

Hello to all,

Last week before we all headed out to our remote areas or stayed in place, I sent an email with info regarding additional stress that COVID-19 may have on the victims/witnesses with whom we work. I have spent time with some of my colleagues through emails and calls this week sharing info to relay to our colleagues reminding each of us that we are impacted also.

This is a different time for all of us. Truly once in our lifetimes. So as we go along learning how to steer this barge, we also remind ourselves that we will survive it and are adopting key tools to pass on to future generations. I am going to compile some of the info that has been shared, as I have large amounts. I will also send some of my thoughts on the ways that we may address some of our own stress. I will provide some resources and articles or sites that you may review. Please feel free to forward info to me and I can share it in some format. Thanks to those that have done so already.

Following are a few important tips and tools that continue to emerge for health and wellness during our social distancing. I will be putting these on an email siting them as our ***“Top Ten Tension Tactics”*** for each day. I will add links and sites each day as well.

“Top Ten Tension Tactics”

1. Please keep connected to others. This means calling them, texting and face timing. Facetime and video calling are a technological gift to us at this time. Seeing the faces of others can assist in filling the void of their presence. This can be very meaningful for grandparents if you have the capability to arrange video or facetime at their location. This will reduce isolation and give eyes on those that you may be worried about. This puts another face in the living room.

2. Journaling has been a key idea. We are living life in a unique time. Writing about the event can be helpful to assist in processing your reactions. In addition, think about the info that you may pass on to your children or grandchildren regarding this historic time. Look at it as a monumental time that you can document and educate others about.

3. Remind yourself that it is ok to experience moments of anxiety during the coming days. We have never done this before. The unknown makes us feel off balance. Respect

your own reactions to it as well as others. Some in your family may be experiencing different reactions than you, and that is ok.

4. Exercise. Your gyms may be closed and you may not have gyms at home. There are multiple websites that will provide home exercises without equipment. Exploring those online may provide you with something just right for you. Exercise will release the endorphins that reduce the stress hormones.

5. Spend time with your pets. This can be a “dual tool”! Take your dogs for a walk. Even the slightest of sun provides Vitamin D. This gives the exercise/pets combo. Pets have been shown to reduce stress. They provide multiple levels of mental wellness. Take advantage of these at-home toolkits.

6. Do not engage in media overload. It is important to remain updated, but we can watch too much. Pick a few times a day to stay updated on status and then transition to something else.

7. Continue the hobbies that you are still able to do. You can also create a new hobby that fits the current climate. Investing in hobbies will give some sense of control over something else. Reading a book will enable you to go somewhere else without leaving the house.

8. Practice breathing exercises or meditation for relaxation. If you have never tried it, there is truly no better time to start. You may find this info on multiple websites just by googling “how to meditate” or “breathing exercises”. An excellent tool when having difficulty sleeping is to start by counting backwards from 300. The triple digits seem to force concentration without enabling negative worry to hinder sleep.

9. Talk to each other. Connecting as peers and colleagues can alleviate stress as many are experiencing the same issues. Debriefing with each other is important, not just about work, but what we are all doing in this historic time.

10. Reach out if needed. This will most likely be the same for number ten each day. Reaching out may just be for a conversation, anxiety, debrief, kids or finances. There are multiple ways to do this. Please feel free to reach out to me. Calls are confidential. I also have a list of crisis responders that do this over the phone. I will provide those names and numbers in the next few days. Many of us were available for virtual individual

calls following the Las Vegas Shootings. I have done this myself with some of my colleagues in this field just processing what we are experiencing.

That is it for our top ten today. More to follow tomorrow.

Please feel free to contact me at 740-506-6690. I am providing a few numbers for you as well as websites that might be helpful. Thanks, and keep doing all the great things that you do. My emotional connection to this office runs deep. I am so proud to call you all my brothers and sisters in this work to assist victims of crime. Take care, be well and we will ride this storm together.

Cindy Kuhr

Helpful websites:

- <https://mha.ohio.gov> - Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services; How to manage coronavirus related stress
- [Coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov) - Ohio Department of Health
- <https://das.ohio.gov> - Employee assistance program for State of Ohio
- <https://walkwithadoc.org>
- <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org> - American foundation fo suicide preven
- <https://www.shiftwellness.net> - SHIFT Supporting Heroes in Mental Health Supports wellness for responders and families
- <https://www.safecallnow.org> info and support for PUblic Safety employees and family
- Ohio Crisis Text Line: Text 4HOPE to 741741. A live, trained Crisis Counselor receives the text and responds.