

# Mental Health and Wellness and COVID-19

As information about COVID-19 continues to unfold, there can be a wide range of emotions, thoughts and reactions. Here are some helpful resources.

**Common Reactions** – There will be a wide range of reactions over the next days, weeks, months. You may experience:

- Anxiety, worry, panic
- Difficulty concentrating, and sleeping
- Social withdrawal
- Anger
- Helplessness
- Hyper-vigilance to your health and body
- Apathy
- Indifference

## Ways to Live with the Natural Anxiety and Fear:

1. **Notice and Accept** – Notice what you are feeling, and accept it as one of the many feelings you will have today. How does it feel in your body? Accept that whatever emotions you have at this time are valid, and don't try to ignore or fight them.
2. **Pause and Breathe** -Your brain is trying to problem-solve how to keep you safe. In this uncertain time, this can lead to ruminating and overthinking, since there is no clear answer. Breathing at a slow and steady pace tells the body that there is no threat. When the rush of stress hormones stops, your body starts feeling more stable, and you have time to make a choice about how to respond to feeling worried. Worried is one of many feelings you can have, and you can choose what to do with it.
3. **Notice that your worried mood may be activated by your thoughts** – Can you pinpoint what thought is getting stuck, and activating anxiety and fear? This one thought is one of many thousands of thoughts you will have today. Our thoughts about the future are never real – we can't know what the future will hold. Worrying won't help you cope now or in the future, no matter what happens.
4. **Empower yourself** – Take responsibility for your health. Stay informed with the latest health and campus information through the website: <https://www.davidson.edu/alert/covid-19>, and further through the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/>. Follow the health guidelines to protect yourself and others. Then relax.

- **Promote positivity-** Listen to music. Dance. Be creative. Cook something delicious. Creativity and enjoyment can shift your mood from overwhelm to happier and more hopeful.
- **Connect with loved ones-** Connection can relieve stress, enhance self-esteem, and alleviate the effects of emotional distress. Whether you are connecting with those in your home, or at social distancing requirements, staying connected can help.
- **Practice Compassion –** Being told to slow down and stay home can be tough in a society that promotes hard work and being busy. Be patient with yourself as you learn to adapt to a slower pace. Give others compassion as they are also figuring out how to function, find purpose and slow the pace of life.
- **Maintain a regular schedule –** Wake up and go to bed at roughly the same time each day. Exercise and stay physically active as much as possible. Eat a nutritious diet. Schedule time for academics, socializing, and recreation.

**Self Care Steps Provided by the CDC:**

<https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp>