How to Stay Calm

It can be challenging to remain calm when the world around us is rapidly changing, our normal routines may be disrupted, and we are maintaining physical distance from family and friends.

If you are experiencing stress or becoming overwhelmed, the following strategies may help to return to calm.

Set boundaries on news consumption	• While it is natural to seek information about the COVID-19 public health crisis, we must also take steps to protect our mental health. • Try limiting media updates to between one and three designated times per day. • In the interim, make a concentrated effort to place your attention elsewhere.
Physical activity	• Small bursts of exercise throughout the day are just as effective as one longer session and can help regulate your mood and sleep patterns. • It is possible to keep active even when confined indoors – dancing, playing with children, and performing chores such as cleaning are other means to stay active at home.
Stay in the moment	• When you are overwhelmed, take a moment to pause, stop, and listen. • Think about *just this moment* –what is happening in your environment? • Notice how you feel emotionally and physically. • Use your senses to notice what is around you. • Welcome difficult moments with friendliness and curiosity and try to take one moment at a time.
Focus on one thing at a time	• It can be a chaotic time with many situations in your family, at work and school changing rapidly. • Remind yourself to focus on one thing at a time. • What action can you take at this difficult moment? What can wait until another day? • Do you need to ask for help?
Breathe	• Notice your natural breathing. Take a few moments to become aware of it. • If you're able, try to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth with a big sigh. • Do this a few times and see if you can slowly lengthen and deepen your breathing.
Compassion	• Be compassionate with yourself and others, acknowledging that what we are feeling is a normal response to a stressful situation. • This is a time to treat ourselves and others kindly, recognizing that we are all in this together and doing the best we can.

Reference: Managing Anxiety during the COVID-19 Outbreak – Suzanne Brown and Caitlin Brown, Wayne State School of Social Work
https://socialwork.wayne.edu/announcement/77956?fbclid=IwAR1gP2NvR7iqwg7XQddzaBJbc8cdxUReoZGQj_gvrSk6eww0v2y-iGg2R4