

## HOW ARE YOU DOING?

How are you doing?

No, really. How are **YOU** doing?

Take a pause...And think.... How are you doing?

Let's take a moment to do a self- assessment.

How is your heart rate?

How quick are your breaths?

Your shoulders: how tense are they?

Your face: are you frowning? Do your eyebrows look strained?

Where are you holding the tension? Your temples? Your shoulders? Your back? Stomach?

Your thoughts: are they scattered? How much water are you drinking? Are you getting outdoors for fresh air, for a walk? How are you eating? Too little, too much?

How is your connection with others? Are you reaching out with a phone call, FaceTime, a conversation face to face (keeping a 6-foot distance)?

How much are you reading and watching the news and social media? Do you need to shut it off for a while?

Are negative and anxious thoughts flooding your mind? Do you feel like it takes too much energy to accomplish simple tasks?

We are all busy looking after our kids, our co-workers, our parents, our neighbors, but we must do a check in with ourselves, as well. We are in uncharted waters and in unprecedented times. It is in times such as this that we need to check in on how our body, mind and soul are coping. We could be in this situation for a while so it is crucial to stay strong and courageous: physically, spiritually and emotionally.

As you read this, take a deep breath through your nose, slowly exhale through your mouth. Roll your shoulders forward and backward a few times. Hang your head to one side for a few seconds, then the other. Keep breathing, slowly and deeply.

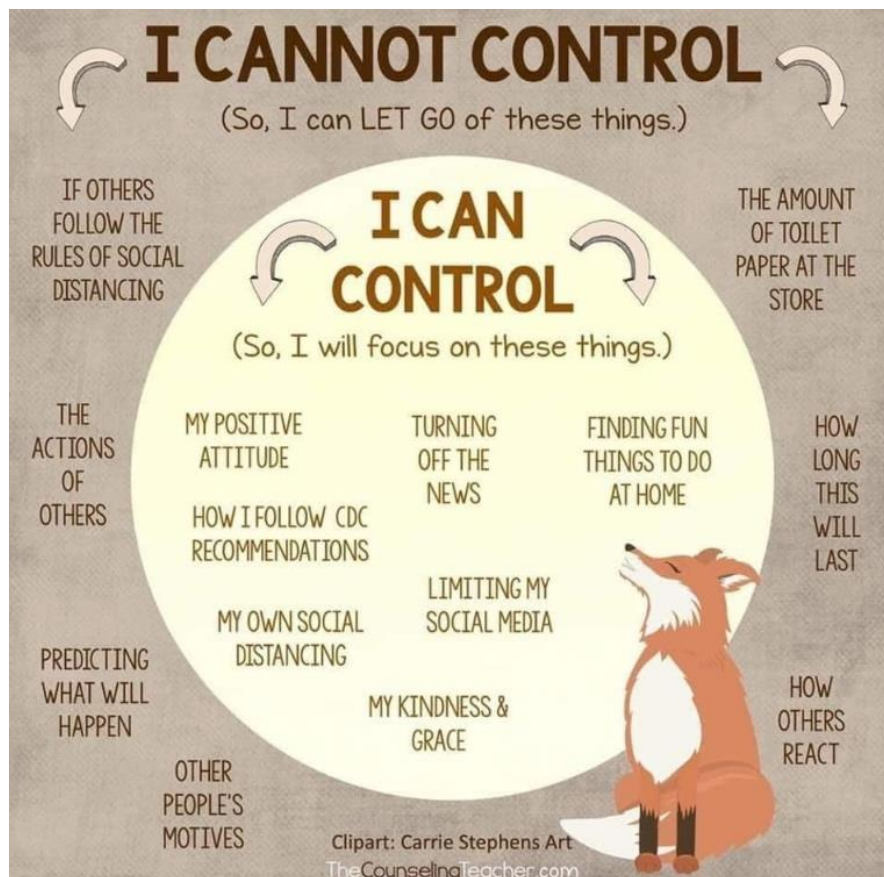
Though we are feeling pressure on all sides, we are not crushed. We may be confused and bewildered at the global crisis, which is now so close to home, but we do not need to be given to despair.

The Alberta Health Services has launched Text4Hope, a free service that reminds us to focus on positive thinking during challenging times. Text COVID19HOPE to 393939 to subscribe.

The Mental Health Help Line is open 24/7 at 1-877-303-2642. The Kids Help Line is 1-800-668-6868. If you are needing assistance while isolating, please call 310-0000 or go online at <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans>

Reach out to those you care about. Keep your diet healthy and balanced. Go outside regularly for a dose of sunshine and movement. We have an advantage living in rural and small town Alberta that makes it easy to go outside and maintain appropriate, safe distances. Flood your mind with calming and uplifting messages and music. Despite the physical distance that is required, we are so fortunate to have countless ways to connect with our friends and family. Journal your experience, your thoughts, your fears, what you are learning, what you appreciate, what you are grateful for.

**Remember: We were made to do difficult things**  
**We are in this together**  
**You are not alone**



*This article was submitted by Tammy Charko, BA, BSW, RSW.. Tammy is Northern Gateway Public School's Student Support Facilitator. . She is a support for schools, staff, parents and students to ensure success in schools. Tammy advocates for students and provides the link between students and the families and other supports in the community. Tammy is mom to 4 teenagers.*