



**Subject: Keeping Ourselves Emotionally Healthy During the CoVID-19 Outbreak . . . and Beyond**



Dear Discovery Counseling family: Good Morning! My name is Autry Jamison and I am the new *Executive Director* for Discovery Counseling Center (DCC). Many of you I have already had the pleasure of meeting at the center and engaged in casual conversation. I look forward to meeting all of you as we travel on this journey together.

Let me start by saying that at DCC our goal is for each one of us, client and staff, to learn and practice good mental health as part of our daily lives, but especially during these challenging times when *social distancing* can limit our connections to each other and our mobility. Here are just a few suggestions to assist you where you're at:



**Stay Informed:** one way we, as humans, are wired to manage stress is by using our intellect to help make sense out of distressful situations. When we use our brains to gather good information, we actually override automatic negative thoughts that can lead to anxiety or depression. Your DCC staff is very dedicated to answer questions you have about how CoVID-19 and other healthcare concerns impact the continuity of counseling services. We strongly encourage all of you to use our approved online platforms for telehealth so that there are no breaks in therapy. Knowledge of all available resources is power!



**Stay Connected:** humans are social by nature, so whether you're used to large groups or small gatherings, we need others for support and confiding. Most people stay connected by cell phone (either talk or text) with trusted family or friends. You may have even noticed that people have learned to put aside their former differences by realizing that we are all going through tough times together. That's what we do in order to preserve community! If you should find yourself experiencing more loneliness during this time, for whatever reason, please don't hesitate to contact your DCC therapist. DCC staff care about you and are available to provide the support you need.



**Stay Active:** when we keep our bodies moving, whether by taking short walks or just walking in place, our brains are sending positive messages to all parts that we feel good, we feel healthy, and we feel confident. Physical activity is one of the number one recommendations in fighting depression because it counteracts the body chemicals leading to low mood and sadness. Also, keeping your mind active through reading, doing crossword puzzles, or watching educational programs does much to redirect your thoughts from negativity to increased positive mood. Remember, bodies in motion support our emotions!



**Stay Mindful:** one good way of decreasing symptoms of depression and anxiety is to break the cycle of over thinking things by directing your thoughts and attention to the here and now. Find a place where you can sit quietly and undisturbed for a few moments. Turn off any television or radio. Bring your attention to the present moment by noticing your breathing. Pay attention to your breath as it enters and then leaves your body. If you notice your mind starting to wander, that's OK. Just acknowledge it then return to your breathing. Don't judge yourself or your wandering thoughts. Continue this process throughout the day until you get good at it and it's totally under your control. Before you know, you will have mastered Mindfulness!

I hope this email has been informative and supportive for you. If you should notice that you are starting to feel more anxious, restless, or on edge, or if you notice changes in your sleeping or eating habits for the worse, please notify your DCC Therapist as soon as possible. Thank you for your time and have a safe journey.

**Autry Jamison, LMFT**  
**Executive Director**