

CBMHS WEEKLY REFLECTION

Maintaining Mental Health During Challenging Times

Dear Friend. All of us are coping with two pandemics right now: the Covid19 virus and the ANXIETY virus, that is sweeping all communication media, overwhelming those who are most sensitive and vulnerable.

Just as there are common sense measures that everyone can do to help slow down the spread of the virus (frequent hand-washing and social distancing) there are common sense measures that all of us can do to stay calm and connected.

Moving forward, Church Based Mental Health Services will recommend three effective practices each week for strengthening coping skills during this period of increased vulnerability uncertainty: **1) a breathing practice, 2) a social outreach practice, 3) and a prayer.**

Dr. Carol Turner, Consulting Psychologist, CBMHS

KEEP CALM

Keep Calm is something that will help you. There are four simple steps to remember.

1. Tell yourself, "STOP AND TAKE A LOOK AROUND." Notice you are safe now.
2. Invite yourself to, "KEEP CALM." You can choose to breathe now.
3. Take a deep breath through your nose while you count to FIVE, hold it while you count to TWO, then breathe out through your mouth while you count to FIVE.

Repeat these steps three times. Then notice how you feel.

Don't forget to pray. Here is one for this week by Cameron Wiggins Belm of Washington.

May we who are merely inconvenienced

Remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors

Remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home

Remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close

Remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips

Remember those that have no place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market

Remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home

Remember those who have no home.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other,

Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God (or a higher power) to our neighbors. Amen.

Connect with Others for Good.

Turn off the news for an hour and call someone instead. Focus on the positive: Tell the person you are thinking about them, that you love them and ask if they need anything. If the conversation turns to worry, invite a Keep Calm Breathing Practice together... Human Beings are wired to match one another's breathing patterns. You can calm yourself and help someone else become more calm.

