COVID-19 Counseling Updates & Stress Management Guide

Counseling Updates

- Students who want to utilize individual counseling have the option of receiving counseling via phone or video conference.
- Group therapy meetings have been canceled for the rest of the semester. If you are part of a group, your group facilitator will contact you about your options for services.
- If you are currently residing outside the state of Texas, our ability to provide counseling services for you may be limited due to laws governing our ability to practice across state lines. Please contact our office if you have questions.

If you want to speak to Counseling Services about any of our available services or to schedule an appointment, you can contact us during regular business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST) at 972-881-5126 or email personalcounseling@collin.edu.

Suicide Prevention:
- Collin County 24 hour Crisis & Suicide hotline: 1(877) 422-5939
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1(800) 273-TALK (8255)
- Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741

Stress Management

It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry during a pandemic. It is important to notice and accept how you feel. Taking care of your emotional health during an emergency will help you think clearly and react to the urgent needs to protect yourself and your family. Self-care during an emergency will help your long-term healing.

1. **Take control of things you can control.** Break down your worries by noting what concerns you most. Focus your time and energy on things within your control. (E.g., “I don’t like that my classes are all online [not within your control], but I’m going to do what I can to set up a new routine [within your control].”) Increase your confidence by taking care of even small things: organize your sock drawer or send an email to your professor about that question you’ve had.

2. **Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings in a non-judgmental manner.** Our emotions are there for a reason. Instead of ignoring your emotions, allow yourself to feel them without judgment. For example, note to yourself “I am having a lot of worrisome thoughts, and that is ok.”

3. **Limit media exposure** and choose your sources wisely. If you are staying up until 3am reading articles about COVID-19, ask yourself whether this is helpful. Choose 1-2 trusted sources like cdc.gov and limit the time you spend on social media or watching the news.

4. **CONNECT with others.** One of the most effective things you can do to feel “normal” during a time like this is to connect with others by phone, chat, or another virtual means. FaceTime a classmate or someone you’ve gotten to know this semester, even if just for a
few minutes. Schedule a weekly gaming night, join a Dungeons & Dragons group, or celebrate a birthday or other celebration via Zoom. Even if you typically do not like virtual meetings, be flexible because this is the safest way to connect during this time. Staying connected will help ensure mental wellness and boost your mood.

5. **Find a new routine, and be flexible.** Your schedule will look different for a while, and you might not feel as productive as usual. That’s okay. Plan on taking some time to adjust to your “new normal”. Keep a list in your phone of things you would like to accomplish, both productive (that paper you’ve been dreading, tidying up your bedroom) and enjoyable (learning a new instrument, listening to a podcast you’ve been wanting to hear or watching a movie you’ve been wanting to see). Schedule time for both types of activities; be kind to yourself if things don’t go exactly as planned.

6. **Take care of your body.** Exercise, dance, do yoga, eat something healthy, sleep, and avoid coping with alcohol or drugs.

7. **Use your counseling resources.** If you would like to set up an appointment to speak with a counselor, email us at personalcounseling@collin.edu or call 972-881-5126. You will have the choice to talk by phone or video.

**Other relaxation tips and tools:**

Use [deep breathing](#) to calm your body down.

Practice meditation with a [mindfulness app](#).

Use [grounding techniques](#) to re-center your focus using your 5 senses.

Try [guided imagery](#) or [progressive muscle relaxation](#).