

## Advice and tips to help cope with anxiety about COVID-19:

- **Make self-care a priority.** Eat healthy and regularly, get rest and adequate sleep, exercise, and get sunshine. Go outside for a bit each day, even if it's just for a walk around the block.
- **Stay connected with others** even if you must do so virtually. Isolation can enhance feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and anxiety. Social support is a huge protective factor for all mental health struggles, including depression and anxiety. Reach out to your supports often and regularly. Share your thoughts and feelings with others; it's likely they are experiencing many of the same emotions and concerns as you are.
- **Remember anxiety is a normal response** and helps to keep us safe. Use your feelings of anxiety in constructive ways such as to fuel connection with others and care for yourself.
- **Limit access to social media.** It is important to find a healthy balance between staying informed and becoming overly preoccupied with COVID-19. Frequent checking can increase anxiety and create unnecessary feelings of panic. Tips for creating balance include limiting time on social media (e.g., checking once in the morning) and seeking reputable sources for updates (e.g., AHS website).
- **Create structure and new routines.** Now that classes have been moved to an online format, regular routines may have been disrupted. With so much unpredictability, it helps to know what your day will look like. Make task lists and set goals for yourself each day.
- **Engage in activities that bring you joy and a sense of mastery.** Be creative with your time now that many of your "go-to" activities have been cancelled, like sporting events and concerts. Maybe it's time to dust off the board games, pick up the musical instrument you forgot about, or reread your favorite novel.
- **Find a healthy outlet for your emotions** Try engaging in healthy coping activities such as mindfulness, journaling, yoga and self-care. You can still go for a walk, or be outside in your own yard. Other ideas include cooking or baking, spending time with your family, reading for pleasure, creating a new playlist, taking a long shower or bath. Try to avoid turning to things like drugs or alcohol to numb or escape your feelings.
- **Know you are not alone.** There are many resources available if you need more support at this time:
  - Confidential and free counselling to benefited employees through Homewood Health – call 1-888-713-8623 or on line at <https://homeweb.ca/service/login> - at this point, if counselling is the appropriate service for you and/or your family members, you will be offered telephonic sessions until the spread of the COVID-19 virus is slowed and the guidance from trusted sources reverts to normal.
  - E-counselling is also available as an option.
  - Community counselling and other support services available [here](#)
  - Chaplains and Elders are available on campus and within the community to provide spiritual care and guidance <https://www.uleth.ca/sexual-violence/cultural-faith-supports>

