

MINISTRY TO MINISTERS

Rev. Angie Swonger LPC

For positive emotional and mental health, here are a few interventions you may want to put into practice as you navigate these precarious times in history and ministry.

Distraction – When you realize you are in the midst of an overwhelming moment, take an enjoyable “time out” to ...

- read
- listen to music or a podcast
- watch a TV show or movie
- play a board game, physical game, or even a game on your phone
- clean, cook, garden
- have a conversation about something other than the stressor

The positive side of distraction is that it gives your mind a break, providing short-term relief. A disadvantage is that you can't stay distracted forever. Sooner or later you must resolve the problem.

Emotional Release – Just let it out! You can ...

- yell, scream, cry, laugh
- run, exercise
- throw balls, hit balls
- drum, dance, sing

A positive of emotional release is that it reduces overwhelming feelings. A disadvantage is that it's difficult to do in every situation. Be selective about where you practice it.

Social Support – Remember, we were created to go on this journey with God and others. Stay connected with those who cheer your heart.

Self-Compassion – Don't be surprised by big feelings. They do not define you. They are simply how you are feeling in this moment. Ways to practice self-compassion include ...

- creating a calm space for yourself.
- hugging yourself
- scheduling a time to do something nice for yourself. Seriously, put it on the calendar right now.

Soul-Care – Allow God to fill you up with His love. The imperative of wellbeing is impossible without Divine Empowerment. To do so, “Be still (*cease striving*), and know (*experience*) that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). Practice Soul-Care through...

- **Listening to Sermons** – Not just your own.
- **Bibliotherapy** – Press into God's Word. Allow Him to be more compelling than anything vying for your attention.
- **Keep the Sabbath** - As pastors, equating Sunday with Sabbath is difficult. Schedule a Sabbath where you allow yourself to power down, fill up, then start anew.

Counseling – If you feel the need to see a mental health professional, please make that appointment. COGO Ministries has prepared a path for pastors seeking faith-based counseling. If you would like a list of counselors in your area, contact COGO Ministries at <https://cogo.church/resources-for-pastors/>