



**The CT Association of Addiction Professionals offers these postings during the COVID 19 Pandemic for your Reflection**

**Dear CAAP Members, Colleagues, and Friends,**

**First and foremost, we hope that you and your family are safe and healthy. COVID 19 is an existential crisis that has brought a new and unimaginable trauma across the globe.**

**As addiction professionals, we spend years of education, training, and employment to acquire the knowledge and skills to address devastating life experiences caused by active substance abuse disorder in order to move our clients onto the path of recovery with all its gifts. Now a New World Order Emerges.**

**The CAAP Board believes that COVID 19 touches the deepest part of our being in many ways, which all our professional experience could not have taught us. The pandemic's terror spreads into our nation, our state, our community, but most terrifying into the lives of our families, friends, neighbors, and ourselves. It is so emotionally and socially powerful. It has turned life as we knew it into the maelstrom of the Unknown.**

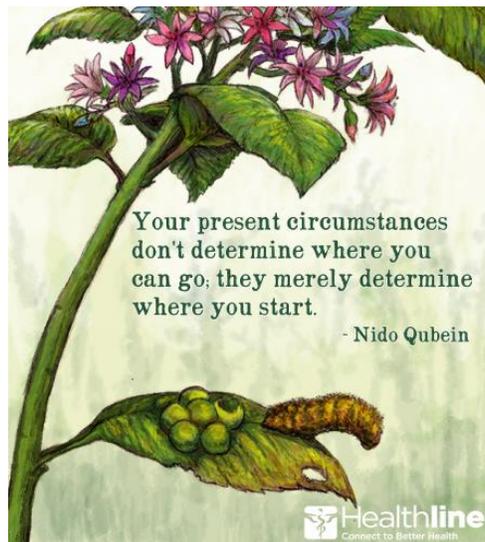
**During these trying times, it is helpful to reach back into our professional preparation and revisit one of the core principles for efficacy as an addiction specialist- *Self-Care*. Our workforce is in a continuous process of learning new theoretical models of best practice for SUDs. Working in the time of COVID 19, addiction specialists give their All to provide quality treatment to our clients. We bring the same level of assistance to significant others in our personal lives. But, due to the COVID 19 challenges, we are more than likely to neglect our own feelings and needs. "Compassion Fatigue" can override all our best efforts in managing the new stresses of health fears, economic instability, losses, and in the worst case, an unremitting sense of dread. CAAP invites each of you to hold in your awareness that your own self-care is of the greatest importance.**

**The CAAP Team links our hearts and minds with each of you in an act of solidarity to explore this Dark Place and to discover new and untried qualities**

within ourselves to deal with whatever COVID 19 brings to our lives. The following are some gentle aids that we wish to share with you.

We begin, as the Buddhist teaching instructs- Acceptance of “*What is, What is.*” Knowing on some days, this will be an almost impossible task. To face this reality, we call on many of the very strategies, which we use in treating our clients.

- Stay in the Moment
- Breathe Mindfully
- Seize any Opportunity for Gratitude
- Affirm our Feelings—Happy or Sad, Safe or Fearful, Peaceful or Angry. Always Remembering feelings have a Beginning, Middle, and End.
- Mediate and/or Pray.
- Offer a Daily Act of Kindness.
- Most importantly, Love and Care for Yourself! You deserve it!!!!!!



Please check out the resources and links for providing client services during the COVID 19 pandemic on the CAAP Website. NAADAC, our national organization, has a wealth of information on teletherapy guidelines, webinars, and health and safety practices.

**Our Special Thoughts- Be Safe and Stay Healthy!**

**The CAAP Team:**

**Albert Young, Darlene Shuff Porter, Tia Rineholt, Eileen Russo, Marvin Douglas, Lew Slotnik,**

**Susan Campion**

*“Surrender to what is. Let go of what was. Have faith in what will be.”*  
– Sonia Ricotte

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Never in my lifetime have I experienced an event like this.  
Entire states are now in quarantine. Our own streets are quiet,  
and private sector jobs are at risk. Anxiety is high in many of us-  
our families, our friends,  
And our colleagues

Meanwhile, we all have our jobs to do and we do them very  
well. No one outside our field of Behavioral Health Addiction  
Services knows what it is like to do this job.

One thing I have learned during all these years is the most  
beautiful and common way God speaks today is through one  
another. During this time, please be deliberate in sharing an  
encouraging word with your colleagues as you continue  
performing your job.

Your word, smile or presence may be just what they need to get  
through a hard day. These words were offered by another  
colleague of mine. I thought that it was noteworthy to share.  
Please Pass It On!

Your Vice President of CAAP  
Darlene Shuff Porter



The best way out is always through.

