



Coping with COVID; Building Hope

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Maine Suicide Prevention Program

A program of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention since 1998

Statewide Activities Include:

- **Data collection, analysis & dissemination of print materials**
 - SAMHS's The Maine Prevention Store: <https://www.maine-preventionstore.com/>
- **Training** on suicide prevention and assessment to a wide range of partners
- **Technical Assistance** for schools and organizations addressing suicide risk or coping with a suicide loss.
- Working in partnership with Maine Medical Association to improve suicide prevention and management in healthcare.
- Additional youth prevention and resiliency-building under a GLS grant
- Annual *Beyond the Basics in Suicide Prevention Conference*

NAMI Maine

- Education Advocacy and Support for people affected by mental illness.
 - Education for peers, family and professionals (*Now virtual*)
 - Support groups for peers, veterans and family (*Now virtual*)
 - Information and Referral advocacy helpline
 - Crisis Intervention Team Program for Law Enforcement
 - NAMI-Maine Family Respite Program
 - Mental Health First Aid Presentations (Youth and Adult)
 - Peer support programming as a growing program
 - Outreach partner for National Institute of Mental Health
- Annual *NAMI - Maine Walk*

www.namimaine.org

1-800-464-5767

Balance has Never Been More Vital
Hope has Rarely Felt More Fleeting





Impacts of Pandemic

This pandemic has impacts us all, every day in so many ways.

- Our daily schedule
- *Access to basic needs*
- *Our finances*
- *How we do our professional work*
- *Access to health and mental health care*
- *How (or if) we socialize*
- *Our sense of safety*
- *Our sense of hope*

We have been unable to find solid common ground



Impacts of Pandemic

For youth, all those impacts and more.

- Their daily schedule and structure
- Critical out-of-home supports
- *Access to peers and peer interactions*
- *Uncertainty about the future*
- *Sports and other group activities uncertain...*
- *Their sense of safety*
- *Their sense of hope*

And they watch their adults unable to agree

EVERYBODY IS AFFECTED



*Almost everyone is struggling!
It has lowered the stigma of mental health*

Supporting Mental Wellness in the Pandemic

The Challenges

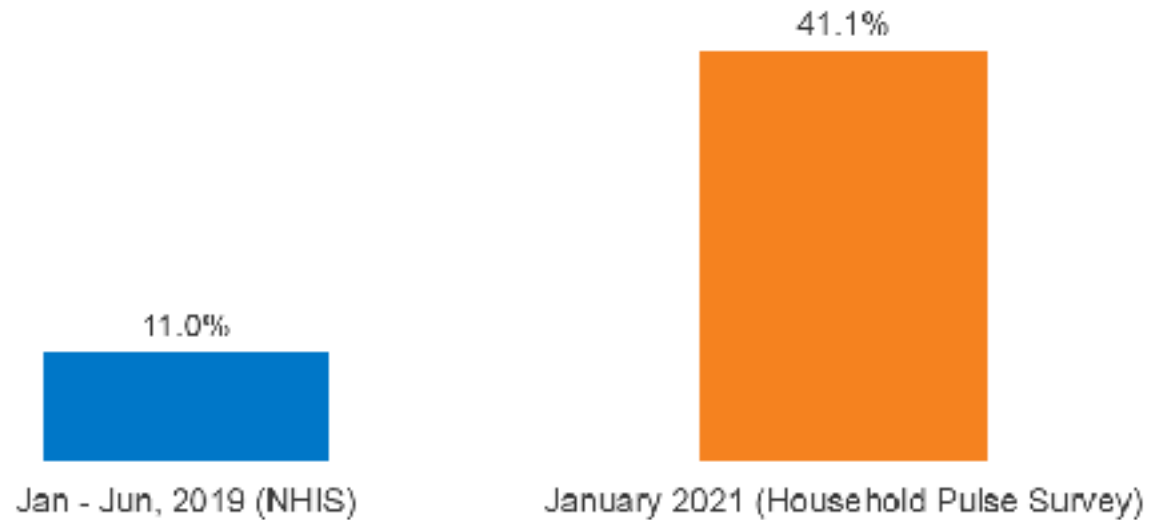
- Depression and Anxiety have increased
 - Increased from a base-rate of 10-20% to 40% or more
 - Isolation, uncertainty and fear are the drivers...
- Substance use is up across the board in all ages and impacting youth who are in isolation.
- Lack of hope leads to increased depression,
- Contagion safety leads to social isolation and also increased anxiety
 - Those already struggling have exacerbated anxiety.
 - For those living in unsupportive situations, it is particularly hard
- The uncertainty and polarization also makes each step more challenging...

