



EAVA Artists Limited

# TAKING CARE OF YOUR **MENTAL HEALTH** DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Ugandan LGBT community guide to keep healthy



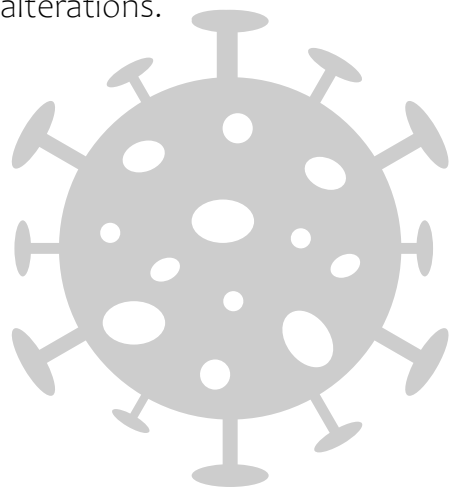
A third of the world population is under COVID-19 lockdown. COVID-19 has forced global economies into seclusion in a bid to flatten the infection curve and this could be very difficult to manage on all fronts for LGBT individuals.

Many LGBT persons have extra financial and social weight to carry and mostly recognizably, extra psychological load on to their shoulders. Studies have shown that Lgbti persons are 3 times more likely to experience depression and anxiety with a high risk of substance abuse. The situation at hand (Coronavirus pandemic) evidently implies that the susceptibility level will increase because quarantine is a new phenomenon and experience that many have not been prepared to face. The uncertainty and instability around coronavirus has the potential to exacerbate existing depression and anxiety and contribute to the onset of new mental health problems.

### **Behavioral and emotional alterations such as:**

- episodes of agitation,
- misplaced anger,
- mood swings,
- deflated motivation,
- extreme worry,
- restlessness,
- drug and alcohol use,
- withdrawal,
- stress,

are bound to increase during this period and this situation undermines good mental health. Because of the confinement, lgbtq individuals will or might face all or some of these emotional alterations.



## 5 SIMPLE BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW FOR A GOOD MENTAL HEALTH DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN



- **Sleep enough:** Ample sleep will ensure that you also put to bed your recurrent negative thoughts, troublesome feelings and fears. This is a healthy practice because your mind remains renewed and always positive.
- **Stay connected:** Do not cut connections with significant others in your life because of the quarantine. Practice a lot of talking and sharing about your fears, experiences and findings, with your people of importance that you are sure will do positive talk. Stay away from negativity during this period because it could expose you.
- **Drink sensibly:** Confinement could drive you into getting a companion to keep you busy and the easiest you

could find could be a drug or alcohol. Too much Drugs and alcohol corrupt the brain and mind leading to unhealthy behavior that could impact on your well-being during this pandemic period.

- **Eat well:** Eating a brain-healthy diet will improve your mental strength. An unhealthy diet can take a toll on your brain and mood, disrupt your sleep, sap your energy, and weaken your immune system. Conversely, switching to a diet low in sugar and rich in healthy fats, can give you more energy, improve your sleep and mood, and help you to look and feel your best.
- **Do daily exercises:** Daily simple exercises can help keep not only your brain but also your body refreshed. Simple exercises could include, jogging around your home, sit ups, push-ups, muscle stretching among others.

## The behavioural substitution technique

Current action/behaviour	Substitute action/behaviour
Drink alcohol sometimes	Drink a lot of water and other non-alcoholic fluids
Smoke cigarettes	Chew gum (greater alertness and positive mood)
Too much phone and television usage	Interact more with people around you
Sleeping too much when bored or idle at home	Perform physical exercises during day / play
Excessive worrying and thinking	Read something (e.g. novel, magazine, poems, view art)
Isolation and seclusion	Talk to a significant relation

These are some of the actions or behaviour adjustments you could make during this challenging time. Some of these are very rewarding psychologically and you will want to try them much more often



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