



Summit  
County

Handling Stressors During the  
Stay-at-Home Order

April 30, 2020



# You Are Not Alone

## Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Information for the NAMI community

[Learn More](#)



- **Manage how you consume information**
- **Follow healthy daily routines as much as possible**
- **Take care of yourself through exercise and movement**
- **Practice relaxing in the present moment**
- **Do meaningful things with your free time**
- **Stay connected with others and maintain your social networks**

**Manage how you consume information**  
Equip yourself with information from credible, reputable sources such as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).



**World Health Organization**



**National Institutes of Health**  
*Turning Discovery Into Health*

***SAMHSA***

Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

**Be selective about how you consume news. It's generally a good idea to stay engaged and informed. Having some limits on your news consumption can help:**

- Watching or listening to the same news constantly can increase stress. Reading can be an easier medium to control how much and what kind of information you're absorbing.
- Set limits on when and for how long you consume news and information, including through social media. It may help you to choose a couple of fifteen-minute blocks each day when you will check news/social media and limit your news consumption to that time.
- False information spreads very easily on social media and can have serious consequences for individual and public health. Always verify sources and make sure they are reputable, especially before sharing anything.

## Follow healthy daily routines as much as possible

Even simple actions can make a difference:

- Make your bed
- Get dressed
- Connect with loved ones
- Move your body
- Make time for breaks

- o If possible, take regular short breaks during work or between shifts. During these breaks, go outside and engage in physical activity if you can.

- Practice good hygiene, especially by cleaning your hands
- Prioritize sleep.

- o Getting enough regular sleep is critical for your immune system

- Eat nutritious food as much as possible, especially fruits and vegetables



## **Take care of yourself through exercise and movement**

Link between exercise and mental health:

- Exercise, brain health and mental health
- Managing stress with exercise

### **Some ideas of how to move more:**

- Walk
- Stretch
- Dance
- Do yoga
- Do cardiovascular exercise

o Research suggests this helps with anxiety and sleep. If you have concerns about balance or joint health, ask your provider about low-impact cardio you can do at home.

- Try free exercise videos on YouTube-yoga, dance exercises, Pilates, cardio, HIIT

## **Practice relaxing in the present moment**

Mindfulness is a way of practicing awareness that can reduce your stress. It involves focusing your attention on the present moment and accepting it without judgment. It may also help people manage some mental health symptoms.

Many medical organizations support mindfulness as a research-based way to lower your stress and boost your physical and emotional health:

- Mayo Clinic: [Tips for Mindfulness & Coping with Anxiety](#)
- [Mass Memorial Center for Mindfulness](#)
- [Mindfulness Program at Johns Hopkins](#)

There are lots of online resources about mindfulness, meditation, breathing exercises and more. Some organizations, including yoga studios, offer free classes online as well.

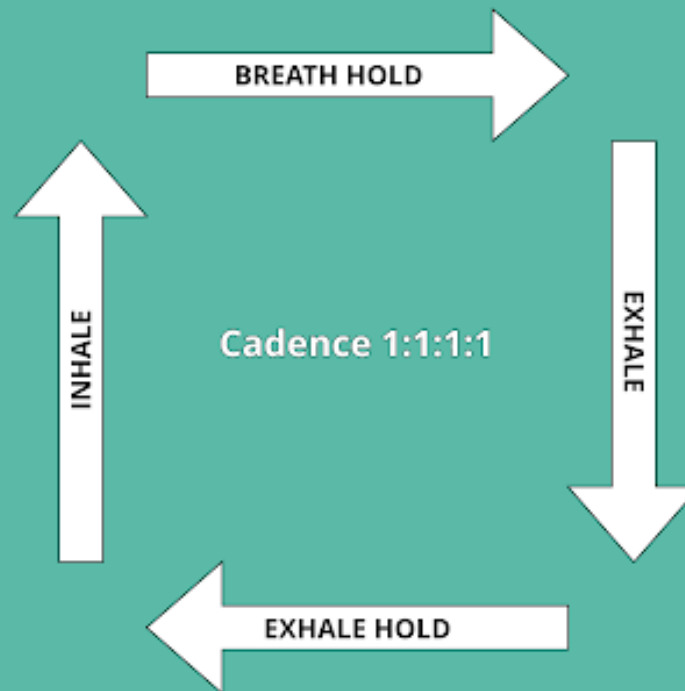
Grounding exercises can help you notice the sights, sounds, smells and sensations around you rather than being absorbed in your thoughts.



## **Meditation**

- There are many types of meditation, but in general, they involve finding a quiet, comfortable place where you can observe your thoughts and focus on your breath. Meditation can help you feel calmer and more relaxed.
- According to the [National Institutes of Health](#), “Some research suggests that practicing meditation may reduce blood pressure, symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety and depression, and insomnia.”
- Meditation apps:
  - [Headspace](#) (free and subscription content)
  - [Calm](#) (free and subscription)
  - [Simple Habit](#) (subscription)
  - [Intimind](#) (Spanish language, free and subscription)
  - [Liberate](#) (free content created by and for people in the Black and African diaspora)
- Breathing exercises can help calm your body and your mind. These exercises often involve [controlling and slowing](#) your breath. They may be especially helpful in managing feelings of anxiety and panic.
  - [Diaphragmatic](#) breathing exercise
  - [Box Breathing](#)

## Box Breathing



**When to Use:**  
Interval Workouts  
Before or During Stressful Events  
As Part of Pre-sleep Bedtime Routine

**Benefits:**  
Reduces Stress  
Promotes Calm  
Improves Mental Focus  
Improves Mood

## **Do meaningful things with your free time**

When you can, do things that you enjoy and that help you relax.

- Read a book/listen to an audiobook. Many public libraries' websites offer free audiobooks.
- Learn a new skill
- Create art—draw, build something, etc.
- Journal or write
- Play puzzles or games
- Take an online course—various free online courses available
- Do tasks around your home. Organize, do crafts, garden, rearrange your living space.
- Cook something new with ingredients you have at home

## **Stay connected with others and maintain your social networks**

Make sure you have the phone numbers and emails of close friends and family

- Stay connected via phone, email, social media and video calls
- Offer to help others if you can
- Ask for help when you need it
- Share how you're feeling with people you trust
- Regularly call, text or email with family and friends who may have more limited social contact—elderly people, those with disabilities, those who live alone, those who are quarantined or at high risk because of chronic health conditions
- If talking about COVID-19 is affecting your mental health, set boundaries with people about how much and when talk you about COVID-19. Balance this with other topics you'd usually discuss.
- If you are living with other people, communicate expectations about how to live well together while staying home
- Do virtual activities together
  - o Plan virtual dinners and coffee breaks
  - o Do at-home crafts and activities over a video call
  - o Watch a virtual concert together
  - o Read the same book or watch the same movie/TV show and talk about it
  - o Play online multi-player video games
  - o Join an online exercise class

## **Find a mental health community**

Being in contact with people who can relate to your experiences can be helpful. It can help you learn information, find resources that suit you and feel supported by people who understand.

- Find a free online support group
- Contact your NAMI Summit County

Gather information about ways you can get help in a mental health emergency or when you want immediate support.

## **Connect to a spiritual or religious community**

Connecting with a spiritual or religious community can be helpful to find strength and consolation in times of distress, loss, grief and bereavement.



Thank you!