is supportive of your needs and helps you feel productive. This may include increasing sleep hygiene; going to sleep at the same time each evening and waking up at the same time each morning, and avoiding screens prior to bedtime. Also aim to incorporate movement into your day; if exercise feels supportive, engage in that! Going for a walk outside can be supportive in reducing feeling “trapped” inside the house – just be sure to maintain appropriate physical distancing while you are out.

**Check in on yourself (and others!):** Take some time each day to evaluate how you’re feeling; physically, emotionally, psychologically – take stock of what sensations, thoughts, and emotions arise and ask yourself what might feel supportive of challenging experiences. It might also be helpful to check in with a friend or loved one and ask them to do the same, and offer support as you are able.

**Create:** Work to create something each day! This might mean creating something through art, like painting or drawing, or even just creating a list of self-care activities to make yourself a menu of things to choose from.

**Catch up:** This may be a good time to accomplish some things on your long-term to-do list! Perhaps there’s a book you meant to finish, tasks you need to complete, or a hobby you want to learn.

**Challenge yourself:** Some days you may not feel like engaging in any of these activities, or it might feel overwhelming to face the day. At those times, consider engaging in a loving-kindness meditation (see additional resources below) and hold compassion for yourself, acknowledging how difficult this time is for you. Then, aim to challenge yourself to engage in one supportive activity – this may be something small, but will help to increase your sense of accomplishment and may be motivating in helping you engage in other ways to support yourself.

## Learn More:

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- COVID-19 Anxiety Toolkit: <https://www.virusanxiety.com/>
- Loving-Kindness Meditation: [https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/loving\\_kindness\\_meditation](https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/loving_kindness_meditation)
- SAMHSA Tips for Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health:  
<https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/tips-social-distancing-quarantine-isolation-031620.pdf>
- Preventing Loneliness: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-to-prevent-loneliness-in-a-time-of-social-distancing/>

## Seek Help:

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You can access support by contacting the Multnomah County Crisis line (503-988-4888) or the Crisis Text Line (text HOME to 741741). If you need in-person evaluation, Unity Center for Behavioral Health (1225 NE 2nd Ave) has a mental health emergency room. SAMHSA also offers a Disaster Distress Hotline 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746.