

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) COPING WITH JOB LOSS



The stress of unemployment can take a serious toll on your well-being under any circumstance. But during the coronavirus pandemic, your stress levels may be even higher than usual. With our current situation and the state of the global economy, there is a much lower chance of landing a new job anytime soon. It's unclear when social distancing measures will end or what shape the economy will be in when you are able to return to work.

Add in the fear of getting sick, the inability to leave home, and the need to educate your children, and you've got a recipe for an increased risk of mental health issues. Fortunately, there are some things you can do to cope with the stress in a healthy way if you've lost your job. Managing your stress and taking positive action may help you maintain your mental health during this crisis.

TACKLE THE PROBLEM

Your chances of getting another job at the moment are limited, but this doesn't mean you should idly wait for things to get better. You can **take action now** to manage your finances and address your employment situation. This action might include things such as:

Apply for unemployment – Filing for unemployment may reduce your financial strain.

Look for new job opportunities – Actively searching for work can help you feel better, whether it be a new full-time job or just a way to make money for now.

Create a budget – Creating a budget can help you gain a better sense of control over your financial situation.

Manage your payments – Explaining your situation to your credit card company, mortgage lender, and other financial institutions may help lower your payments. Financial institutions may also grant you more time to pay your bills.

Search for helpful resources – Whether you want to talk to a career counselor, or you're looking for help with paying your electric bill, there may be resources available.

Further your education – Taking classes for credit or signing up for an online course for your own enrichment could be helpful to your career.

Update your resume – Updating your resume (and asking for feedback) might increase your chances of landing a job when applying for new positions.

TACKLE HOW YOU FEEL

In addition to addressing your employment issues, you can also address your emotional stress head-on.

Practice good self-care – Getting plenty of sleep and eating a healthy diet is key to managing your stress. You need to take care of your body if you want your mind to function at an optimal level.

Maintain social interaction – Video chat, talk on the phone, or message friends and family regularly. Positive social interaction can greatly improve your mental health.

Structure your day – Staying on a schedule can help you feel better. Create time to work on your job situation, time for leisure, and time to do things that help improve your mental health.

Get physically active – Exercise is a key component to good mental health. You may need to get creative since most gyms are closed, but working out in your living room can go a long way toward helping you stay physically and mentally healthy.

Reach for healthy coping skills – Writing in a journal, meditating, deep breathing, and yoga are just a few examples of healthy ways to relieve stress.

“Change the channel” when you're dwelling on things you have no control over will keep you stuck in an unhealthy state. If you find yourself thinking about how awful your life is, interrupt yourself. Get up and do something to change the channel in your brain.