- Robert Frost



**Health Line**

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**The New Normal: Managing Anxiety During a Pandemic**  
**Written by Yvette Young, LPC**  
**Associate Vice President of Programs and Advocacy**  
**The Village for Families & Children**  
**March 27, 2020**

Usually, each day we wake up we can predict how our day will go. We have an outlined schedule that we follow, and we adapt to adjustments throughout the day because they are often minor. We establish a routine that makes us feel safe and comfortable. Routines give us a sense of normalcy. Predictability allow us to feel safe. When these two exist together we often feel that we are in control of our lives. In the absence of routine and predictability there is fear and panic. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) defines fear and panic as follows:

- A **marked and persistent fear that is excessive or unreasonable**, cued by the presence or anticipation of a specific object or situation.
- Panic is a *specific period of intense fear or discomfort*.

When COVID-19 became a reality, life as we knew it changed. Our routines and ability to predict what would happen next were drastically altered. Our ability to keep ourselves safe was compromised. Fear and panic became the underlying catalyst for our responses.

“This is a period of collective uncertainty, which results in the inability for everyone to be comforted during this time,” stated Dr. Jennifer Lusa, The Village for Families & Children’s Associate Vice President of Intensive Programs. Often, when one person is anxious another person will assist them in returning to their baseline of functioning by comforting them. *But, when society is anxious, who will provide the comfort?*

The world is experiencing Generalized Anxiety as a result of the COVID-19 virus. “Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)—despite its name—is a *specific* type of anxiety disorder. The hallmark feature of GAD is persistent, excessive, and intrusive worry,” states Dr. Deborah R. Glasofer. The image below depicts several of the symptoms of GAD:



We have all experienced some or all of these symptoms since we have been forced to deal with the fact that this virus was in our communities. We had to quickly make adjustments to protect ourselves, our loved ones and the community in which we live. The COVID-19 virus was no longer an international issue. Overnight it became a domestic crisis, bringing with it a surge of fear, doubt, panic and anxiety.

The most recent statistics show that more than 500,000 people have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and more than 25,000 people have died. These numbers will continue to grow, and it is hard to predict when this crisis will end. COVID-19 has left us with more questions than answers. People are left to wonder if or when they will get sick. *Will I lose a loved one to this virus? When will I be able to return to work? When will my children be able to go back to school? How long will I be able to survive in isolation?* A lack of predictability is keeping us stuck in a state of anxiety. We are holding our breath waiting to live again.

It's important to create a new "normal" to reduce our feelings of anxiety. We are now adjusting to a life where quarantine, social distancing, virtual meetings, virtual connections, working from home and home schooling is now par for the course. To alleviate feelings of anxiety it is important to establish new routines and predictions based on our current circumstances.

"The antidote to anxiety is predictable, routine, structure and consistency." explained Dr. Lusa. "Therefore, it is important for people to do what they know how to do. It is important to live and not be paralyzed by anxiety. It is important to live authentically in the moment, without holding your breath and waiting for tomorrow. It is important to enjoy what you have so you can enjoy today."

To live authentically in the moment; we must practice gratitude. Gratitude is a demonstration of appreciation. It allows us to be at peace with the circumstances around us. Brené Brown shared, "I don't have to chase extraordinary moments to find happiness – it's right in front of me if I'm paying attention and practicing gratitude".

So, let gratitude guide your path. And allow yourself to let go of the way of living you once knew and embrace the new way. Begin to love again, breathe again, find joy in the small moments, find ways to stay connected to those you love, eat healthy, exercise, be of service to others, develop new routines, be spiritually grounded, and practice self-care daily. You may start to find

that there are some real benefits to this new way of living: benefits we can carry with us once life does get back to normal.

References:

American Psychiatric Association, (2013). Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) Arlington VA American Psychiatric Publishing

<https://www.verywellmind.com/generalized-anxiety-disorder-4157247#citation-1>

<https://covid19data.com/>

[https://www.azquotes.com/author/19318-Brene\\_Brown/tag/gratitude](https://www.azquotes.com/author/19318-Brene_Brown/tag/gratitude)

“Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the assessment that something else is more important than fear.” Franklin Delano Roosevelt

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## **“ANXIETY UK” National Registered Charity Organization**

### *Strategies for Living During the Time of COVID 19*

**Anxiety UK suggests practicing the "Apple" technique to deal with anxiety and worries.**

- **Acknowledge:** Notice and acknowledge the uncertainty as it comes to mind.
- **Pause:** Don't react as you normally do. Don't react at all. Pause and breathe.
- **Pull back:** Tell yourself this is just the worry talking, and this apparent need for certainty is not helpful and not necessary. It is only a thought or feeling. Don't believe everything you think. Thoughts are not statements or facts.
- **Let go:** Let go of the thought or feeling. It will pass. You don't have to respond to them. You might imagine them floating away in a bubble or cloud.
- **Explore:** Explore the present moment, because right now, in this moment, all is well. Notice your breathing and the sensations of your breathing. Notice the ground beneath you. Look around and notice what you see, what you hear, what you can touch, what you

**can smell. Right now. Then shift your focus of attention to something else - on what you need to do, on what you were doing before you noticed the worry, or do something else - mindfully with your full attention and focus. [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk) 3/2020**

**“Tackle things before they have appeared. / Cultivate peace and order before confusion and disorder have set in.”— Tao Te Ching**

*End Note----*

*Blessings from CAAI*