



## Healthy Coping

According to the CDC and the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, there are specific actions our teens can take to deal with the stress of this situation, including:

### Make time for unwinding.

- Activities like listening to music, talking to a friend, drawing, writing, or spending time with a pet can reduce stress.
- Make a go-to list of enjoyable activities and do several of those activities every day. Include several activities that are non-electronic.
- Laughter is a known stress reducer!

### Take care of your body.

- Exercise regularly.
- Eat healthy meals.
- Get enough sleep and have a good sleep routine.
- Avoid excess caffeine which can increase feelings of anxiety and agitation. Also, avoid nicotine, alcohol and other drugs.
- Learn relaxation exercises, such as abdominal breathing and muscle relaxation techniques. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate.

### Connect with others.

- Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
- Look for-- and be!-- a friend who supports positive coping.
- Look for opportunities to laugh or be silly.

### Find ways to calm stress and anxiety.

- Make a list of what makes school work do-able for you: making lists of what to do each day, putting a schedule up, making your work space nicer, listening to (not distracting) music while you work, having an online study group, etc.
- Break a large task into smaller, more attainable tasks.
- Decrease negative self-talk: challenge negative thoughts with alternative, neutral, or positive thoughts. "My life will never get better" can be transformed into "I may feel hopeless now, but my life will probably get better if I work at it and get some help."
- Learn to feel good about doing a competent or "good enough" job rather than demanding perfection from yourself and others.
- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting. Make sure you access/ share accurate information from reputable sources.

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