Impact on Anxiety and Depression



Figure 1

Average Share of Adults Reporting Symptoms of Anxiety Disorder and/or Depressive Disorder, January-June 2019 vs. January 2021



NOTES: Percentages are based on responses to the CAD 2 and PHQ 2 scales. Pulse findings (shown here for January 6–18, 2021) have been stable overall since data collection began in April 2020.

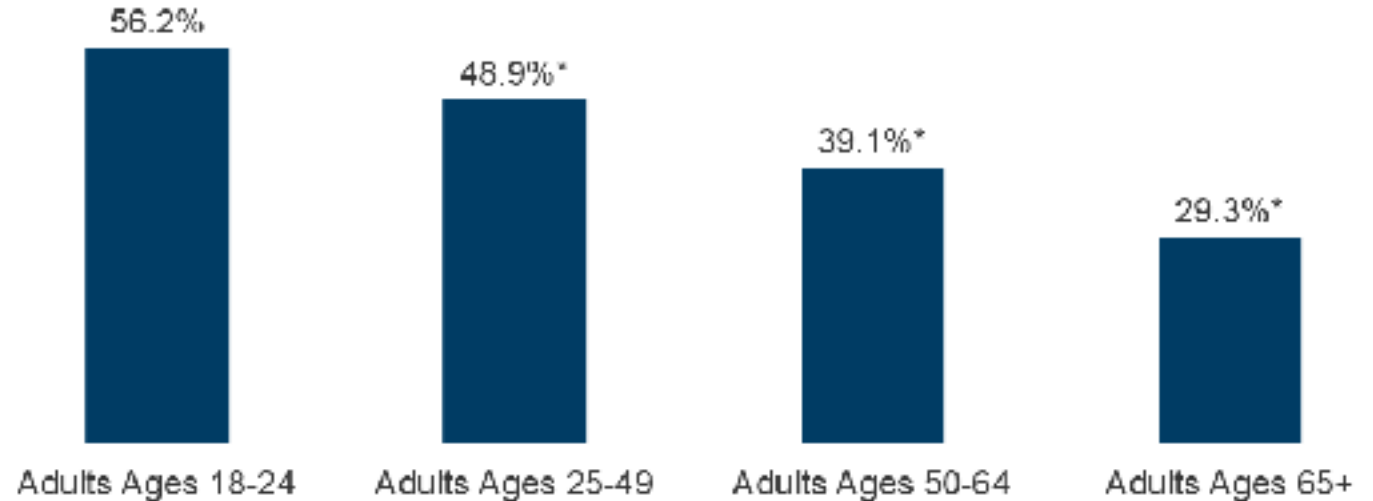
SOURCE: NHIS Early Release Program and U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey. For more detail on methods, see: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/ERmentalhealth_508.pdf

Impact on Anxiety and Depression



Figure 3

Share of Adults Reporting Symptoms of Anxiety and/or Depressive Disorder During the COVID-19 Pandemic, by Age



