Taking Care
of our Emotional Health

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The outbreak of the coronavirus is stressful for many people. Fear and anxiety about an unknown disease and its widespread effects on our lives and the world, can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Coping with stress will make you, your loved ones, and your community stronger.

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations. How you respond to the outbreak can depend on your background, your ability to cope in difficult situations, and your community.

Below are some tips to support you and your senior's emotional health:

- **Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media.** Constantly hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can upset you and those around you.
- **Take care of your body.** Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- **Make time to unwind.** Try to do some other enjoyable activities you enjoy like taking a walk around the neighborhood or reading a book outside.
- **Connect with others.** Call and talk with people you trust about your concerns and feelings. Sharing your emotions can help relieve stress. Use technology such as FaceTime or Skype to stay in touch with family and friends.

Now is the time to draw on skills used in the past to manage previous life's adversities. Use those skills to help manage your emotions during the challenging time of this outbreak. Our elderly population have probably lived through difficult times and may want to share what that was like and how they got through it.

If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions of sadness, depression, or anxiety, and stress gets in the way of attending to daily activities for several days in a row, call your healthcare provider.

Reference: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html