

Dear All,

DSW office wishes everyone a safe time in the current crisis spreading through every corner of the globe across the continents. We hope everyone is following safety measures and preventive action during this critical period that the whole world is going through. Current situation is a testing time to the whole world.

Print and electronic media is full of news about the current spread, the do's and don'ts to prevent the possibility of further spread, the facts and figures and the like. While on one side we are taking the fact of the current scenario as a reality, and carefully implementing the precautions, some are also undergoing anxiety and distress owing to several factors.

Some factors such as receiving unverified information through social media and other sources leading to unnecessary apprehensions, restricting life to home, and the unexpected challenges may be creating confusion in some, distress and negative psychological states in some. What can be done to deal with these situations?

**Minimize exposure to untrustworthy sources of Information:** Being able to filter the needed and genuine information from several other forms of information, using only trusted sources, and limiting exposure to baseless rumours and negative information, will help.

**Awareness of facts:** Knowing the factual information and understanding that there are precautions and steps that we may take to prevent, manage and remain healthy boosts our confidence in dealing with the challenge. Be aware of and trust the activities taken up at local, state and national level to gain a grip over the pandemic spread. Understand that health teams, several departments and employees in the government and from other sectors, socially concerned and service minded individuals and groups and media along with others are doing their best in their own ways.

**Listening to the experiences of those who have gone through the experiences:** Exposure to factual information by listening to the experiences of those, who have undergone the various phases of the problem can help. So does listening to the professionally qualified health teams who are in the frontline. These enable first hand and reliable information.

**Identify your thoughts and emotions causing distress:** Identify the negative distress causing thoughts, use the factual information to support the positive alternative thoughts replacing those negative thoughts. Try to recall times where individually or at a society level crises were faced and how they were dealt with. At an individual level, identify your physical, psychological and social strengths to cope with the present distress.

**Accept the limits:** Understand that we are limited in our capacities to gain control over nature. But we have always been successful in being friendly with nature and handling the crises by precautionary or proactive steps.

**Learn the lesson:** Understand how vulnerable we humans are and try doing your best to stay safe and keep people around you safe. No adventures and experiments during these hazardous times will help and may be countereffective.

**Stay safe and keep others safe:** Interestingly this experience also teaches us how to take care of self first and through the same, how we can take care of others around us. Being conscious about self care is not being selfish but is equal to being careful for the others as well.

**Contribute positively to self:** Using your time wisely and constructively within the limits of present scenario, may help building your careers and future. This is the time where novelty and creativity in us will help us deal with the stresses of being limited to home and others. Try to make the most of the present moment rather than worrying over what could have been done or is not being done.

**Contribute positively to others:** As young literates you may be of help to some more people too. For example, as concerned citizens, understanding the right and authentic information from received contents and spreading such it is important. There are many who are ignorant and believe false information, or do not have the opportunity or access to genuine information. Helping them in such circumstances may be a contribution to the society. Show your contribution using your compassion, genuineness, integrity and empathy.

**Enjoy the togetherness with family/near and dear/ well wishers:** Many who are at home have a time of union with family. Others who cannot have abundant time now to be in touch with them for greater duration, and at more frequency. The constant complaint of the busy lives that 'there is no time' is no more a reality. Use it to the best in a positive, beneficial way.

Remain indoors and stay calm. Be positive and hopeful. This is the time to show the strength, ability and courage in facing the challenges of the day and remain optimistic. We may all refrain ourselves individually to our homes, but together we are working to prevent the pandemic spreading itself. Remember, by doing so, collectively we are helping each other.

The Counseling Unit from DSW office urges you to stay home and safe; think positive and stay strong and healthy.