

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS!

Here are some tips to help you:

Stay calm. Panic will make it difficult for you to make sound decisions.

Strengthen your immune system. Tackle the problem directly by eating healthy and sleeping well to build a strong immune system to fight off disease. Increase your intake of fruits and vegetables, stay hydrated, and get a good night's rest.

Exercise and keep active for a healthy mind and body. Exercise has been shown to increase "feel good" chemicals in the body called endorphins that can help reduce stress.

Think positive. While it is not easy to always stay positive, try to find the positive in a difficult situation. Remove negative thinking by identifying positive things in your life. Having gratitude is one way of thinking positive.

Talk to your children. Children need to feel secure in times of disaster.

- Allow them to talk about their feelings and let them know you understand.
- Bring comfort by letting them know you love them and you will do everything you can to keep them safe.
- Remind them that not all information is true, so fact-checking is important.
- Educate them about how to protect themselves from getting sick and find enjoyable family activities, such as playing games, working on a project together, watching a good movie, and story-telling.
- Finally, keep a routine and model self-care.

Focus on what you can control. Sometimes you just have to step back and realize you cannot control everything. Some things are out of your hands, however, you can control your response to the situation. Now is the time to follow the safety recommendations, practice patience, and have hope.

Find your strength. Use your faith to overcome and get through these fast-changing, difficult times of uncertainty. Finding strength in your faith through prayer, meditation, or reflection, is one way to stay calm and find inner peace.

Avoid drugs, excessive alcohol, and overeating. During times of stress, one may have the urge to deal with the situation by using drugs and/or alcohol, smoking, and/or overeating. Stressful events, such as COVID-19, and having a hard time coping increases the risk of turning to unhealthy behaviors. Managing your stress is key to avoiding unhealthy ways of coping.

RESOURCES

Mental Health Support Line

For mental health support and coping skills,
please call **285-1856 or 323-6560/6561**
Available Monday to Friday
7:30AM-4:30PM

Disaster Distress Helpline (SAMSHA)

1-800-985-5990
24/7

COVID-19 Info Line

For information about COVID-19 symptoms and testing please call
285-1352/1542/1672 or 1854
Available Monday to Sunday
7:30AM-8:00PM

CHCC Facebook:

www.facebook.com/cnmichcc

CHCC website: www.chcc.gov.mp

STRATEGIES TO REDUCE ANXIETY AND IMPROVE SLEEP

Connect with family & friends. Social distancing does not mean social isolation. We can find support from others while staying home. Try calling, video chatting, or messaging friends and family. Reach out and stay connected.

The 4-7-8 breathing technique involves breathing in for 4 seconds, holding your breath for 7 seconds, and exhaling for 8 seconds. This breathing pattern aims to reduce anxiety or help people get to sleep. To use the 4-7-8 technique, focus on the following breathing pattern:

- Empty your lungs of air
- Breathe in quietly through your nose for 4 seconds
- Hold your breath for a count of 7 seconds
- Exhale forcefully through your mouth, pursing your lips and making a “whoosh” sound, for 8 seconds. *Imagine blowing out through a straw.*
- Repeat the cycle up to 4 times

Establish a regular bedtime and stick to it. Going to bed and getting up at roughly the same time, all the time, will program your body to sleep better and will reinforce your biological clock. This makes it easier to fall asleep quickly, and awake feeling fully rested and alert.

Eliminate distractions in your room. If there is a television or a computer in your bedroom, try to find another place for it. A bedroom should only be used as a place for rest and relaxation.

Avoid having a big meal and beverages with caffeine too close to bedtime. A heavy meal close to bedtime can keep you awake at night. Consuming anything with caffeine less than six hours before bedtime can interfere with a good night's sleep. Drink a hot, milky drink or herbal tea instead.

Allow enough time to relax before bedtime. Build in some relaxing after-dinner time. Too much activity close to bedtime can keep you awake.

Establish a relaxing bedtime routine. Try to relax before going to bed. You can take a warm bath, listen to some quiet music, or read a book. All these activities help relax both the mind and body. Try different routines. When you find out which one works best, stick to it. Avoid activities that increase your heart rate before going to bed.

Make sure your bed is comfortable. It is difficult to get restful sleep on a bed that is too soft, too hard, too small or too old.

Create a restful sleeping environment. The bedroom should be for rest and sleep, and it should be neither too hot, nor too cold, and as quiet and dark as possible.