



Stay Resilient During COVID-19

These are difficult times. If you are stressed, you are not alone. The speed at which the pandemic has stopped or changed our lives is like experiencing psychological trauma. People are experiencing numerous stressors associated with job loss, financial stress, uncertainty about the future, increased juggling of responsibilities, disruption of routines and structures and increase in consumptions of news. All this can feel like our foundation is shaking beneath our feet and it takes

that much more energy just to keep from falling down. We are also grieving many losses and potential losses. These include our jobs, holidays, dreams of our futures, time with friends, and even the simplicity of being able to grocery shop in a normal way.

All of this leads to increased

- Anxiety
- Stress
- Depression.

For many men, this can produce irritability and manifest as conflict

and aggression with family members.

With many of our lives turned upside down, we are also at risk of coping in ways that can make things worse like drinking more.

All of this has a negative impact on our brain. We end up reacting or lashing out rather than using our intelligence. During this pandemic, when we feel so many things are out of our control, it can be tempting to try and control those around us.

Do You Display Any of This Behaviour?

- Get angry or insecure about your partner's relationships with others (friends, family, coworkers) and feel possessive?
- Frequently call and text to check up on your partner, or have them check in with you?
- Check up on your partner in different ways? (e.g., read their personal emails, check their texts)
- Feel like your partner needs to ask your permission to go out, get a job, go to school or spend time with others?
- Get angry when your partner doesn't act the way you want them to or do what you want them to?
- Blame your anger on drugs, alcohol, or your partner's actions?
- Find it very difficult to control your anger and calm down?
- Express your anger by threatening to hurt your partner, or actually physically doing so?
- Express your anger verbally through raising your voice, name-calling or using putdowns?
- Forbid your partner from spending money, or require that they have an allowance and keep receipts of their spending?

- Force or attempt to force your partner to be intimate with you?
- Blow up in anger at small incidents or "mistakes" your partner makes?
- Prevent your partner from social distancing, limit or control access to products they need to keep them and their family safe during COVID-19?

Choose Effective Coping Responses

Under the challenging circumstances of COVID-19, we need simple rules to guide our behaviour, especially when stressed and angry or irritable:

- If you are having aggressive thoughts, take a personal time out, such as in the bathroom, until you calm down. Give yourself some private space.
- Slow your breathing to 5-6 breaths per minute to bring your brain back online. Deal with issues only once you have been able to calm down.

Ask for help.

- Call 1-800-563-0808, email VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca, or visit www.victimlinkbc.ca. This phone information and referral service is available 24/7 in multiple languages.
- Call 604-827-0847 to get free counselling and mental health support during the pandemic through the BC Psychological Association.

Try These Actions for Longer-term Coping:

- Take care of your body with activity and healthy food. Avoid alcohol, which suppresses your immune system.
- Keep consistent sleep-wake routines.
- Lower the bar on your expectation of yourself and others.
- Take a break from the news and information.
- Create a schedule. Include self-care: time in nature, exercise, connections to friends via telephone and video.

Remember:

The world is uncertain so to regain control, you need to centre yourself when you feel off balance. Open your mindset when you feel like reacting. Release physical tension through exercise, deep breathing, and lowering expectations. Extend into positive connections. This creates your psychological core. Strengthening that will help you stay resilient in times of stress.

Controlling others is NOT the answer.