

Kia ora koutou

Protecting you and your members' mental health during the COVID-19 outbreak

Some ideas, thoughts and links about protecting and maintaining mental health during this Coronavirus outbreak prepared by Eileen Brown at the CTU. It will go up on the CTU web site page too.

Kind regards

Cory



Dealing with COVID-19 is stressful for people's mental health. So many stresses all at once: work, or loss of work, income, health care, shopping and supplies, family worries including kids at home to name some. Every day is a challenge - everything is different and much of it difficult. Looking after our own mental health and wellness is vitally important as we face these unprecedented times with new demands.

Tools of coping make a difference. Wellington clinical psychologist, Sarb Johal, has written on this and makes useful suggestions: be informed but limit your media consumption of COVID-19, get creative about ways to stay in touch e.g. have a zoom catch up with usual groups; retain structure in each day and week, make sure you check in with yourself as well as with other people, if you have an argument with someone repair the rift asap, and do some things that are fun for you - cooking, games.

If you're working from home and you're not used to it here are some useful tips from Sarb's web site: <https://thespinoff.co.nz/business/18-03-2020/nine-ways-to-make-working-from-home-easier-in-a-covid-19-world/>

Physical distancing and socially connectedness are the terms we now use instead of "social distancing". At the heart of this is the concept of preserving relationships and building support. Action Station have developed a tool kit that has got some excellent ideas for keeping communities strong and connected in these turbulent times.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1b7g6GCXFTwJeygZDdKG9VeXbaqrZ6Qsewx3_ISZUfw/mobilebasic#h.triv2z9ttvx8

The Mental Health Foundation has developed specific tips for looking after your mental health and wellbeing during COVID-19 and beyond on getting through based on the five ways of wellbeing: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help/covid-19/top-tips-to-get-through/>

The Ministry of Health web site also has tips to for looking after your mental health:
<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-health-advice-general-public/covid-19-taking-care-your-mental-wellbeing->

This event, unprecedented in our life time, can tip any of us into mental health distress with increased anxiety, low moods and other reactions. It's really important to seek talk about this and reach out to someone to talk if you are having distressing feelings. As well as your usual supports, and your usual health providers who may be able to provide on-line support, the **1737 Text line** is there for support and provides trained counsellors for free.

For people who battle with mental health issues this time could be super stressful as they deal with loss of contacts, medication worries, increased anxiety and new or increased symptoms of mental distress. The MHF web site talks through some of these scenarios and also refers to the 1737 text line for support with anxiety, distress or mental wellbeing.

Keep safe and well out there and look after your and others mental wellbeing too.

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Here's the link on the FB site:

https://www.facebook.com/UnionWomenNewZealand/posts/2550887921682775?_tn_ =K-R