

TIP SHEET Nº3

COPING WITH COVID-19

The world is always changing, bringing new challenges and tough times, alongside everyday life and fun times.

The outbreak of COVID-19 is like any other challenge: it brings up many different feelings. Sometimes these feelings may grow and become difficult to manage. There are lots of different ways to cope with distressing feelings.

How we feel is connected to how we think about situations, what actions we take and our social and cultural context. There are a number of ways to look after your wellbeing/hauora as the community deals with COVID-19.



Spiritual



Social



Cultural

ACTION

There are a lot of different things you can DO to help cope with stress in life and challenges like COVID-19.

TAKE ACTION ON THE PROBLEM

- Doing something to improve your health or to help others, either as an individual or with your friends and family, is an important way to feel empowered, and to contribute.

HAVE FUN

- Have fun in your life - every day, if possible. Do some things that you enjoy, try out new things. Play. Laugh.

LEARN MORE

- Find out more about the facts of COVID-19. Learn about the problems or issues that you are trying to solve. Use your critical thinking and fact checking to make sure you are accessing reliable information. Use this information to decide what to do.

LOOK AFTER YOUR TAHA TINANA / PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

- **Care for your Body**
Your body goes with you wherever you are, from birth to death. Take care of it, speak kindly about it, and listen closely to what it needs.
- **Be Active / me kori tonu**
Get your body moving with exercise or sport, or any activity that you enjoy. It might be a walk, a run, a swim, yoga, kicking a ball, or having a kanikani (dance).
- **Get Resting**
Rest your body (and your brain). Rest allows your mind and body to recover, so take time for resting and doing nothing. Look after your sleep cycle and get plenty of sleep.
- **Be Creative**
Paint, draw or write about COVID-19, or be creative in a way that suits you, to give yourself a break.

GET TO KNOW YOUR FEELINGS



Listen out for how you feel. Ask yourself what you are feeling about COVID-19 (and other situations) and give your feelings names. Write about or draw your feelings about COVID-19.

ACCEPT YOUR FEELINGS

Remember that all feelings are okay, no matter how big or small. Remind yourself that other people feel the same way at times and that all feelings are important.

RIDE YOUR FEELINGS

Remember that feelings are like waves, they come and go and will pass. Imagine yourself surfing the waves of your feelings, riding them as they grow and fade.

EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS

Let yourself cry or hit a pillow. Express your feelings through words, pictures, movement, music, or whatever ways suit your personality and the particular feelings.

LISTEN TO HOW YOUR BODY FEELS

Take notice of how your body feels and give it some attention. Maybe your body wants to move, dance, rest, hide, get warm, be in nature, or seek some comfort. Care for your body and make sure you enjoy some good kai, sleep and rest, and get frequent physical exercise.

MAKE MUSIC

Create a playlist with your favourite tunes for calm and peace, or for feelings of happiness.

GROW YOUR TAHA WAIRUA (SPIRITUAL WELLBEING)

If you find yourself confused or uncertain, take some time to ask yourself, what is important to me and why? Take some time to reflect on the situation: thinking, writing or talking can help clarify what is most important to you right now. Think about your whakapapa (ancestors) and consider what hope and guidance they offer.

Learn about your background and culture to understand more about why you think, act and feel certain ways. Explore the art, stories, and music from your culture, and from other cultures around you, for inspiration and guidance

**Whatungarongaro te tangata
toitū te whenua.**

**As man disappears from sight,
the land remains.**

Take a look at [Aunty Dee's Tips for Celebrating Culture](#).



SOCIAL WELLBEING OR TAHA WHANĀU

SMS

CONNECT

If you are not in self-isolation, using social distancing, get together with other people to enjoy their company, have fun, talk, hang out, and do things together that you're interested in. Unplug and hang out. Join a group or a team. Make a phone call or send a message.

HELP AND BE HELPED

Ask for help. That could mean emotional support to help you cope, or practical help. Be honest when you are struggling and need support. Be kind to others wherever possible, and help other people with what they need. Ask people how they are and listen.

