

Self-management in the moment

Quick tips to support yourself during the COVID-19 pandemic

As a health care provider and essential worker, you may experience some heightened emotions as a response to your role during the COVID-19 pandemic. Psychological pressure, helplessness, loneliness, stress, physical and mental fatigue and burnout syndrome are a few of the negative impacts known to health care providers working during this time.

Proactive self-reflection will help you to observe and recognize how different stressors affect you. Keep track of how you react in various situations and become aware of what affects your mind, body and behaviour.

As a health care provider, you can manage your reactions during stressful situations by implementing practices that help you to centre and ground yourself. Below is a list of techniques to help you do so.

Technique	Method
Breathe	Inhale deeply. Pause for three seconds. Exhale slowly. Repeat.
Focus	Focus on your client and track the person's words (i.e., use active listening).
Clasp hands	Give each hand a series of gentle squeezes.
Control thoughts	Dismiss negative thoughts. Focus on what you can do now.
Plan	Review your plan step-by-step.
Affirm	Tell yourself you can do this. Remind yourself of successful results in the past.
Remain trauma-informed and -aware	Remind yourself this situation can be a reaction caused by a past trauma. Understand that you need to approach things with empathy and understanding, and to alleviate judgement.
Move	Change your body position.
Scan the environment	Are there other clients, family members or objects that need to be moved? Notice details: Where are you positioned in the room and in relation to others? Where are your support people? Where are the exits for you and the other people in the room?
Ground	Wiggle your toes. Focus on lowering the arch of your foot to the ground. If seated, feel the back and seat of the chair.
Walk slowly	Notice each step.

For further mental health support, view CAMH's resources for health care workers or any of the other resources here: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-support-people#section-4>.

S., Kessler, F., Narvaez, J. (2020). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of healthcare professionals. *Public Health Notebooks*, 36 (4).

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This information sheet is not intended to be a resource for people who require screening for COVID-19 or who are experiencing a mental health crisis. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, please call 911 immediately or go to your nearest emergency department.

For more information, visit www.camh.ca/covid19

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