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## Preparing for the Coronavirus By Taking Care of your Whole Self

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The news about the Coronavirus has been unsettling for many. The Vermont Department of Health is closely monitoring the spread of the Coronavirus and provides current information on their website which can be found at: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/infectious-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus>.

We also recognize, however, that the uncertainty about the Coronavirus may cause anxiety and general stress for many Vermonters. People want to know if it will become a significant problem in Vermont, and whether it will cause serious illness for themselves or their loved ones. Without clear answers to these and other questions, such uncertainty can become problematic if we aren't aware of our feelings.

The Vermont Department of Mental Health is providing information on how to take care of ourselves in the face of these unknowns. As the World Health Organization says, "There is no health without mental health."

### **What can we do?**

First, take time out of your day for some self-care. Remain calm and gather information from reliable sources (such as the [Centers for Disease Control](#) and the [Vermont Department of Health](#)). Helping others helps as well, so consider offering support to someone who is struggling with anxiety or fear of the Coronavirus. The stress of worry and anxiety can take a toll on the immune system, and remaining calm and focused may help support our health and well-being. Some more specific steps are below.

### **Pay Attention to Your Body and Your Emotions**

It's natural to experience stress and anxiety in the face of uncertainty. Everyone reacts differently, so it is important to determine what your needs are.

- Listen to your emotions, noticing any anxiety, sadness, anger, or detachment.
- Listen to your body, noticing any change in appetite, new aches and pains, or feeling particularly hot or cool.
- When you notice troubling symptoms, pause to care for your body and mind (see the suggestions on how to do this below).
- If you become unable to manage or function well, seek the assistance of a professional

- For immediate assistance, text VT to 741741
- For local crisis assistance numbers, see the listing on the Department of Mental Health's website here: [How to Get Help Locally](#)
- You can also call 2-1-1 for assistance locating someone near you

### **Taking care of your Mental Health by Practicing Self-Care**

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health challenges during this time, here are a few tips to stay emotionally healthy.

- Maintain your normal routines
- Connect with family and friends
- Eat well and stay active
- Get adequate rest
- Do enjoyable activities
- Employ coping skills that nurture your spirit, like [mindfulness](#) exercises or prayer