

# MENTAL HEALTH MOMENT

# ANXIETY AND STRESS



The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) encourages adults to understand normal responses to stress during an infectious disease outbreak. It is important to understand that everyone reacts differently to stressful situations. Here are some common symptoms of stress during an outbreak:

**Fear & Worry** We fear for our own health and the health of loved ones. Hypervigilance.

**Changes** Struggling with change is normal. We can notice disturbances in sleep patterns or appetite. Perhaps sleeping to little or too much. Difficulty obtaining restful sleep.

**Difficulty Concentrating** Being easily distracted or losing focus, excessive worry or sadness, irritability or feeling overwhelmed.

## How we can respond effectively

**Take breaks** Take a break from watching, reading or listening to news stories... including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.

**Take care** Take care of your mind, body and wellness. Take deep breaths, stretch or mediate. Try to eat healthy, well balanced-meals. Set a daily exercise routine. Avoid using alcohol or drugs.

**Unwind** Plan time to spend doing activities you enjoy. Read a book. Set new routines which provide a temporary sense of normalcy and require less focused thinking.

**Connect** Social distancing is recommended but remember to maintain social connection. Talk with people you trust about your feelings and concerns. Facetime, Skype or find a digital way to celebrate life events such as birthdays, celebrations and other positive life events.

**Professional help** Still struggling? Now is the time to use the prepaid counseling provided by your employer through the Bowen Center. EAP phone counseling is available, convenient and safe.

The **Mental Health Moment** is provided by your Employee Assistance Program  
To schedule your private and confidential counseling sessions please call:

**1 800 342 5652**