

Substance Use during Uncertain Times

Persons who are isolated and stressed – as much of the population has been during the past two years – frequently turn to substances to alleviate their negative feelings.

Experts advise against excessive use of substances such as alcohol or marijuana to help reduce stress, anxiety, and loneliness. While drugs and alcohol may help you feel calm in the short term, they may heighten fear, anxiety, withdrawal, and depression in the long term.

Positive coping mechanisms have healthier long-term outcomes. Fortunately, there are a lot of good options that you can try. Check out these 8 tips and add your own healthy ideas to the list.

Positive Coping Mechanisms:

1. Practice mindfulness. The practice of mindful meditation involves sitting comfortably, focusing on your breathing, and then bringing your mind's attention to the present without drifting into concerns about the past or future. Research suggests that mindfulness can help ease stresses like anxiety, depression, and pain.

2. Get outside. Go for a walk, hike, do some gardening. A change of scenery can be great for mood.

3. Get Moving! Even mild exercise will help calm your mind and lower stress levels. Aim for 20 minutes several times a week. If you're not up for a high-energy workout, find a leisure activity that you enjoy, like working in the garden or washing your car.

非常時期勿濫用藥物和酒精

這兩年來，大多數人都感到孤立而壓力繁重，這種情況常會導致人借助藥物或酒精來緩解他們的負面情緒。

專家建議，非常時期，大家別為了減輕壓力、焦慮和孤獨感，轉向酗酒或過量服用大麻等藥物。儘管這些藥物和酒精會在短期內讓你平靜，但長遠看來，它們可能會加深恐懼、焦慮、退縮和抑鬱的程度。

應對生活，態度積極——這種機制對健康具有長期的良好效果。真是運氣，我們有很多良好選擇可以逐一嘗試。比如，查看以下八個建議，同時，把你的健康秘訣也增添到這一名單裡吧。

積極的應對機制

1. 練習覺察自我的正念。練習覺察自我的正念和冥想，舒適放鬆地坐著，專注於自己的一呼一吸，注意力集中在此時此刻，思緒不飄到對過去和未來的莫名擔憂。研究表明，覺察自我的冥想正念，可以幫助你舒緩心理壓力，如焦慮、抑鬱和疼痛。

2. 到戶外去。散步、遠足，幹一些園藝活兒，改變一下眼前景致對穩定情緒有很大幫助。

3. 動起來！即使最輕微的運動，也有助於撫慰你的心靈，降低壓力水平。爭取每週做幾次20分鐘的運動，如果不願意做高能量的運動，就找一項你喜歡的休閒活動，比如在花園裡幹活或洗車。



4. Distract yourself. Join an online book club like the ones at Goodreads. Pick from 3300 TED talks to stir your curiosity. Create a playlist of songs you enjoy. Play games that engage your mind such as Sudoku, crossword puzzles, or online chess.

5. Stay Connected. If you are feeling lonely, reach out to family and friends. Get emotional support by sharing your concerns with people you trust. Let them know how they can help

6. Relax. Do what makes you feel happy and calm, such as taking a bath or reading a book. Try a simple breathing exercise to ease stress: Sit comfortably on the floor or in a chair. Breathe in through your nose. As you do it, count to five. Breathe out through your nose to the count of five. Repeat several times.

7. Allow your feelings. If you notice that you are having strong feelings, acknowledge them. Don't try to ignore or deny them.

8. Get help. If you feel overwhelmed, or if anxiety is interfering with your everyday life, consider talking with your doctor or consulting with a counselor. For more information about substance use, call SAMHSA's (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) Helpline at 1-800-662-4357 for free information and referral.

Learn about [Mental Health and Addiction Services](#) at El Camino Health or call **650-988-8468** for more information.

4. 分散自己的注意力。加入一個在線讀書俱樂部，比如 Goodreads 上那些讀書項目；或從3300個TED講座中，選一個你好奇的節目收看；或建一個你喜歡的歌曲播放列表，玩一些吸引你注意力的遊戲，如數獨、填字遊戲，或在線下盤象棋。

5. 保持聯繫。如果你感到孤獨無助，可以向家人和朋友求助。通過與你信任的人分享你的擔憂，來獲得情感支持。讓親友知道可以如何幫助你。

6. 放鬆。散做一些使你感到快樂和平靜的事，如泡個澡或看本書。練習簡單的呼吸來緩解壓力：舒適地坐在地板上或椅子上，用鼻子吸氣，數到1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 再重複做5次。

7. 接受自己的感受。如果你察覺自己有一種強烈感覺，接納和承認它，而不是試圖忽視或否認。

8. 獲得幫助。如果你感到迷茫痛苦，或者焦慮干擾了你的日常生活，考慮與你的醫生交談或諮詢專業治療師。有關濫用藥物和酒精的更多信息，請致電SAMHSA's（藥物濫用和精神健康服務管理局）熱線服務電話1-800-662-4357，以獲得免費信息和轉介服務。

El Camino Health [提供的有關藥物使用的資源和醫療服務](#)或致電 **650-988-8468**