



Protecting Your Mental Wellness with Self-Care during Covid-19

As human beings we tend to like certainty so when we are in uncertain situations, we may find ourselves struggling. Feeling stressed, tired, anxious and overwhelmed are all normal feelings when we don't feel safe. We may be feeling helpless or that things are out of our control, and that too is normal. It is important to remember that we are not helpless! We are able to choose our own responses and therefore give ourselves some control. To help us choose healthier responses to what is happening around us, we need to take care of ourselves and our families.

Here are some ways to use self-care to protect your mental wellness during this difficult time:

Prioritize Sleep- stop use of screens at least one hour prior to bedtime, use calming essential oils to aide in sleep, use guided meditation prior to bed, utilize relaxation techniques to assist in calming your mind and body prior to sleep.

Practice Mindfulness- try to stay in the present. When you find yourself worrying about the future and what might or might not happen, try to bring it back to the here and now. Take a deep breath, notice what you smell, hear, feel, see. Staying present can give us a sense of grounding and control.

Recognize your limitations- take breaks and replenish, you are not meant to go 24/7. Separate what is in your control and what is not. Follow standard precautions and encourage others to do the same, limit your consumption of news cycles, and give yourself permission to “go with the flow”.

Avoid self-medication- substances such as alcohol and drugs can often increase symptoms of anxiety

Eat Clean- processed food disrupts our bodies and our brains. Real, natural food maximizes our well-being

Exercise- healthy body = healthy mind

Music- listen to, make music, sing and dance

Be creative- you may have extra time at home, think of creative projects/activities you can do with your family or on your own

Self-compassion- treat yourself as you would a friend. Be kind to yourself.

Limit Screen Time- set boundaries with technology. This includes television. Social media can often increase symptoms of anxiety. Switch it off and do something that increases well-being.

Spend time outdoors- Socially isolating still allows for hikes, walks, and playing in your yard. Nature has a positive impact on your well-being.

Stay Connected- socially isolating does not mean isolating from the world. Call a friend, video chat and text. Stay connected to those you care about and share your fears and struggles with what is happening. Do what helps you continue to feel a sense of safety.

Laugh and Play- find joy in everyday experiences. Humor is a protective factor for our mental health.

Use techniques to assist in decreasing feelings of anxiety- links to Emotional Freedom Technique, Relaxation Exercises, Yoga for relaxation, Guided meditation and breath work can be found in the Resource Section.

If you continue to feel overwhelmed, there is help. We are all in this together. Contact a local mental health professional or utilize our local and national resources listed below.

The Crisis Text Line: text TALK to 741741

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK

Contact Community Services 24 Hour Crisis Line: 315-251-0600

211 CNY Referral for Mental Health, Community, Social or Gov't Services: 211

Mobile Crisis Assessment Team (Oneida County): 315-732-6228

Liberty Resources Mobile Crisis in collaboration with Contact Community Services: 315-251-0600