Tips to help manage during the COVID-19 outbreak

Here are 7 tips to help you during this time

We are living in unprecedented conditions and many businesses are working remotely or with at least changed working conditions. While some of us are comfortable with working remotely, others may find this difficult. Understandably some of us may have heightened anxiety at this time. To help support you, we have put together a few tips to help you during this time.

1	**Consider all information, not just statistics** **Anxious minds tend to pay attention to negative information**, so be sure to also pay attention to positive stories about COVID-19, such as the experiences of people who have recovered. The best thing is to be mindful about misinformation, as it's tough to trust the flow of information from certain sources. Watch the news each day and don't get influenced by your social media feeds.
2	**Unplug or disconnect when you can** This is where **technology becomes both a blessing and a curse**, we can use technology like social media, that can help us feel a sense of connectivity (see tip 6). The curse of it is it can produce misinformation, or even a sense of feeling overtaxed or overwhelmed because it's prevalent everywhere you go. **Seek information updates at specific times during the day, once or twice – not more.** Try to remove devices at least 2 hours before bedtime to allow your mind to relax.
3	**Stay active** For many of us, a key part of our daily activity is getting to and from work – the average person would take 3,000 steps on their commute. This activity needs to be replaced for your wellbeing and your fitness. Exercise, deep breathing as well as mindfulness and meditation are good ways to help your mind and body. Try to take a walk in your breaks – go around the block or get a regular routine of exercise. Try to do at least 30 minutes a day. Practice mindfulness for 5 -10 minutes each day.

4	**Eat balanced meals, and get to bed on time** It is very easy to snack at home and raid the fridge. Be mindful to keep a good routine with meals. Eat regularly but avoid the bad snacks. When it comes to bed time try not to alter your routine. By staying active during the day you will feel more like sleeping at the right times.
5	**Acknowledge your concerns and frustrations, and don't try to deflect them** Practice tolerating **uncertainty**. The more we are unwilling to accept that these are anxious times, the more anxious we become, so **practice allowing anxiety to be present and remind yourself it is ok to feel anxious.**
6	**Keep in touch with colleagues, family and friends** There's a good chance you may be asked to self-quarantine in the following weeks. But that **doesn't mean you should completely isolate yourself.** You may not be able to be face to face to speak with family and friends and colleagues. Be sure to check in with each other, use the phone and even better use a video chat tool to interact with others. By t**alking with others you can minimise the isolating effect that social distancing** may have on you. Check in on family and friends to see how they are coping but equally as importantly to share how you are coping – it is ok to say that it is tough.
7	**Seek help if you need it** Remember that it is ok to seek help. Speak to your manager, call your HR partner, or if your company provides, one ring the Employee Assistance Program if you need. If you are interested, there are some great insights on the ***Beyond Blue website*** as well as a ***forum/blog.***

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