

How The Coronavirus Pandemic May Increase Risk Of Relapse

Lockdowns and other stay-home orders are creating intense feelings of isolation for a majority of the population. While some are managing to cope, many of us are struggling to adapt to this “new normal”, particularly those struggling with drug and alcohol addiction.

The ongoing global coronavirus crisis has represented one of the greatest challenges of our lifetimes. Outside of concerns regarding contraction of and complications from the virus itself, lockdowns and ensuing economic instability have led to increased feelings of fear and loneliness. While all of this is plenty for anyone to bear, those struggling with substance abuse may be even more susceptible to succumbing to these overwhelming emotions.

While some have found a semblance of solace in the age of the “new normal”, many of us may be facing a new host of challenges we never thought we would. Countless have found their sound habits and routines upended, taking a core sense of stability and converting it into chaos. From feeling alone and being outright isolated, to concerns over being exposed at work or being unemployed altogether, each of us faces a variety of unique challenges that make everyday struggles all the more challenging.

Some of the challenges and struggles that come with this new age may act as potential relapse triggers for those who live with drug and alcohol addiction. Multiple studies have established a connection between isolation and addiction, finding that feelings of isolation can often lead to worse treatment outcomes. Having a solid social support system is an important part of sobriety for many, with some opting for options such as finding a sponsor and group therapy.

Social interactions, which for many serve as a major source of close and intimate support, have been replaced with more impersonal alternatives such as chat rooms and group video calls.

While this may serve as an effective stopgap measure for some, there are plenty of people who are struggling to adapt to this new normal and the lack of personal connections that come with it.

The New Normal

Those just starting their recovery often rely on a system of internal and external accountability to help them maintain their sobriety. Unfortunately, in addition to the lack of in-person options for support systems, many are faced with a growing sense of disillusion and apathy in light of current events.

To those struggling with managing their addiction and maintaining their sobriety, there are options available for you. It is important, now more than ever, for you to maintain healthy relationships in whatever capacity you can. Friends and family can help provide you with a sense of stability and support, and even chatting online with a trusted acquaintance can offer a bit of release and help create some sense of connection.

To those actively in treatment, try your best to increase your engagement however possible. If in-person counseling or meetings aren't an option, consider alternatives such as tele-counseling and virtual meetings. While not a direct replacement for the feeling and connection face-to-face engagement creates, the stability and accountability that come from the habit of attending and being honest may be of great help to many.

Relapse is a part of recovery for many of those struggling with addiction. Never forget that life is a marathon, not a sprint. Move at your own pace.

We're Here For You

If you feel you're at an increased risk of relapsing, don't be afraid to reach out to a counselor, sponsor, family member, friend, or trusted acquaintance for support.

If you do slip up, don't treat it as a failure or view yourself as one. You are a complicated human being worthy of love and compassion, especially from yourself. Try to identify what triggered the relapse for you and do your best to avoid it moving forward, then try to use the advice above to help you as you continue on your journey.

While many treatment centers are currently offering reduced services or are outright closed, other outlets such as ourselves continue to offer compassionate and comprehensive care utilizing new health and safety standards for both our clients and staff. Don't be afraid to [reach out to us today](#) for the support you need and deserve. We are here for you and more than happy to help.