GSAPP/ NEW JERSEY
HOPE AND HEALING
PRESENTS

COPING WITH SOCIAL ISOLATION
WEBINAR
WHO WE ARE
FEMA/SAMSA
CRISIS COUNSELING PROGRAM

The Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program (CCP) is a federally funded supplemental program administrated by the U.S. Department of Human Services (DHS) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Webinar Goal:
To learn about social isolation, what the signs are, and how you can help yourself if you are experiencing social isolation.
Experiencing social isolation is hard
You are not alone

How we can help
It is important to understand what social isolation is, recognize that you are not going through this alone, and figure out how you can cope and address it.

What is Social Isolation?
What is Coping?
Active Strategies
WHAT IS SOCIAL ISOLATION?

Social isolation is the lack of social connection. Social isolation can lead to loneliness in many people. This can happen when there is a lack of desired quantity and quality of social connection in one's life.

Quarantine and social distancing measures limit the opportunity to socialize, leaving many people feeling lonely.

It is normal to have a variety of feelings and reactions to social isolation. Uncertainty about the future can cause feelings of anxiety, depression, and isolation.
COMMON REACTIONS

LONELINESS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO INCREASES IN STRESS LEVELS AND LEAD TO ADVERSE HEALTH OUTCOMES, SUCH AS:

1. Increase in blood pressure
2. Feelings of fear, sadness, worry, numbness, or frustration
3. Physical reactions such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, rashes
4. Sleep disturbances (insomnia)
5. Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
6. Increased risk for a variety of physical and mental disorders

UNHEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHANGES

- Smoking
- Increased alcohol and substance use
- Physical inactivity
- Poor diet
- Change in energy levels
- Lack of desires or interests
- Noncompliance with medical prescription

WHY ARE THESE CHALLENGES SO COMMON?

- Restriction of movement
- Loss of social connections
- Loss of employment and financial worries
- Fear of contagion
- Fear of lack of access to basic supplies and medicine
At Risk Groups

INDIVIDUALS ARE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES DURING SOCIAL ISOLATION

SOME RISK FACTORS INCLUDE:

- Have pre-existing mental health conditions, such as depression and anxiety
- Affected by bereavement, hospitalization, and illness
- Struggling with substance use
- Living alone
- Unemployed or lost income
- Under mandatory quarantine
- Young people, due to closures of colleges, sports, and entertainment facilities

Smaller social network and lack of medical support exacerbates these conditions.

MANY COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE AFFECTED DUE TO IMPACTED ROUTINES

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?
WHAT IS COPING?

Coping mechanisms are strategies that are used in order to relieve stress and manage painful emotions.

COPING MECHANISMS TO ADDRESS SOCIAL ISOLATION

- Maintain your social network
- Stay in contact with family and close friends at a frequency that feels comfortable to you
- Maintain contact virtually, such as over the phone, through video calls (zoom, skype, etc), and on social media
- Keep a routine and schedule
- Engage in peer activities on a regular basis

MORE STRATEGIES

IF YOU WANT TO CREATE NEW SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

- Connect with the resources at your university,
  - Student life
  - Clubs and organizations
  - Volunteering opportunities
- Join student groups based on hobbies/interests
- Hope and Healing virtual groups coming up where you can interact with other people from your school experiencing social isolation
REDUCING VULNERABILITY

BY TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF, YOU CAN REDUCE YOUR VULNERABILITY TO EXPERIENCING STRESS. IT MIGHT FEEL EASIER TO COPE WITH HARDSHIP!

A CAR CAN’T RUN ON AN EMPTY TANK OF GAS. BE SURE TO FILL YOUR BODY’S GAS TANK TO HANDLE WHAT COMES YOUR WAY.

JOY

MAKE TIME FOR YOUR HOBBIES AND INTERESTS. EVEN IF IT IS A BRIEF PART OF YOUR DAY, BE SURE TO EXPERIENCE SOME JOY!

MENTAL HEALTH

- Take breaks from watching news and from coursework to set aside time for yourself
- Seek professional mental healthcare if your stress, anxiety, or mood begin to interfere with your daily functioning [national help line SAMHSA]
- https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline

HEALTH & WELLNESS

- BE SURE TO MAINTAIN A CONSISTENT SLEEP SCHEDULE [LINK TO SLEEP FLYER!]
- EAT A WELL-BALANCED DIET
- STAY HYDRATED
- GO OUTDOORS
- EXERCISE REGULARLY (E.G., WALKS)
WHAT'S NEXT?

- Weekly virtual group for 4 weeks
- Hosted by us, for NJIT students
- Groups for residential and commuter students
- [link to flyer]

NJ HOPE AND HEALING RESOURCES

- Instagram: gsapp_nj_hopeandhealing
- Contact us at: njhopeandhealing@rutgers.edu
- https://gsapp.rutgers.edu/centers-clinical-services/ ccp-fema-samhsa

The Center for Psychological Services (CPS) of the Rutgers Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (GSAPP), in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Human Services’ Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Disaster and Terrorism Branch, offers this Crisis Counseling Program through a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA/SAMHSA) grant. This program is brought to you through the New Jersey Hope and Healing Crisis Counseling Program.