

COPE with COVID

by Bernadette Mazurek Melnyk

First of all, I want to give you some Vitamin G for Gratitude today. I am so incredibly grateful for you and your dedication, passion, caring and commitment during this COVID-19 pandemic. Never forget how much of a positive impact that you are making in the world. Taking a dose of Vitamin G every morning is a powerful evidence-based tactic for reducing stress and improving mood. Even in the darkest of times, we have people and things for which to be grateful, so make it a habit to count those blessings daily.

There is a saying: When it rains, it pours. We have certainly had a lot of rain and storms in 2020, however, there is hope: rainbows follow rain. We are in for a lot of rainbows this year, so look for them on a regular basis and take time to appreciate them when they happen.

Remember, you cannot pour from an empty cup, so it is critical for you to take good self-care. When we get on an airplane and the oxygen masks drop, we are told to place them on ourselves before our children. It is not selfish to prioritize a little self-care every day. Even if you don't feel like it, do it to feel emotionally better.



COPE with COVID

- C**ontrol the things that you can, not the things you can't
- O**pen up and share your feelings
- P**ractise daily stress reduction tactics, including physical activity
- E**ngage in mindfulness; be here now; *worry will not help!*

- C**ount your blessings daily
- O**verturn negative thoughts to positive
- V**olunteer to help others
- I**dentify helpful supports and resources
- D**o your part to prevent spread of the virus

- Bern Melnyk



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Other tips to continue to COPE with COVID include:

Join the Mask On/Mood Up Movement! When you put your mask on, remember to do these 3 evidence-based tactics that have been shown through research to decrease stress and improve mood:

- Take 3 deep abdominal deep breaths using the 5-7-8 method. Breathe in for a count of 5, hold it for a count of 7 and breathe out slowly for a count of 8.
- Be kind to yourself: say a positive self-affirmation 10 times (e.g., I am strong; I am safe: I am too blessed to be stressed).
- Be kind to others: name one person you are grateful for today; tell that person with specifics (e.g., I am grateful for you because you let me vent when I am stressed).

Even during these very character-building times, let's keep asking ourselves, what can we do in the next 5 years if we know we cannot fail? Let's keep dreaming, discovering, and delivering to continue to transform health, improve lives and create a healthier world. I believe in YOU!

Warm and well regards,
Bern

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