

## Techniques for Managing Stress and Anxiety

Here are some useful suggestions for coping with the stress and anxiety stemming from disease outbreak:

- Limit your exposure to graphic news stories. Get accurate, timely information from credible sources.
- Seek out and follow the experts' advice. Educate yourself about the specific hazards.
- Try to maintain your normal daily routine. Exercise, eat well and rest. Stay busy - physically and mentally.
- Communicate with friends, family and supporters.
- If you are spiritual, use your personal beliefs.
- Keep a sense of humor.
- Express yourself through writing, poetry, drawing, etc.
- Talk and share your feelings with others.

## Staying Connected

### Who We Are:

New Jersey Hope and Healing provides free assistance to New Jersey residents with emotional challenges related to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

### What We Do:

Our trained workers help people with the emotional challenges associated with stress, anxiety and loss and provide brief counseling, information and referrals to additional resources.

### Emotional Support:

Call NJ MentalHealthCares Helpline

(Multilingual Service Available)

**866-202-HELP (4357)**

7 Days/Week, 8 a.m.–8 p.m.

Text NJHOPE to 51684

7 Days/Week, 8 a.m.–8 p.m.

### Individual Crisis Counseling Services

Available through  
NJ MentalHealthCares  
and the Texting Service

### Virtual Support Groups and Additional Information

Visit [mhanj.org/njhope](http://mhanj.org/njhope) for details.

**You are not alone!**

**Call or text for emotional support.**



**Are you  
struggling with  
emotional strain  
related to  
the COVID-19  
Pandemic?  
We're here to help.**

**Toll-Free Helpline:  
866-202-HELP (4357)**



This program is made possible through the NJ Hope and Healing Crisis Counseling Program funded by a FEMA/SAMHSA grant.

## The Emotional Response to Infectious Disease Outbreak

No one who lives through a massive infectious disease outbreak or pandemic is untouched by the experience. The loss of what we consider normal life, becoming ill, concern for the safety of others and the death of a loved one may cause emotional distress and sadness. The need for quarantine and social distance as well as unemployment and financial concerns may cause extreme anxiety and may threaten our sense of control and safety, affecting many aspects of our lives.

Extreme stress related to a disease outbreak may impact our physical and mental health. Dealing with the emotional consequences as soon as possible may help reduce the possibility of long-term problems. Recognizing and handling stress properly may help you meet the challenges of recovering emotionally and help you reclaim your sense of control and security.

### **Remember that you don't have to go it alone!**

There are several services listed on the back of this brochure to assist you in managing the emotional consequences of these events.

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## Many Ways to React... Many Ways to Cope

It is important to remember that there is no one correct way to react emotionally to disease outbreaks. Not everyone reacts the same way, and in fact, you may react in a variety of different ways even in the course of the same day. People get through the emotional challenges of coping with these types of crises in their own time and on their own terms.

The best predictor of how a person will react to a disease outbreak is how he or she has reacted to other challenges in the past. The best strategies for coping are those that have worked well in the past.

To help you manage your emotions use the coping mechanisms that are familiar and comfortable for you. Other ideas for coping are explored in this brochure and may be discussed with counselors and other caregivers.

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## Predicting and Preparing for Emotional Reactions

Those who do react, do so in their own unique way. Some of the more typical emotional reactions may include:

- Sleeplessness, recurring dreams or nightmares
- Trouble concentrating or remembering things
- Feeling numb, withdrawn or disconnected
- Having bursts of anger or intense irritability
- Persistent physical symptoms (such as headaches, digestive problems, muscle tension, etc.)
- Struggling with overwhelming fear and anxiety related to your family's safety
- Avoiding reminders of the disease outbreak
- Being tearful or crying for no apparent reason