Let’s Talk About Coping Strategies While Social Distancing

Social distancing is a term that we have been hearing frequently as a way to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The CDC guidance on COVID-19 describes social distancing as "remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible." Many people have had to alter their daily lives, such as attending classes online and working from home, because of COVID-19 and social distancing. In response, you might be experiencing high anxiety or stress. It is important to remember to take care of yourself physically and mentally.

Here are some strategies for healthy ways to cope.

1) Creating a routine. By engaging in a routine, you allow yourself to have structure in your day that is predictable. This predictability can provide a reduction in anxiety when there is uncertainty going on around you.

2) Be active. This can be anything from dancing to music in your room to taking a walk outside.

3) Engage in a hobby. This could be something that you have done before that brings you joy or something that you have always wanted to try.

4) Be connected with others. Social distancing does not mean social isolation! Call/text/video chat with your friends and family. Also, platforms have come up with ways to even watch movies with one another at the same time or have a trivia night. Get creative.

The following ideas tend to be unhealthy ways of coping.

1) Using alcohol and other drugs to manage your emotions. You are actually avoiding your emotions by using alcohol and other drugs.

2) Taking in too much news. By doing this, you could be increasing your anxiety or cause agitation/frustration. Instead, try to limit your media coverage intake about COVID-19 and make sure that you are getting the facts from credible sources such as the World Health Organization (WHO) website, the CDC website, or a local/state public health agency.

3) Avoid sleeping or eating more than usual as a way to deal with your stress.

4) Don’t let fear control you. We make better decisions when we are calm and think through situations rather than reacting out of fear.

The biggest thing to remember about coping strategies is that the strategies should help you manage your anxiety and stress and not create more.

For more information about coping strategies, please call the Counseling Center at 765-285-1736.

You Might Want To Know

WELLTRACK is a free online self-help tool that promotes mental wellness on campus. Visit https://bsu.welltrack.com/ and sign up using your @bsu.edu email address.

Counseling Center Services
The Counseling Center is still open and offering support to students via telehealth appointments. Call us at 765-285-1736 to talk with our reception staff about how we can support you. You can also check our website (https://www.bsu.edu/CampusLife/CounselingCenter.aspx). We will continue to update our website if anything changes.