

MANAGING STRONG REACTIONS DURING STRESSFUL TIMES

When experiencing significant stress, we often react quickly and strongly, which is not always an effective response in the moment.

It is important to utilize practical strategies that keep us connected to ourselves and our community.

INCREASE PREDICTABILITY

- Establish a routine schedule that balances work, leisure, and self-care activities
- Plan activities to look forward to, even if they are simple or small

DECREASE IMMOBILITY

- Get up and stretch one time every hour - Set a reminder!
- Move your body every day
- Change your perspective of your environment (i.e. change where you sit)

INCREASE CONNECTION

- Reach out at least 1x per day to a family member or friend
- Choose video or phone conversations over text messages

DECREASE NUMBING

- Limit mindless distractions (e.g. internet browsing)
- Limit/abstain from substance use
- Use mindfulness to feel grounded in the moment

INCREASE SAFETY

- Use your five senses (Smell, Touch, Sight, Hear, Taste) to help you to feel grounded
- Try relaxation techniques
- Create a private and calming space for yourself

DECREASE LOSING SENSE OF TIME

- Remind yourself that this stress is temporary.
- Plan activities for each day and stick to your routine!
- Maintain a sleep schedule

INCREASE PURPOSE

- Practice self-compassion
- Explore your personal values
- Reconnect with engaging in activities that are fulfilling

Adapted From:

van der Kolk, B. (2020).

Global Coronavirus Crisis – Steering ourselves and our clients through new and developing traumas