

# What we should know and what we can do for our mental health amid coronavirus pandemic.

Amid the spread of coronavirus all over the world, our daily routine have changed in significant way. Even if the number of new cases of infection in Japan decreases, there are still concern for predicted second wave. Even the economy is gradually reopening, we are asked to adapt to the “new lifestyle” and we still needs time to get back to the life we used to have.

For Doshisha University students, we understand that it is very hard and exhausting work to prepare and practicing this new remote learning style in such a confusion. As we are still in the middle of this unsettling situation, we would like to inform you some tips to care for your mental health.

★It would be helpful to know the predictable responses to this outbreak.

Responses during Coronavirus outbreak can include:

- Changes in sleeping quality. (trouble falling asleep, arousal during sleep, nightmare, early-morning awakening etc.)
- Get exhausted easily.
- Have a headache/stomachache.
- Feel fear and worry about infection.
- Concerns about your health, academics, jobs and future.
- Get frustrated by the restrictions and quarantine.
- Feel sense of isolation by social distancing.
- Assume worst case scenario and become unrealistic and unsettled.

You may experience unexpected responses which can be overwhelming. However, we know that is normal responses in the outbreak. Knowing that your responses are normal in such a situation may help you to settle down.



★It will be difficult to keep your daily routine normal.

Students are asked to modify learning environment which the framework is still unclear (class time, learning materials etc.). All of these causes difficulty in regulating life as you cannot predict when you would be able to finish all of your work for the day.

We know it is difficult but it is important to keep your sleep time cycle as usual. To keep your regular sleep hours, setting a time for meal, for exercise and for study may help.



★You may feel isolated.

As we are asked to stay at home, all students and faculty and staff members have less chances to meet each other to discuss their concerns. It is known that communicating with others about concerns is one of the most important way to relieve the anxiety. For international students and students who is living by themselves may feel more anxious. If you are living with your family, communicating with the members would be very important. Even if you are living by yourself, talking to your family or friends on the phone or online may also relieve your stress. In the communication, share how you feel in this outbreak. It would also encourage not only yourself but your family and friends too.



★Becoming aware of your response would help to cope with stress.

We all should know that unexpected changes can bring up many emotions such as sadness, frustration, anxiety, fear, loneliness and grief. If you are feeling those emotions, that is normal. When you know these responses are normal in this situation, it may prevent blaming yourself not being able to do the works or things that you have planned to do, causing you to be more anxious, sad or frustrated. We need to break this vicious cycle by doing things that you can do little by little and knowing that you are capable of handling this situation, and by knowing that you have someone to ask for help.

Also, following activities can relieve stress and prevent burnout. Having time to rest. Enjoying your meal. Exercising. Talking to the person you can rely on. If you have your own way to relieve stress, recalling it and practicing it would be helpful during this situation.



☆Other TIPS.

For those students enrolled in 2020, it must be very hard to build a new community in Doshisha because in-person class has not been conducted since April. You might also feel unsure whether you are doing fine with your works as you do not have much chance to share with other students from your classes.

⇒If you feel worried, contact your teachers.

⇒Make some time to have a get-acquainted conversation with new class members, when having a discussion in interactive online class.

⇒Some extracurricular activities(Clubs and Circles) are now operating programs online.

⇒SIED(student staff for intercultural events at Doshisha) is also operating intercultural events online.

For upper-class students, we understand that you are worried about your carrier and future.

⇒Talk to your family, contact Carrier Center, or visit Hello Work(job-placement office) for informations.

For international students, it is probably more difficult to seek support for study and living in Japan. There may be students who cannot go back to their country, or cannot come to Japan, because of the travel restriction across the countries. If you are in Japan, you may find difficult to understand the information in Japanese and also difficult to find reliable information. It is now important for you to contact your Faculty or Offices in Doshisha to get support or informations.

For students with disabilities, these classes conducted online may be confusing, and it is assumed that special support is needed. Contact your teachers, Student Support Service Center of Disability Service, or Office of Special Support in Counseling Center for support.

If you are currently seeing a doctor for your mental health, it is better to visit or contact on a regular basis. It may be helpful for you to ask for advises, what you should do in case you get unwell during the pandemic.

★From members of Counseling Center.

We are now providing phone counseling. Even if you are away from the campus and we cannot see each other, you still belong to our community and we are here to support you. If you have any concerns and you want to talk, please call us.

Counseling Center      Imadegawa Campus: 075-251-3275  
Kyotanabe Campus: 0774-65-7415

Office hour is 9:00 ~ 11:30, 12:30 ~ 17:00 on weekdays.