



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Responding to the Mental and Emotional Challenges of COVID-19

Sterling, Colo. – September 29, 2020: The COVID-19 pandemic has brought numerous disruptions to our lives and this has increased stress responses on all levels for individuals, families, organizations and communities. We are all experiencing losses. Cancellations of special events are difficult. Individuals who are in a high risk group are challenged with having to continue to isolate at home and missing the social contact and relationships they had a few months ago. The loss may differ among individuals but each loss hurts. Not only have there been losses over the past few months but there is also anticipatory grief. What does the future hold? What will remain the same and what will never be the same again?

Our circumstances and resulting experiences often differ from other people in our lives. We all respond differently to stress based on our background, personality, the community we live in and our specific circumstances. Many of the responses people are experiencing are normal and common reactions to abnormal situations. Wherever you are in processing your emotions and

circumstances, you are not alone. When you return home from a trip you have to unpack your suitcase so that you can then repack it and move forward. The same is true for emotions in order to move forward and there are many ways to process emotions:

- Remember to limit your media consumption. Seek out reliable sources for the latest information on COVID-19, but limit the news.
- Take time to focus on what is good around you. Some days it may be harder to see the good, but it is important to look for good and to not just focus on what is wrong. Keeping a gratitude journal may help.
- Be sure to focus on facts, not rumors.
- Set realistic expectations. Don't compare yourself to others because their new normal may not look the same as yours.
- Take a break.
- There are things that are out of your control, but it's important to focus on what you do have control over. It may help to create new routines and traditions. Also, take this time to create some new memories you may not have previously had time to create.

Due to increased stress for individuals, families and organizations during this challenging time, we want to remind everyone that there is support through local counseling resources. To learn more about providers available in northeast Colorado go to <https://www.nchd.org/behavioralhealth>.

Another important local resource is the faith community. Local pastors and priests are available for you to talk and pray with as well.

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