



As this situation continues and we spend increasing time away from social contact and “regular” working conditions, dealing with extra responsibilities at home, waiting in long lines to enter stores (with some empty shelves), seeing an increase of patients in need, and perhaps dealing with the news that loved ones have been diagnosed with COVID-19, it is normal to experience increased stress and anxiety. As a result, it is vitally important that we remember to take time to check-in with ourselves (as well as our colleagues) regarding our emotional well-being. There are many ways to do this and many resources available to help individuals with varying needs and availability.

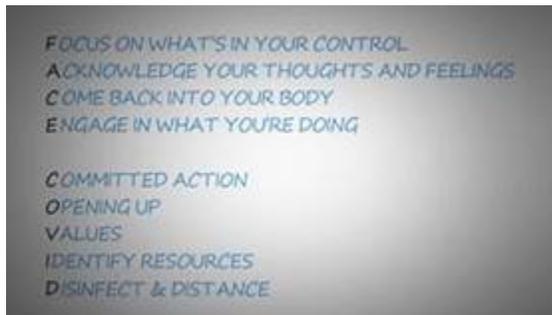
As a reminder, every day you can take **2 minutes for a “Resilience Reset”** with Dr. Carol Lewis, who facilitates a quick self-care practice and shares a tip based in the science of resilience. Do yourself a favor and check them out here:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJWuMBoY4jMpNeM6cv_N0Zx59RbQftggC

- Additional quick (2-16 minutes) guided relaxation/meditation options created by Dr. Lori Waxenberg and other UF faculty are available here:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJWuMBoY4jMpVTEXe_cWU2f8SvDV5ZnXc
(more options coming soon!)
- Access to a variety of free online resources and apps can be found here:
<https://wellness.med.ufl.edu/2020/04/01/resources-to-promote-well-being-during-covid-19-outbreak/#meditation>

If you are experiencing increased anxiety, you may also benefit from making some adjustments to your typical way of responding to current events. This **5-minute “FACE COVID” video** (by Dr. Russ Harris, author of *The Happiness Trap*) introduces basic resilience and mindfulness-based skills that may be helpful to you:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmvNCdpHUYM&fbclid=IwAR1U9RjI97UdQ5wtktDix4t2L5m359IvBysbtosQTCydL0yAz_IrErADN6Q



“FACE COVID” Strategies (by Dr. Russ Harris)

You can take advantage of **virtual peer support groups for healthcare professionals and scientists** to discuss your struggles and strategies for coping. Peer support groups specifically for UFCOM/UF Health, as well as community-based options are listed here:

<https://wellness.med.ufl.edu/2020/04/01/resources-to-promote-well-being-during-covid-19-outbreak/#support>

Our UF mental health professionals are now offering **facilitated drop-in support groups for healthcare workers via PHI Zoom**. The first group, focusing on resilience skills, will be facilitated by Dr. Carol Lewis on **Tuesdays from 5-6pm STARTING TODAY** (drop in at any time—even for a few minutes). You can join the group via this link: <https://psychiatry.ufl.edu/resilience-focused-support-group-zoom-drop-in/>

*(**Information regarding additional groups will be shared soon**)*

If you are beginning to struggle and wonder if you might benefit from **accessing mental health services**, such as:

- Psychiatric medication consultation and management
- Free individual short-term counseling
- Individual psychotherapy
- Resilience-based group therapy
- ***NEW*** Drop-in support groups (see info above)

Please call the UF Health Staff Telepsych Services center between 8:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. (7 days per week) at 352-265-5459 or email c19peersupport@shands.ufl.edu [provide your name, contact number, and best time(s) to receive a call back]. A licensed mental health professional will perform a quick screening and help you identify the services that would be most useful and convenient for you.

Some **additional mental health resources** can be accessed at the links below, with a fuller list (including crisis and non-crisis mental health services) available on the UF COM Wellness COVID-19 Resource page here: <https://wellness.med.ufl.edu/2020/04/01/resources-to-promote-well-being-during-covid-19-outbreak/#mental>

Mental Health Resources

- **#1: Limit your exposure to social media and sensationalized news.** Obtain information from reliable sources, such as the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [Tips and Resources from Mental Health America](#)
- [Mental health tips for social distancing](#)
- [7 Crucial Research Findings to Help Deal With COVID-19](#)
- [Tips for dealing with uncertainty](#)
- [Science-based tips for emotional resilience during coronavirus crisis](#)
- [American Psychiatric Association COVID-19 Resources](#)
- [American Psychological Association Pandemic Resources](#)
- [CDC Resources to Manage Anxiety and Stress](#)
- [SAMHSA Tips – Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health](#)
- [Resilience in Challenging Times](#)
- [Care for Your Coronavirus Anxiety Toolkit](#)
- [Self-Compassion and COVID-19: For self-compassion guided activities](#)
- [FACE COVID Video to Combat COVID-19 Anxiety](#)
- [NAMI COVID-19 Information and Resource Guide](#)

Finally, we will continue to develop additional mental health resources and services based on feedback from the UFCOM and UF Health community regarding interest/availability. **If you haven't already, please complete this 1-minute survey regarding your preferences for accessing mental health services:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/COVID-MH>

Thank you, and stay well!

Lisa J. Merlo, Ph.D., M.P.E.
(Legal Name = Lisa Merlo Greene)
Director of Wellness Programs, UF College of Medicine
Director of Research, Professionals Resource Network
Associate Professor of Psychiatry
University of Florida
Box 100256
Gainesville, FL 32611
352-294-4932
lmerlo@ufl.edu