Mental Health and Wellness During COVID-19 Pandemic

For each of us the impacts of COVID-19 present different feelings, reactions and responses. As the impacts drag on and uncertainty looms, stress levels may rise and become overwhelming. Concerns that you may be feeling are valid, it is normal to feel stress and worry during a crisis. Here are some resources and tips for managing your mental health and wellness during COVID-19:

- Control what you can control – take ownership of your body, your home and your exposure to social media/news/opinions
- Recognize the signs of anxiety – listen to your body. Identify and write down the five signs (or more) that you are experiencing stress and/or anxiety. Also write down five things (or more) that you do to decompress and that you enjoy doing such as bike riding, fishing, reading a good book. When you start to see the signs of stress within yourself that you wrote down, pick one or two things off the list your wrote for decompressing and resetting. Make sure to post these lists in highly visible places and multiple spots to keep you reminded of what stress looks like for you and how to manage it
- Manage anxiety by staying in touch with loved ones, practice meditation (lots of good free apps available), deep breathing and exercise. Exercise doesn't have to look like running a marathon daily, it can be successfully accomplished with a walk around the block or on your favorite trail
- Set tiny manageable daily goals. Don't further overwhelm yourself by setting expectations that are difficult to accomplish, by setting small goals you eventually work your way to success and getting the desired outcome accomplished

According to Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health "Traumatic or stressful experiences put individuals at greater risk for not only poor physical health but poor mental health outcomes, such as depression, anxiety, and PTSD. You may notice that yourself or others around you are more edgy, irritable, or angry; helpless; nervous or anxious; hopeless, sad, or depressed. Sleep may be disrupted and less refreshing. Practicing social distancing may leave you feeling lonely or isolated. If you are at home with children, you may have less patience than before." Staying fit physically will benefit you in keeping your mental health balanced, some tips include; maintain routines, create structure and eat healthy meals daily. For further resources please see our Covid and Mental Health Page at https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/mental-health-subcommittee