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Dear Armor Employees,

On behalf of Armor Correctional Health Services, Inc., during this time of public health concern we are sharing tips and pointers for navigating the Coronavirus. Please take some time to review the enclosed information and reach out to your local leadership if you have any questions.



Reducing Emotional Twists and Turns in the Coronavirus Journey

Armor Correctional Health

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“The only thing we have to Fear is Fear Itself” (Franklin Roosevelt at his 1933 inauguration-in relation to The Great Depression)

Coronavirus is a real concern. There is clear scientific guidance on what to do at an individual, community, and national level.

In this pandemic, and as a part of the great American team of Health Care Professionals, you are protecting us all. This is a calling, and you’ve answered that call.

Keep in mind that stress isn’t easy to identify at times-Here are a few signs:

- **Thinking is not as clear:** forgetting things more often; feeling confused; having trouble concentrating; difficulty making decisions
- **Moody, nervous:** anxiousness; anger; guilt; sadness/depression
- **Feeling less well:** stomachaches; very tight muscles; headaches
- **Behaviors that you usually don’t have:** irritability; trouble sleeping or sleeping more than normal; crying easily; worrying excessively; wanting to isolation

Are there lessons for the Coronavirus Pandemic?

Here are 10 Practical Pointers for the Navigation of Coronavirus:

1. **Eat, rest, exercise, and take care of yourself:** This is good advice at any time. It becomes essential when facing new challenges. Emotional and physical resiliency depend on taking care of body and mind. <https://www.samhsa.gov/programs>
2. **Know that your mind may send you down the wrong trail during stress:** Fear can distract you from important tasks The Cleveland Clinic notes, “Although you’ll want to stay informed about COVID-19, it’s important to focus on what you can control. Take a break from media coverage or social media if you find an increase of anxiety
3. **Get your facts straight:** Due to spotty data when the virus was first announced in China, there were multiple lanes of thought-even by the experts. Now that solid data is emerging in Italy and other countries, we have much better and consistent guidance. The CDC is the authoritative resource. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

4. **Keep activities moving forward-even if they are modified:** The Cleveland Clinic also gives the following advice. It can be hard with trips and events being cancelled, schools being closed and the concept of “[social distancing](#)” always at the top of your mind. But it’s important to try to maintain some sort of schedule. Routine makes most people, [especially children](#), feel safe. Try to keep your normal sleep and meal times and focus on activities that make you feel happy – like reading a book, watching your favorite show or playing a board game with your family. Or [take a walk](#), as long as you’re not in quarantine, a little fresh air is always a good idea!
5. **Connect with others:** Learn to share, help others emotionally, and ask for support and help from others. “Giving” and “taking” have strong emotional benefits. Healthy relationships, and a strong support system weather many storms!
6. **Take breaks:** Downtime and re-charging emotionally helps us be sharper and make better decisions. Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Try taking in deep breaths. Try to do activities you usually enjoy.
7. **Stay Informed by routine checks on Expert Opinions:** The CDC notes the following. When you feel that you are missing information, you may become more stressed or nervous. Watch, listen to, or read the news for updates from officials. Be aware that there may be rumors during a crisis, especially on social media. Always check your sources and turn to reliable sources of information like your local government authorities.
8. **Avoid too much exposure to news:** Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories. It can be upsetting to hear about the crisis and see images repeatedly. Try to do enjoyable activities and return to normal life as much as possible and check for updates between breaks.
9. **Seek help when needed:** If distress impacts activities of your daily life for several days or weeks, talk to a clergy member, counselor, or doctor, or contact the SAMHSA helpline at **1-800-985-5990**.
10. **Reconnect with your mental health provider proactively or if any sign of imbalance appears:** If you have been diagnosed and treated for conditions such as Anxiety, Depression or Bipolar Disorder, as well as Schizophrenia or any Substance Use Disorder, please realize that you are at-risk for an exaggerated stress response. It is advised that you connect with your therapist and/or doctor to map out a proactive plan of care. Remember, an “*Ounce of prevention prevents a pound of cure.*”

References for items 5-9

<https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp>