

Your Suicide Prevention Team:

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Confidential chat at MilitaryCrisisLine.net or text 838255

Fayetteville VA Medical Center
2300 Ramsey Street
Fayetteville, NC 28301
24/7 Urgent Care Walk-In Mental
Health Support
910-488-2120 | 800-771-6106

#BeThere

June 2020

Connecting with Support at your local VA

People experience emotional and mental health crises in response to a wide range of situations—from difficulties in their personal relationships to the loss of a job. For Veterans, these crises can be heightened by their experiences during military service. When emotional issues reach a crisis point, it's time to call on your **Suicide Prevention Team** or the Veterans Crisis Line for support. This monthly newsletter is intended to provide you with support, options for care, and skills to assist in managing your mental health treatment at the VA.

Strategies for Dealing with Uncertainty

Many would agree that 2020 has been full of challenges thus far. Between COVID-19 and the resulting social distancing and economic fallout, natural disasters to recent events within communities experiencing racial tensions, social protests and images of violence, there has been a lot of uncertainty. These events can create a level of angst, fear, anxiety, mood changes, and feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. It can contribute to feelings of being out of control. We may not be able to change what is going on around us, but we can change how we respond and react to what is happening.

In an article by the American Psychological Association “The Great Unknown: 10 Tips for Dealing With the Stress of Uncertainty” the following steps are identified as ways to deal with life’s uncertainties:

1. **Be kind to yourself.** Some people are better at dealing with uncertainties than others, so don't beat yourself up if your tolerance for unpredictability is lower than a friend's. Remind yourself that it might take time for the stressful situation to resolve, and be patient with yourself in the meantime.
2. **Reflect on past successes.** Chances are you've overcome stressful events in the past – and you survived! Give yourself credit. Reflect on what you did during that event that was helpful, and what you might like to do differently this time.
3. **Develop new skills.** When life is relatively calm, make a point to try things outside your comfort zone. From standing up to a difficult boss to trying a new sport, taking risks helps you develop confidence and skills that come in handy when life veers off course.

Fayetteville Health Care Center

7300 South Raeford Road
Fayetteville, NC 28304
910-488-2120 | 800-771-6106

Brunswick Co. Outreach Clinic

20 Medical Campus Dr. Ste 106
Supply, NC 28462
910-754-6141

Goldsboro Clinic

2610 Hospital Road
Goldsboro, NC 28462
919-731-4809

Hamlet Clinic

100 Jefferson St.
Hamlet, NC 28345
910-582-3536

Jacksonville VA Clinic

4 Josh Court
Jacksonville, NC 28546
910-353-6406

Jacksonville CBOC

4006 Henderson Drive
Jacksonville, NC 28546
910-353-6406

Jacksonville 2 VA Clinic

306 Brynn Marr Road
Jacksonville, NC 28546
910-353-6406

Robeson Community Care Clinic

139 Three Hunts Dr.
Pembroke, NC 28372
910-272-3220

Sanford CBOC

3112 Tramway Blvd.
Sanford, NC 27332
919-775-6160

Wilmington Health Care Center

1705 Gardner Road
Wilmington, NC 28405
910-343-5300

Homeless Program

910-488-2120 ext. 7744

LGBT Veteran Care Coordinator

910-488-2120 ext. 5762

Military Sexual Trauma

910-488-2120 ext. 7320

Substance Use Treatment

910-488-2120 ext. 5483/7770

4. **Limit exposure to news.** When we're stressed about something, it can be hard to look away. But compulsively checking the news only keeps you wound up. Try to limit your check-ins and avoid the news during vulnerable times of day, such as right before bedtime.
5. **Avoid dwelling on things you can't control.** When uncertainty strikes, many people immediately imagine worst-case scenarios. Get out of the habit of ruminating on negative events.
6. **Take your own advice.** Ask yourself: If a friend came to me with this worry, what would I tell her? Imagining your situation from the outside can often provide perspective and fresh ideas.
7. **Engage in self-care.** Don't let stress derail your healthy routines. Make efforts to eat well, exercise and get enough sleep. Many people find stress release in practices such as yoga and meditation.
8. **Seek support from those you trust.** Many people isolate themselves when they're stressed or worried. But social support is important, so reach out to family and friends.
9. **Control what you can.** Focus on the things that are within your control, even if it's as simple as weekly meal planning or laying out your clothes the night before a stressful day. Establish routines to give your days and weeks some comforting structure.
10. **Ask for help.** If you're having trouble managing stress and coping with uncertainty on your own, ask for help. Mental health professionals can help you to develop coping strategies.

<https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/stress-uncertainty>

Other Considerations for Managing Stress:

- 1) Exercise
- 2) Meditate
- 3) Enjoy Nature
- 4) Use one of the many VA mobile apps for specific challenges

<https://mobile.va.gov/appstore>