



From the Counselor

As parents, caregivers, and humans the recent events may cause us to feel anxious or stressed. The first part of being able to cope with this new normal is to accept that we cannot control everything. Fortunately, we do have the ability to control a lot of things, like how we can cope with these unsettling feelings.

Understanding Anxiety and Stress

--When you become anxious, your brain is responding to some trigger of fear or danger. Your brain is reacting and in turn, causing your body and mind to react. You have to calm your mind and body so that your brain can resettle.

-The first tip for coping is identifying what triggers us. Is it when we go to work? Is it when we turn on the news? Get on social media? Thinking of finances?

- Once we can identify those triggers we can begin to respond with our mind and body.

WAYS TO COPE

--Find a mantra or saying to repeat when you feel yourself slipping into that uncomfortable place. It can be as simple as “This feeling will pass” or “I am in control.”

--Take deep breaths. This relaxes your body and mind so that your heart rate can go back to normal and your brain knows everything is okay.

--Go for a walk or exercise. Walking and exercise can provide a distraction as well as boost your mood.

--Write down what is bothering you.

--Talk to someone. Call or text someone to get your mind off things or find someone you can talk to about your worries.

--Listen to music.

--Do something you enjoy like cooking, baking, spending time with family, etc.

--Turn those negative thoughts into positive ones. If you make everything negative, then it will always seem that way.

--Meditate. Insight Timer is a free app where you can practice. Even 5 minutes a day can be beneficial in lowering stress.

*Being at home with the family for an extended time can cause extra unpredicted stress. It is important to maintain your mental health and engage in self-care so that you are able to help those around you. If you find that you are struggling, please reach out to a friend, family member, or physician to discuss your situation. The following link provides a variety of websites for help at home.

<https://www.more4kids.info/549/best-parenting-websites/>