

Communication from the Office of the ACBH Director –

Remembering your Behavioral Health during the Coronavirus – one ***hour at a time...***

In addition to continued focus on personal hygiene, social distancing, shelter in place orders, and staying home while sick; it is important that we keep in mind our own Health and Wellness, ***from a behavioral health perspective.***

The ever-changing landscape and daily reports surrounding the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), can provoke a number of normal stress reactions that may go unrecognized.

According to the *Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress (CSTS)*, “*Community response to outbreaks is governed by perception of risk (not actual risk) with a variety of factors impacting community distress...*” As a result, we can anticipate that the mere coverage of COVID-19 events, situation updates provided by local organizations, the media, and lively discussion within our own homes – can sometimes lead to internalized distress or vicarious traumatization.

Social connections or those normal social activities that were generally useful in managing stress may now, as a result of COVID-19 precautions, be ill-advised. Yet we know that finding alternative creative ways to reach out and be connected with other individuals helps to minimize distress and isolation.

However, if you (like many others) find it overwhelming as you attempt to balance work, emails, text messages, personal life, school closures, nationwide fears around unemployment or the economy; AND the rapidly changing worldwide landscape that is the Novel Coronavirus – NOW may be a call to action to ***support your own behavioral health one hour at a time...***

Whenever possible, I am encouraging everyone to “just be” for at least an hour daily. *If you are not involved in an essential activity at the time, use those 60 minutes to STAY HOME and shut down your computer or your emails, paint, refocus on your goals, pray or meditate, remember what gives you joy – or simply, listen to your favorite songs or read your favorite book.*

Whatever each of us can do to shelter in place ***and recalibrate*** each day – I ask you to do across our shared community. Imagine, for just one hour we each might be contributing to lowering the Coronavirus curve AND supporting our collective behavioral health – ***one hour at a time...***