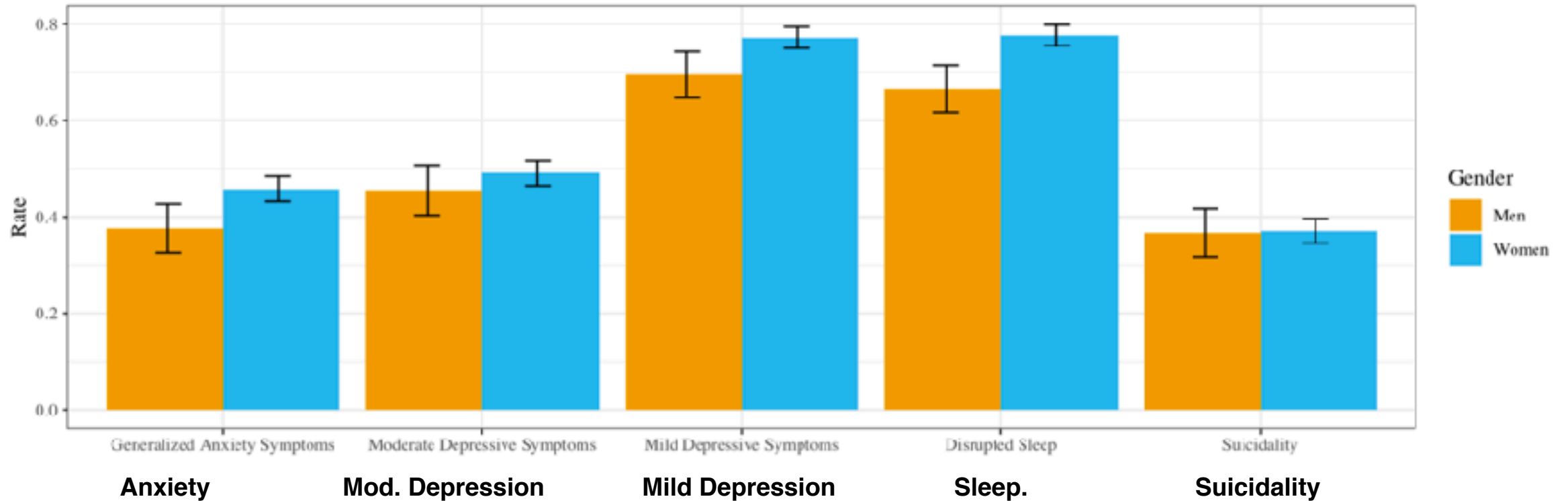
NOTES: *Indicates a statistically significant difference between adults ages 18-24. Data shown includes adults, ages 18+, with symptoms of anxiety and/or depressive disorder that generally occur more than half the days or nearly every day. Data shown is for December 9 – 21, 2020.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey, 2020

Recent US survey of 18-24 y/o

Prevalence of Mental Health Symptoms Among Young Adults by Gender

October survey wave ending 10/23/20





Drivers of Mental Health Challenges in the Pandemic

What increase risk for negative mental health outcomes?

- Isolation from social outlets, friends, activities, supports
- *Stressful or unsafe home environment*
- *Uncertainty about the future; little predictability*
- *Anxiety about the pandemic*
- *Missing milestones (eg. Graduation, weddings, funerals)*
- *Underlying vulnerabilities/ trauma*
- *Duration of the pandemic and uncertainty*
- Lack of control
- Lack of hope for future

