While we are familiar with viruses like the common cold and the flu, the coronavirus (COVID-19) is new and presents a situation that none of us could have imagined a few short months ago. The fact that it is extremely contagious has resulted in business closures, social distancing, and quarantine measures which have disrupted our daily lives. It is more important now than ever to pay attention to mental health during this time of isolation and uncertainty.

One of the most frightening things about COVID-19 is that it is much about the virus and the limitations on where you can go and are out of your control. However, there are things that you can control, and focusing on those things can provide you with some comfort. Some of the things you can control include:

- Keep a healthy diet
- Exercise at home
- Get enough sleep
- Do not smoke or drink alcohol excessively
- Maintain self-care and personal hygiene
- Your house, your bedroom, your closet, your kitchen – now is the time to clean and get organized
- Make responsible choices about when to leave the house and only go out if necessary
- Limit the number of people you come into contact with
- Work from home if you are able to
- Don’t oversupply your news and information intake
- Get your information from reliable sources like the CDC or WHO
- Watch TV, movies, and videos that make you feel good

If you’re taking steps to manage worry and anxiety during the COVID-19 crisis but they don’t seem to be helping, there are additional resources you can take advantage of.

- Mental Health Screening
- Crisis Hotlines and Textlines

If you are in crisis or thinking about suicide, get connected to a local crisis center and get in touch with someone immediately.

Call 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255) or text “MHA” to 741741.

If you are unsure of which organizations can provide a safer place, text “TalkWithUs” to 66746.

During these unprecedented times, it’s more important than ever to ensure that people who have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 have access to mental health services. The Mental Health Association in America (MHA) is doing everything we can to help meet the needs of people in crisis. Whether you or someone you know is struggling with mental health issues, you can find resources and support at our website (https://mhanational.org/covid19).

Find more information and resources about COVID-19 and mental health at mhanational.org/covid19.