

TIPS TO MANAGE ANXIETY AND STRESS

DURING COVID-19



ROUTINE

Create and communicate expectations and build your daily routine around them - including sleep schedules! The routine may look different and may not have as many tasks as usual, and that's okay. Set realistic expectations for yourself and do your best to maintain them.

HOBBIES + INTERESTS

When creating your schedule, don't forget to include fun things! It can give you something to look forward to after class, work, and other tasks, and provides structure for down time. *Ideas: read a book; learn a new craft or exercise; cook and bake; video chat with friends and family.*

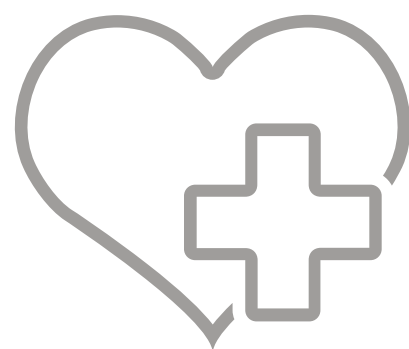


COMMUNICATION

Be flexible and understanding with one another. Some family members may need more time for themselves, others may spend more time on their devices and playing video games. Be sure to check-in with one another. Anxiety and stress can rise and fall throughout the day.

GET MOVING

Take a break from classes, chores, screen time and devices to get some fresh air and sunshine outside. Exercise, of any kind, reduces anxiety and stress, and is good for your physical health. Just 20-30 minutes of walking or sitting in nature is enough to [significantly reduce your cortisol levels](#) (your stress hormone).

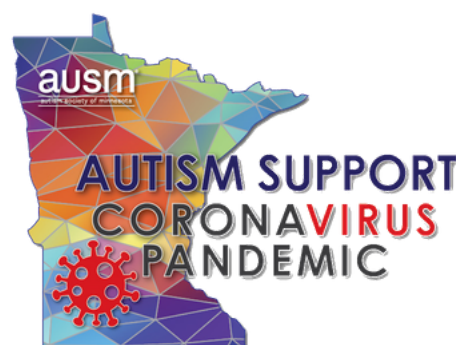


TURN OFF THE NEWS

It's great to stay informed and up to date as information changes daily. But too much information can increase anxiety and stress. Set a limit for your daily media intake, talk with someone you trust about how you're feeling about things you hear/see/read, and make sure to seek out [Some Good News!](#)

NEED MORE SUPPORT?

[The Autism Society of Minnesota has created a great resource page](#) to support individuals on the autism spectrum and their families during the pandemic. Learn more about understanding the pandemic and coping with anxiety, links for mental health support, activities, and MN-based food shelf information.



Thanks to Greg B. for these helpful tips. Greg is an MICC Advisor and member of the MICC Autism Committee, and is currently pursuing his MA in Counseling Psychology.