Isolated people perhaps most of all



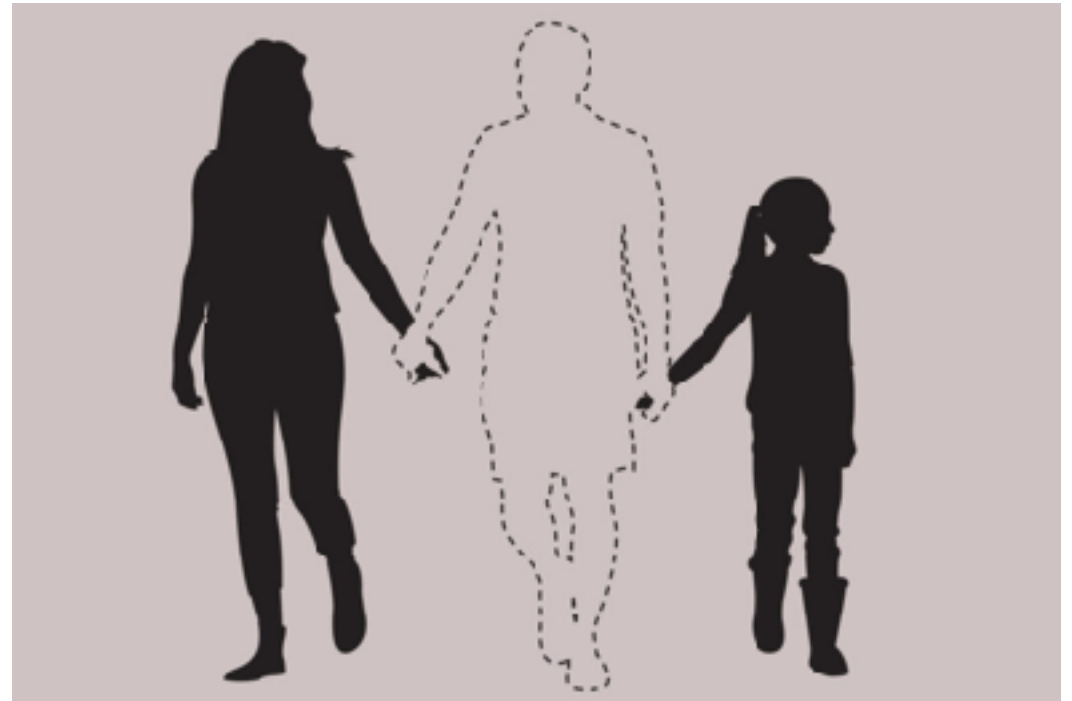


Michael Deforge NYT

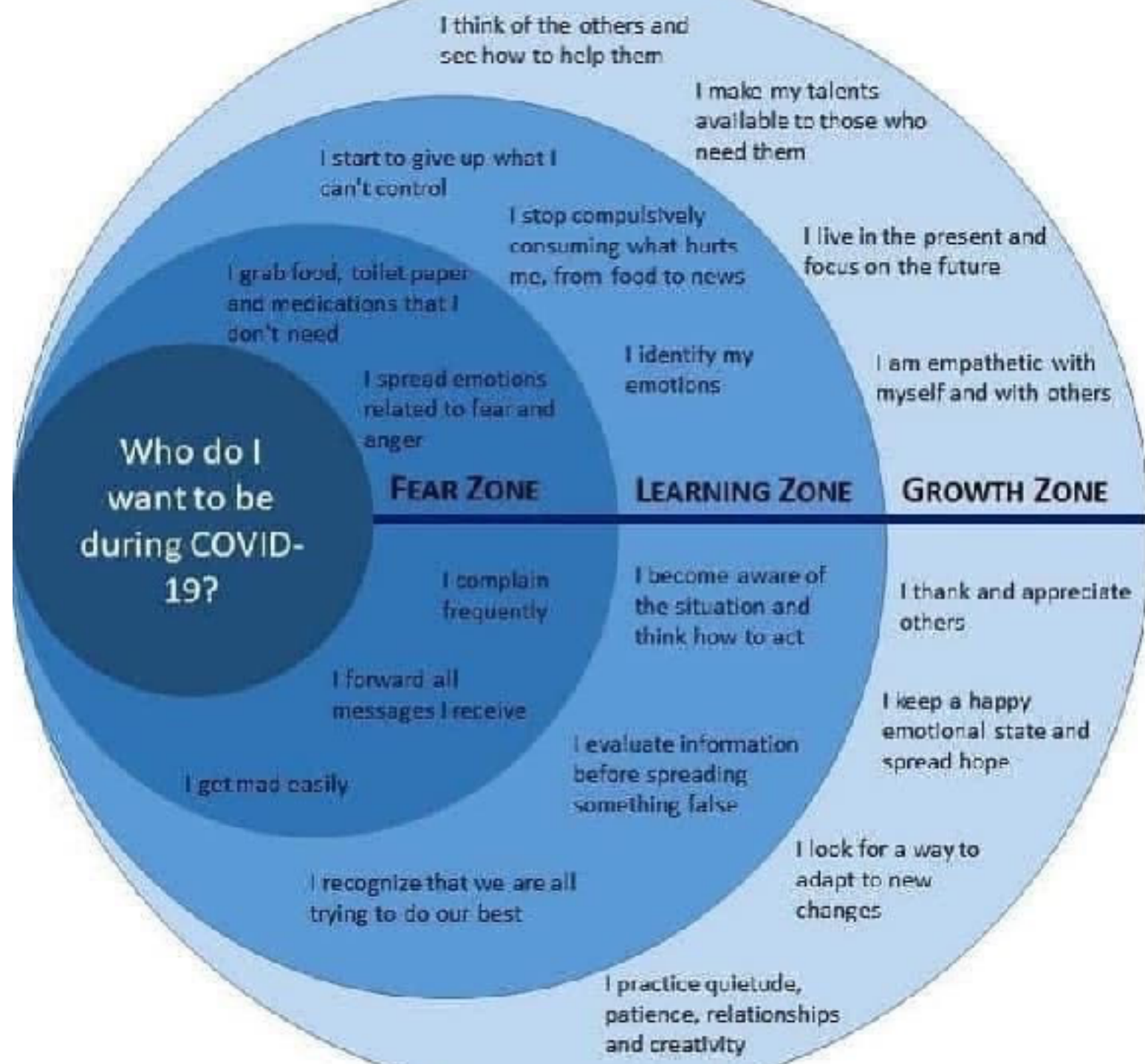
There are Losses and Grief

There are phases we all have gone through; some repeatedly, like grieving

- Shock, denial and magical thinking
- The uncertainty, pain and distress
- Anger and bargaining at loss of control
- Depression and anxiety
- Acceptance and innovation
- And the return of hope.



