

## Feeling Worried About Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Many students may feel understandably anxious about the impact of COVID-19 disease, the new Coronavirus disease spreading throughout the world and recently diagnosed within our state. The continual news feeds combined with rampant uncertainty can wreak havoc on the mental health of students who are already stressed by the routine demands of college life. Below are a few tips and links to multiple resources to help you keep a perspective and stay emotionally well.

- **Acknowledge your reactions** and the reactions of your friends and family. Simply validating that this is a difficult time for everyone can be reassuring. Approaching this issue as a family can feel empowering and less isolating.
- **Maintain your regular routine** as much as possible. Continue with your regular plans until advised to alter them by competent authorities.
- **Take care of yourself.** While this may seem obvious, it is always easy to ignore our own self-care when distressed, which simply increases stress. Eat healthy, exercise, use hand washing and other reasonable precautions against virus transmission. Use your own typical calming rituals or outlets to stay internally chill. Stay connected to friends in safe ways and avoid isolating unless directed to do so.
- **Treat other people with kindness and compassion;** especially avoiding the stigmatization of certain groups of people due to country of origin or travel. Such treatment simply drives fear and inhibits care. For more information on building resilience and avoiding stigmatization, follow this link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/related-stigma.html>
- **Use social media to maintain contact with friends** (it is “social” media after all) and get your news from more reliable sources. If you need to distance yourself from others for a time, take steps to ensure your emotional health such as suggested here: <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4894.pdf>
- **Stay informed** by getting your information from competent sources like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention which can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- For UTK specific information go here: <https://utk.edu/coronavirus>
- **Seek support when needed.** Reach out to family and friends. Stay connected to your spiritual or religious resources. Come to the counseling center if you begin to have thoughts of self-harm or suicide or just feel that your distress calls for professional assistance.
- For more tips on coping with COVID-19 related stress look here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/coping.html>