GIVE

Give compliments. Share what you have. If you are not in self isolation and practicing social distancing, volunteer your time or skills. Donate your old toys or clothes.

BELONG

Learn about your background and culture to understand more about why you think, act and feel certain ways. Tune into your whakapapa (ancestors) and spend time with your whanāu (family) to find out more about your tūrangawaewae (your 'place'). Consider your family and cultural values for guidance about how to cope and live with purpose. Make some food from your culture.

LET YOUR VALUES BE VISIBLE

Advocate for someone, stand up to stigma or bullying, join a cause. Speak up and share your thoughts.



THINKING OR TAHA HINENGARO (OUR THINKING AND EMOTIONAL SIDE)

Remember the simple things
that give you joy / Me aro tonu
kinga mea mama noa I ngakau.

CHANGE YOUR SELF-TALK Self Talk is the way you talk to yourself, or the thinking inside your head. Self-Talk can be a powerful influence on how we feel, and on what we do. Identify ways of talking to yourself that are kind, encouraging, helpful and optimistic. First of all, learn to listen to your inside voices, or thoughts. Ask yourself: "Is my Self Talk encouraging me, and is it helping me?" If you find yourself making critical judgements, giving yourself a hard time, or getting stuck with negative thinking about yourself or the world – you can change your self-talk. Ask yourself how would you talk to a friend or "What is a more helpful way to think about this?"

TAKE A THOUGHT BREAK If you find yourself dwelling on COVID-19, give yourself a Thought Break. Change it Up – move from where you are, spend some time thinking about something else fascinating, or turn your mind to something simple like picking flowers, or watching your pet play. Taking time out is not the same as avoiding the issue.

CRITIQUE YOUR WORLD Question, investigate, consider and examine the information coming your way and the views being expressed by others. Watch out for missing information, rumours, misinformation and stigma. Notice the impacts. Consider what you believe and ask yourself 'why do I think this way?'

BE IN THE NOW Being in the now (in mind and body) is called mindfulness and can help us cope with the stress of COVID-19. Each day, take time to notice what you are seeing, feeling and experiencing right now. Let go of thoughts of the past or the future, and just observe what is happening at that moment. Go on a mindful walk and notice your surroundings. Eat some delicious kai/food being aware of every bite. Observe your thoughts from a distance, without judgement, as if the thoughts were clouds in the sky. If you are feeling worried, try just noticing the feeling without judging it or wanting to make it go away. What does it feel like in your body? Labelling in a gentle, friendly way can also help. For example: "Oh, here is worry again, and I can feel my tummy butterflies". When every you feel anxious, bring your mind back to Right Now.

TAKE ONE STEP AT A TIME If you find yourself overwhelmed, use your Self Talk to speak to yourself in a kind and patient voice. Break down what you are trying to do into small, achievable steps.

FOCUS Pick one or two actions you can take during the COVID-19 outbreak to focus on. Keep it simple, write down what you want to do, and acknowledge what you are doing.

BE GRATEFUL Take some time each day to think about what you appreciate and value about your life, your friends and family, and the planet. Stop and really notice what is awesome and cool. Start with the little things. Notice what others are doing to help the community during this crisis. Express your thanks and give compliments. You might even want to start a "gratitude diary" or share what you are grateful for with someone each day.



THE WORLD AROUND YOU



LET NATURE IN

If not in self-isolation and practicing social distancing, spend time in nature and your local community. Aotearoa is full of wonderful places. Discover the awe inspiring, peaceful and special places in your neighbourhood that you want to protect. Climb your mountain. Plant a tree or grow a pot of flowers or herbs. Spend time with animals. Listen to the birds. Catch a wave. Look at the stars. Watch the clouds. Enjoy the sunrise. Forage for food. Swim in your awa (river). Notice the seasons. Visit and care for the land and places of your ancestors.

