

A person wearing a dark, patterned hooded garment is seen from behind, looking out over a body of water under a cloudy sky. The person's head is slightly tilted upwards. The background is a soft-focus landscape with water and distant land.

MANAGING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH IN A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY

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ORDER OF BUSINESS

- ▶ understanding difference between stress and anxiety
- ▶ understanding why we're all simultaneously fatigued and hyper-activated
- ▶ impact on health and relationships
- ▶ practical tips
- ▶ Q & A



A person in a dark suit is shown from the chest up, with their hands resting on a clear glass. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. The person's face is partially visible through the glass, appearing somewhat obscured and distorted. The background is a plain, light color.

STRESS OR ANXIETY?

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
EUSTRESS AND DISTRESS?

**HYPER-ALERT
& FATIGUED**



WHAT'S INCREASED?

- ▶ Time
- ▶ Uncertainty
- ▶ Change
- ▶ Active thinking
- ▶ Possibilities
- ▶ Job uncertainty

WHAT'S DECREASED?

- ▶ Knowledge
- ▶ Control
- ▶ External Reinforcement
- ▶ Space
- ▶ Coping Outlets
- ▶ Frustration tolerance

WHAT'S INCREASED?

- ▶ Time w/ family
- ▶ Time alone
- ▶ Stress for everyone
- ▶ Boredom
- ▶ Observations
- ▶ Concern and criticism

WHAT'S DECREASED?

- ▶ Time with friends
- ▶ Time with colleagues
- ▶ Physical contact and interaction
- ▶ Empathy

THE EFFECTS

- ▶ Constant state of fear
- ▶ Heightened state of arousal
- ▶ Chronic threat response
- ▶ Hyper-arousal survival mode

Our sympathetic nervous system can only stay in that overwhelmed, almost frenetic state for so long before we crash



THE CONSEQUENCES

- ▶ Poor sleep
- ▶ Loss of interest & pleasure
- ▶ Loss of human connection & interaction
- ▶ boredom turns to numbness turns to depression
- ▶ Physical and emotional exhaustion / collapse
- ▶ Hopelessness
- ▶ Helplessness
- ▶ emotional outbursts



WHAT TO DO?



RESET EXPECTATIONS

- ▶ Focus on what you can control
- ▶ Be intentional, not passive (locus of control)
- ▶ Reset expectations
- ▶ Create a schedule
- ▶ Focus on short, specific units of time
- ▶ Practice self-compassion
- ▶ Stay active (i.e., move around)
- ▶ Ask for what you need

THERAPEUTIC TOOLS & TIPS

Mindfulness activities

- ▶ Yoga
- ▶ Meditation
- ▶ Deep breathing

Externalizing activities

- ▶ Journaling / Writing
- ▶ Art
- ▶ Music

COGNITIVE TOOLS

Grounding tools vs. Interventions

- ▶ Can you do anything about it?
- ▶ If not, employ grounding technique
- ▶ If you can - then employ behavioral intervention

COGNITIVE REFRAMING – CHALLENGING DISTORTED THINKING

- ▶ Making assumptions
- ▶ Catastrophizing
- ▶ Fixation on the negative
- ▶ All-or-nothing
- ▶ Mind Reading
- ▶ Personalization
- ▶ “Shoulds” / Perfectionism
- ▶ “I can’t”
- ▶ Intolerance of Uncertainty

FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIP TIPS – IT BEGINS AND ENDS WITH COMMUNICATION

- ▶ Prioritize your self-care
- ▶ Talk often
- ▶ Be honest
- ▶ Clarify roles and needs
- ▶ Carve out your space
- ▶ Adjust boundaries - respect boundaries
- ▶ Monitor making assumptions
- ▶ Schedule together time, alone time, and dates
- ▶ Prioritize kindness, compassion, and empathy
- ▶ Be flexible and adaptable
- ▶ Get creative
- ▶ Unplug
- ▶ Don't sweat the small stuff

SINGLE OR DATING

- ▶ Be intentional about your intentions
- ▶ Focus on you
- ▶ Avoid over-reliance on someone meeting all your needs
- ▶ Embrace this time for friendship and family
- ▶ Accept loneliness when it hits
- ▶ Reach out - don't wait for others to reach out to you

QUESTIONS?



THANK YOU

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