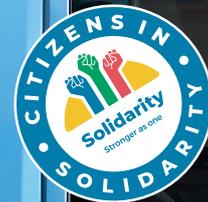


Coping with COVID-19 related stress at work



There is no denying that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all our lives. As individuals, we are all different and therefore, cope with stress in different ways. Some people love working alone at home; others who prefer to work with colleagues can find working from home stressful and lonely.

Although getting back to work may reduce some of these stress-related symptoms, they can also erupt in workplaces where the stresses of working in groups and fearing the virus can provoke strong reactions.

These reactions are nothing to be ashamed of.



If you are battling to cope at work and feel that you need help, use the confidential health and wellness facilities offered by many companies.

You can also seek professional help or consult one of the many recognised organisations that provide mental health support and counseling, including *The South African Depression and Anxiety Group* on

0800 567 567.

The symptoms of stress at home and in the office can include:



Feelings of fear, anger, sadness, worry, numbness, or frustration.



Changes in appetite, energy, desires, and interests.



Difficulty concentrating and making decisions.



Difficulty sleeping or nightmares.



Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes.



Worsening of chronic health problems.



Worsening of mental health conditions.



Increased use of tobacco, alcohol, and other substances

References

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/returning-to-work.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

The CDC's tips for fighting COVID-19 related stress:

Healthy ways of coping with stress can be as easy as:



- Taking breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including those on social media. Taking a breather from hearing about the pandemic can make you feel better.



- Taking better care of yourself. Exercising, eating healthily, getting enough sleep and avoiding excessive alcohol or tobacco use, all help reduce tension.



- Taking time off to relax.



- Connecting with other people you share interests with, or you trust enough to share personal problems with.