When does hope invite behavior change?

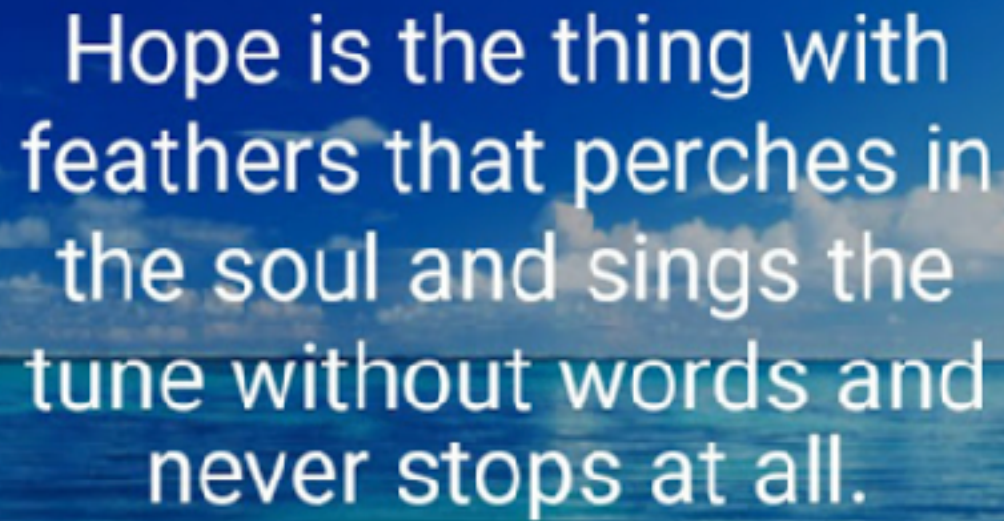


How has your approach to dealing with the pandemic changed over the year?

What influences a person's move into the Growth Zone?

How are you approaching future decisions given where we are now?

Be Intentional in Use of Coping Strategies



Hope is the thing with
feathers that perches in
the soul and sings the
tune without words and
never stops at all.

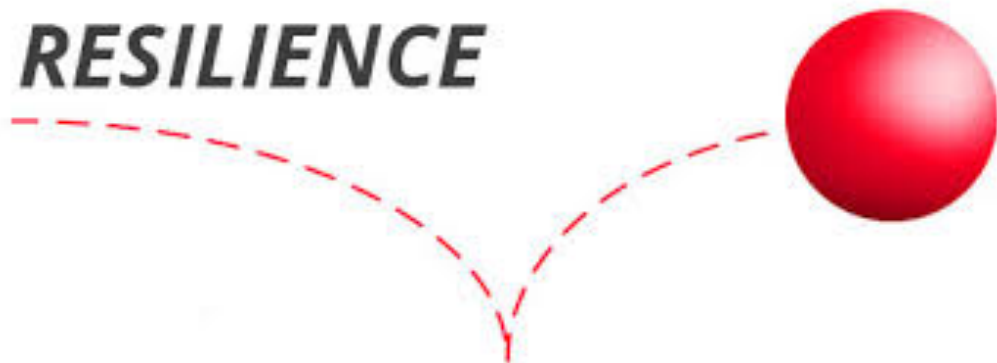
- Emily Dickinson

Self-Care Suggestions

- Practice “Physical Distancing” and ensure “Social Closeness”
 - ***Maintain a routine*** to preserve a sense of order and control
 - Work, exercise, house and garden projects
 - ***Practice good sleep hygiene***; it heals and maintains health
 - ***Keep calm and keep cooking & eating***; good food lovingly cooked is healthy and a way of giving as well
 - ***Enjoy Maine’s outdoors actively***; walk, bike, hike, ski, snowshoe, paddle, forage.... exercise
 - ***Develop mindfulness practices***; meditate, calming music, journaling, prayer...
 - Be intentional about socialization. Who is your COVID Pod?

