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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Coronavirus and the Impact on Mental Health**

*Statement from Bonnie Cook, President and CEO of Mental Health America of Greater Dallas*

DALLAS, March 12, 2020 – Anxiety levels continue to increase as the number of Coronavirus cases rise. The mental health effects of COVID-19 are as important to address as are the physical health effects. Mental health is integral to physical health. We need to take measures to provide support to the 1 in 5 adults who already have mental health conditions – or the 1 in 2 who are at risk of developing them.

- **Use your phone to stay connected to family and friends. Shift from texting to voice or video calling to feel more connected.**
- **If you monitor the 24-hour news cycle, consider limiting exposure to reduce anxiety.**
- **Continue regular home activities and hobbies. (Find that puzzle in the back of the closet!)**
- **Be flexible. Understand that disruptions will occur.**
- **Practice self-care – mediation, journaling, deep breathing, exercise – whatever works for you.**
- **Practice healthy, positive self-talk.**
- **Unplug, learn to be in the moment.**
- **Don't do anything you'd consider to be unhealthy for you. This includes excess drinking. Be mindful of actions that will just increase your anxiety afterwards.**
- **Keep looking forward. Make some plans for six months down the road.**

-MORE-

## -CORONAVIRUS AND IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH-

Mental Health America of Greater Dallas in partnership with our national organization and is using its online screening tools to monitor the increase in anxiety. Between the first two weeks of February and the last two weeks of February, we experienced a 19 percent increase in screening for clinical anxiety. During the first 11 days of March, anxiety screenings increased by an additional 12 percent.

We will provide free material on coping with the pandemic in our resiliency-oriented Mental Health Month toolkit that will be released late march.

MHA-Dallas will continue to monitor anxiety and offer free [tools](#) to address it. We are also encouraging the community to take free [mental health screenings](#) on our website at [mhadallas.org](http://mhadallas.org).

The mental health effects of the CVOID-19 outbreak will continue to remain for months to come. It is in our best interest to combat the increase in anxiety by providing online mental health resources and tools.

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Mental Health America of Greater Dallas is a 501 3(c) nonprofit whose mission is to spread mental health awareness through education, advocacy and programming in the greater Dallas community. The organization continuously works within the community to achieve these goals.