



## Recommendations of improving mental health

- **Above all** be take care of your health and follow the instructions of the public institutions but also be aware that most people infected with COVID-19 only experience mild symptoms
- **Work is being done to help persons who may be more vulnerable to the coronavirus**, such as older persons and persons living with disabilities.
- **Follow the news about the epidemic**, and make sure you follow the verified and relevant information provided by the websites of the Ministry of Health and the Institute for Public Health as well as the World health Organisation. Communicate your to your parents and the Children (Relevant websites: <https://covid19.rs/>, <https://www.zdravlje.gov.rs/>, <http://www.batut.org.rs/>, <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>).
- **Talk to your older parents** and share with them important information and recommendations on behaviour. Emphasise that for their health it is essential that they follow the guidelines listed above. Underline the **importance of sticking to guidelines and assist them** in procuring important articles and other activities. **Social isolation is very important for them at this time.**
- **Neighbourly assistance:** try and organise the community, in the apartment building or in your street so you can collectively assist older persons (especially those living alone) using all the protective measures (such as masks, gloves, no handshakes...). Older persons in your community may not be included in its activities or may not be receiving any support from the institutions and you may be their only support. Try and arrange within the community so that there are persons who will go for the groceries for them, pay their bills or walk their dogs.
- Your children may also feel fear because they see your behaviour and reactions. **Therefore it is important to communicate with them**, about the behaviour and self-protection but also to ensure they stick to routine while at home. It is also good to somewhat restrict their access to different media so that their anxiety is under control. You can play board games and other games with them and perhaps teach them some old games that they may not know.
- **Remain in touch.** Keep in touch via social networks as this will help reduce stress and reinstate the sense of normalcy without increasing the risk of infection. You can create Skype, Viber and WhatsApp groups with your family and friends, neighbours and relatives. You can talk on the phone, exchange text messages and use other services. Feel free to share useful information you find on public institutions' web sites. This will help your family and friends deal with anxiety.
- Red Cross organisations can with their older beneficiaries and **older volunteers create telephone circle** programmes which acts as a form of psychosocial support. In such a circle,

# COVID-19

#OstaniKodKuće



**OPERI**  
ruke temeljno  
i često



**NE DODIRUJ**  
oči, nos i usta  
sa nečistim rukama



**POKRIJ**  
usta prilikom  
kašljanja i kihanja



**OČISTI**  
površine sa kojima  
si često u kontaktu



**NE PRILAZI**  
zadrži odstojanje  
od druge osobe



15 older persons and a Red Cross person call each other every day at the same every day so that every person knows when to expect the telephone call. The Red Cross volunteer starts the circle and calls the first older person. That older person calls the second older person and this goes on until the last person in the circle calls the Red Cross volunteer to close the circle and report whether anyone needs any assistance. The individual conversations should not exceed 15 minutes.

- Persons who experience great anxiety, long lasting sadness or other long lasting reactions that affect their work or interpersonal relationships **should consult trained and experienced mental health** experts and get help with their extreme stress.
- **Be responsible, conscious, maintain solidarity and follow official guidelines.**

### Respect people's

#### Safety

Make sure your behaviour does not bring damage or harm to others by exposing them to additional risks (if you are ill do not go to work or to home visits, do not hoard goods at home as they are unnecessary and you will jeopardise other people's livelihoods and indirectly bring yourself and your family to increased risk because if your neighbours do not have disinfectants, that is also a risk to you)

Make sure, best you can that older persons and children you provide care to are safe and are protected from physical and mental harm (wash your and their hands, make sure they keep distance of one metre minimum from others at all times, cough and sneeze in your elbow or paper tissue and use protective gear whenever needed).

#### Dignity

Treat people with respect and observing their cultural and societal norms (if a person is infected do not stigmatise them).

#### Rights

Make sure that people can access information and assistance equally and without discrimination (also considering their and your safety).

Assist people in getting the help that is available.

Act only in the best interest of every person you are in contact with (observing the recommendations on behaviour and protection).

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