Resilience Balances Trauma

- The ability or capacity to recover to to adapt well in the face of trauma, adversity or difficulties:
 - Bounce Back
 - Flexible
 - Adaptable
 - Grit



Resilience is about having choices and access to options



*Everyone you meet is fighting a battle
you know nothing about.
Be kind. Always."*

—
ROBIN WILLIAMS



FIND HELP. FIND US.

Call us: **(800) 464-5767**

- *Press 1 for the Help Line*
- *Monday - Friday, 8am - 4pm*

Find us online: **www.namimaine.org**

- Sign up for membership and classes
- Browse support and resources
- Find you local affiliate and support groups





SUPPORT GROUPS

Support groups are offered statewide for peers, veterans, friends and family members.

- *Virtual Groups available 4 days a week!*
- *Always free - drop in as often as desired*
- *Safe and confidential*
- *Recovery-focused support*
- *Facilitated by trained volunteers with lived experience*

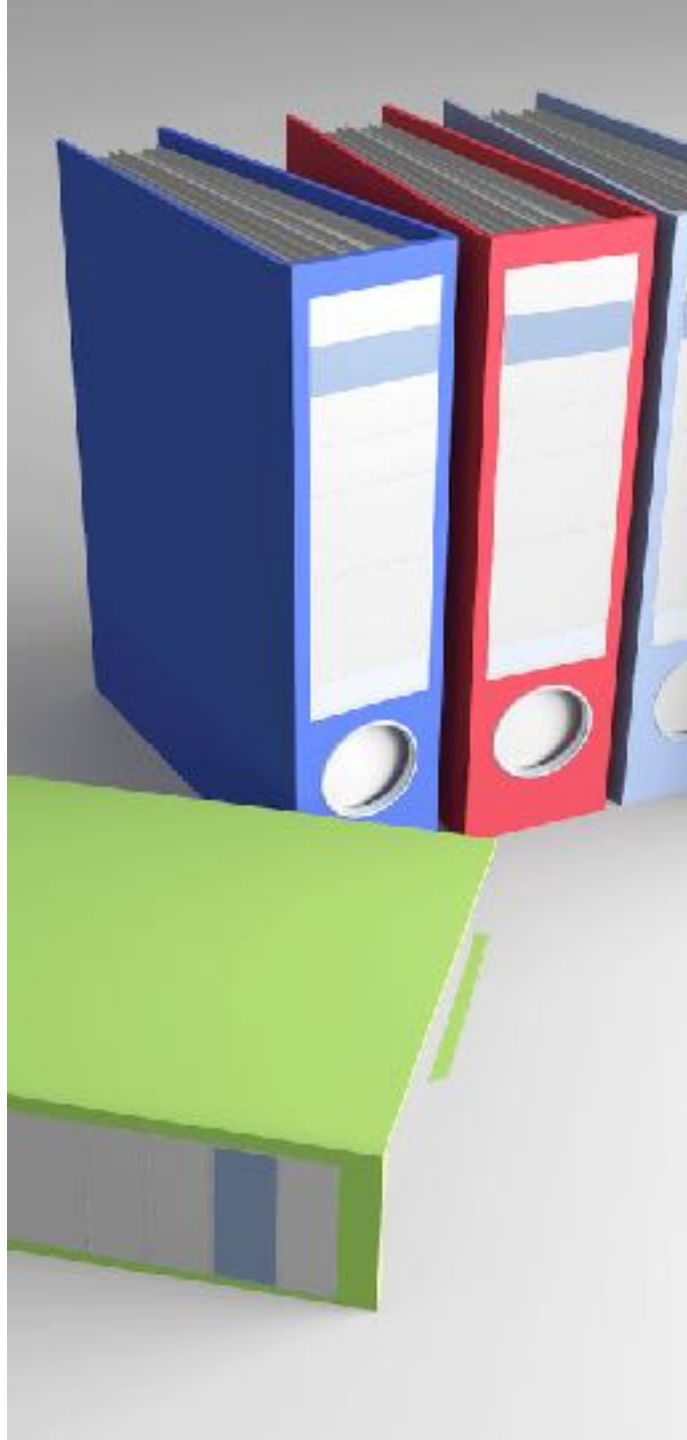
NAMI Maine operates 26 support groups statewide.



FAMILY EDUCATION

Free courses for people supporting an individual with a mental health concern. All programs are facilitated by trained volunteers with lived experience.

