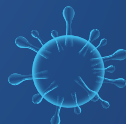
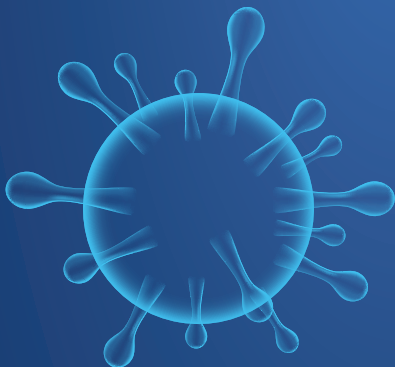




# HOW TO WORK ON YOUR **MENTAL HEALTH** DURING **COVID-19**

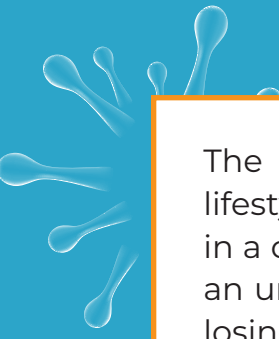


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The unprecedented shift in our lifestyle due to COVID-19 has left us in a constant state of limbo. There is an unsettling feeling and a sense of losing control as most of us are not equipped with the art of tolerating or coping with uncertainty and disruption. In this difficult phase, we are worried about our education, future, employment opportunities, social relationships, health and safety to our loved ones and above all, the uncertainty of tomorrow.

Students are most vulnerable to emotions of fear, stress and anxiety as they are now challenged with an unprecedented disease in a phase of their life where they are already overwhelmed with the demands, conditions and expectations of a grownup world. To reduce the anxiety and emotional discomfort induced by this barrage of events, following are some of the strategies that can help students cope successfully with the challenges.

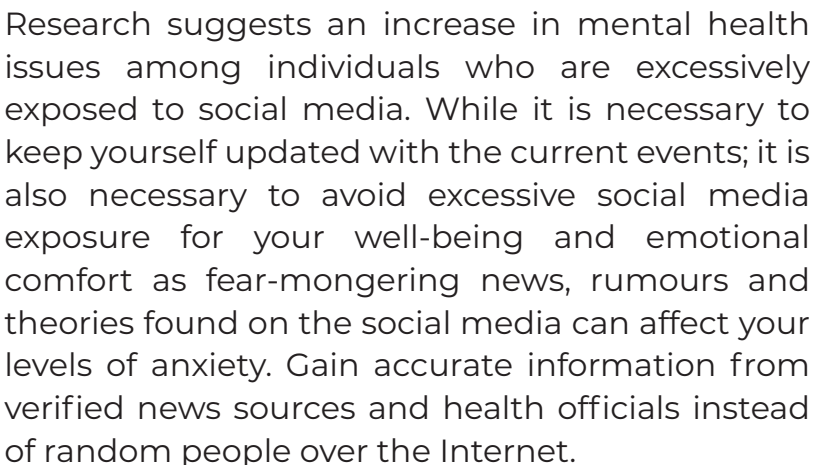
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For example, the thought “*I cannot control any of this*” can be countered with the reminder that “*I can control how I am responding to it.*”

With all the positivity you can summon, try to see the glass as half full rather than half empty. As a result, you will feel more adaptive and confident about your ability to navigate through this storm.

## 2. Avoid excessive exposure to social media



### 3. Build resilience



Uncertainty and unpredictability have become the main feature of our current lifestyle. On the other hand, it is facilitating us to build life-long resilience to sustain and cope with hard times. According to the Academic Resilience Consortium, being resilient means that one has the capacity for persistence, creativity, emotional intelligence, cognitive flexibility, adaption to change, learning from failure and success, and overcoming adversity.

Think about one of these capacities and see how they are being utilised by you at the moment. For instance, 'creativity' can be as to how people are finding activities to facilitate their personal growth during the lockdown.

This moment in time (better or worse) is being experienced by every student. However, you can work your way through these trying times with strength, perseverance, and resilience by focusing on the positives.

### 4. Focus on the constant



During the times where uncertainty prevails, it is better and helpful to rely on the constants that are certain such as academic interests, research interests, general interests, your goals and hobbies and your family and friends. Constants like these can retain one's drive and motivation during such rocky times.





## 5. Take concrete action

There are certain elementary and effective ways to cope with anxieties, fears and emotional turmoil faced during this turbulent situation. Consider talking to a counsellor, adopt daily exercise to channel out your nervous energies, meditate to relax the mind, get proper sleep, strengthen your support system by maintaining your social connections. It is also very important the with the coping and management of your emotional state, you take all measures to protect your health. Follow SoPs recommended by the authorities.



## 6. Practice deep breathing

If there are moments where you feel overwhelmed, practice Deep breathing exercises to reduce stress. Start by putting one hand on your belly and the other on your chest and breathe through your diaphragm. Take in a deep breath through your nose as you count from 1 to 4. Hold your breath and count from 1 to 7. Breathe out through your mouth while counting from 1 to 8. Repeat five times or more, until you feel relaxed.

## 7. Practice gratitude



Every now and then, focus on the goodness and kindness you have witnessed and experienced during this time. What have you seen? What have you experienced? Focus on the good in your life and in the world at present and consciously express gratitude for it. This can help in fostering a positive attitude that will be helpful in the longer run for you.

**Beloved NUSTians,**

As you deal with all the emotions, disruptions, and thoughts about this pandemic, just know that the NUST Family misses you on campus. We are here to facilitate you in every way in these trying times. Stay safe, stay healthy!





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