- ***Family-to-Family: for families supporting adults, 8 wks***
- ***Basics: for parents supporting children, 6 wks***
- ***Homefront: for families supporting military service members and veterans, completely online, 6 wks***
- ***All are available virtually during this time!***



MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

An 8-hour, evidence-based training for anyone who wants to learn how to help a person who may be experiencing a mental health concern or crisis.

- *Participants learn signs and symptoms of mental illness*
- *Skill building for communication and self care*
- *Dynamic agenda with video, discussions and activities*
- *Various models: Adult, Youth, Higher Education, Veterans,*
- *Law Enforcement and Older Adults*
- *1,700 individuals certified in the Adult model and 1000 in the Public Safety model since 2014*



“Growing Together”



PEER Supports

Waterville Peer Recovery Center is a community where participants can feel accepted, uplifted, and empowered—experiencing hope and the reality of recovery.

- *Participants experience growth and change because of their own strength*
- *Peer support they provide each other believe more fully in their own worth, their hopes and dreams, and their ability to achieve them.*
- *New grant program to provide peer recovery services to women in corrections*



A PEER SUPPORT TEEN TEXT LINE

- Open 12pm – 10pm
- Designed for 14 – 20 year olds
- Staffed by youth under 25 years of age
- Not a crisis service



EMERGENCY
PHONE
AND
CRISIS
COUNSELING

85

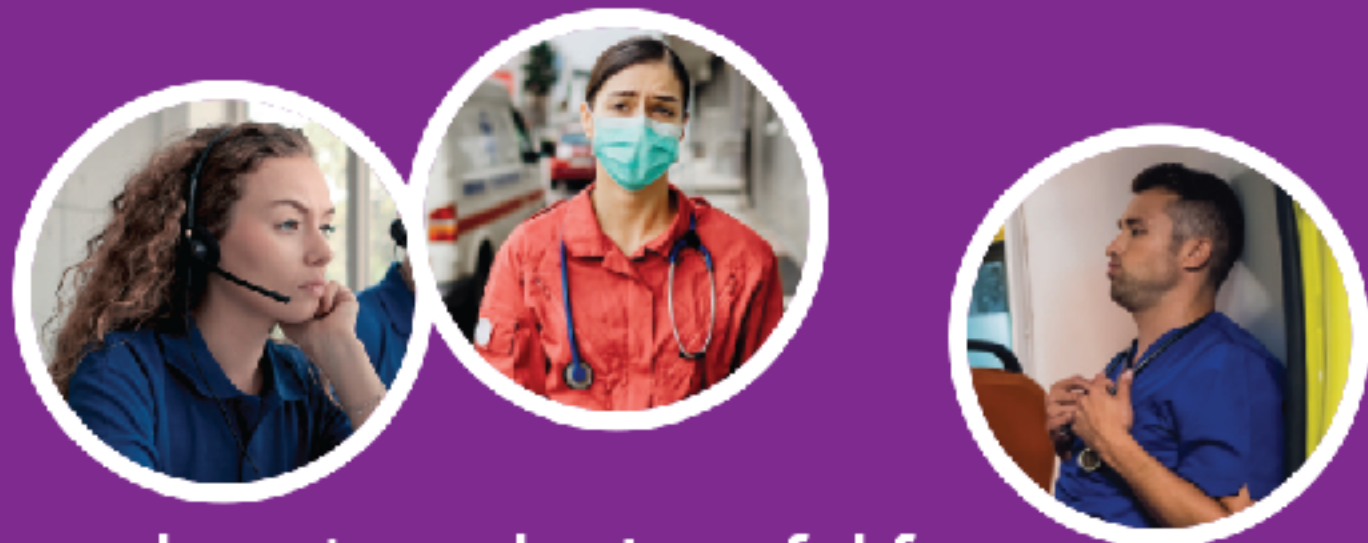


SUICIDE PREVENTION

NAMI Maine holds Maine's suicide prevention training and technical assistance contract. Trainings are provided to communities, schools, health and mental health clinicians and media outlets.

- *Increases awareness about suicide prevention*
- *Builds skills for managing suicidal behavior*
- *Supports best-practice models of suicide management*
- *Provides consultative guidance, resources and support in the aftermath of suicide or traumatic loss*
- *Training for school staff, clinicians and the community available virtually*

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic



can be extremely stressful for healthcare workers and first responders.

Your peers are here for you.



Everyone is eager to bust out of the COVID Cage



Wall Street
Journal



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Questions and Discussion

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