

# LGBTQIA+ PERFORMERS COPING TIPS FOR COVID-19

As members of a widely marginalized community, there are some unique stressors that we are experiencing during quarantine that others may not be. For this reason, it is especially important for us to take care of ourselves as well as one another during this time.



Stay in contact with other members of the community if possible. If you find yourself quarantined with family or others that are not supportive of your gender identity or sexuality, having contact with others in the larger LGBTQIA+ community or strong allies can serve as a reminder that you are not alone in this. Chosen family is just as real/important as any biological family.



Limit the amount of news you consume during quarantine. While it is important to stay up to date on the latest developments in this ongoing public health crisis, if we allow ourselves to consume this information without limits it can have a negative effect on our mood and our ability to cope with other stressors.



Consume media (TV, movies, books, memes, etc.) that is affirming to your identity or is made by those who share your identity. There is unfortunately always an abundance of negative portrayals of LGBTQIA+ folks in the media and it's no different during this time. Consuming media with positive queer/trans messages can help to counterbalance the stress caused by exposure to bigoted or negative portrayals in the media.



Go outside! (In a safe way of course!) Observe social distancing guidelines responsibly but get out in the sunlight for at least a few times during the week. Soak up some vitamin D! Take a walk, even if just around the block. It helps with depression and anxiety.



If it is within your power, help out those community members in need. Helping others, even in small ways, is a good reminder that we are important and that we can still help others even in the midst of a pandemic.



Give yourself space to have a freakout/breakdown/bad day, etc. We are all coping in our own ways and these are completely new circumstances for all of us. It's okay and important to admit that you're experiencing stress or anxiety about all of this! Guilting/shaming yourself for having those perfectly legitimate feelings is not okay.



Work on your art! Work on a new project or continue working on an older one. You can and should still nurture the creative side of yourself in quarantine. It reminds us of who we are!



Try not to put too much pressure on yourself to be "productive" during this time. It's okay if you want to take on a new project, but it's also totally fine if all you're doing is getting through one day at a time. There is no right or wrong way to cope with all of this additional stress.



Reach out to a professional if necessary! Most doctors and therapists have adapted to phone/video-based services. "Mental health assistance can be intimidating but there are people that can help no matter how bad you're feeling. There is no shame in asking for help when we need it.



## CODY M. SMITH, MS, LPC

Ms. Smith is a mental health therapist in private practice in the New Orleans area primarily serving the LGBTQIA+ community. She is the first trans person to be licensed as a professional counselor by the state of Louisiana. She is an advocate and educator regarding ethical treatment of LGBTQIA+ individuals in healthcare and social service settings. She serves on the board of directors and as Medical Policy Advisor for Louisiana Trans Advocates and is the head of the local New Orleans area chapter. She is an adjunct faculty member and field instructor at Tulane University. She also serves on numerous advisory boards for healthcare organizations throughout the New Orleans area assisting them in developing LGBTQIA+ affirming policies and procedures. She has also been an avid drummer and percussionist for most of her life and believes strongly in the healing power of music and other forms of artistic expression.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**TGNC (TRANS & GENDER NON-CONFORMING) PEOPLES FUND LOUISIANA** A Louisiana-based advocacy group to assist those at risk for eviction, or currently unhoused/homeless.

Email us at [tgncrelieffund@gmail.com](mailto:tgncrelieffund@gmail.com) and give us a brief description about what's going on for you.

**THE VALIDATION STATION** Sign up to receive affirming text messages.

<https://www.validationstation.net/>

**THE TREVOR PROJECT** The Trevor Project is the world's largest suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, & questioning (LGBTQ) young people.

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/2020/04/03/implications-of-covid-19-for-lgbtq-youth-mental-health-and-suicide-prevention/>

**HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN: GENDER AFFIRMING CARE** We know LGBTQ communities are particularly vulnerable to both the economic and health impacts of the virus--because they are more likely to work in industries highly-impacted by the pandemic, such as service industries--and they may have more health risk factors that exacerbate the disease, like smoking..

<https://www.hrc.org/blog/an-update-on-gender-affirming-care-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>

**MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA**

<https://mhanational.org/covid19/#%23ForLGBTQIndividuals>

**NATIONAL LGBT CANCER NETWORK**

<https://cancer-network.org/coronavirus-2019-lgbtq-info/>

### For national information specific to the LGBTQIA+ community:

**THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR TRANSGENDER EQUALITY**

<https://transequality.org>

**THE TRANSGENDER LAW CENTER**

<https://transgenderlawcenter.org>

### For local information specific to the LGBTQIA+ community:

**CRESCENT CARE** CrescentCare offers a range of healthcare options sensitive to the unique needs of LGBTQ individuals and their families, including gender-affirming primary care for transgender and gender non-conforming people.

<https://crescentcarehealth.org>

**LA TRANS ADVOCATES** Since founding in 2011, we've been a consistent resource for transgender and gender nonconforming Louisianans, whether they needed referrals for providers, support, or an advocate to help them with their school or employer. Also provides monthly support groups for trans folks throughout Louisiana, including Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Shreveport, Lafayette, Lake Charles, and Monroe.

<https://www.latransadvocates.org/meetings>

**SOUTHERN TRANSMASCULINE ALLIANCE** aims to: provide safe space support groups, organize positive and inclusive social events, discuss social action, assist with name and identity change processes, host activities to create a positive social brotherhood, and encourage the conversation of finding out what masculinity means for each of us.

<https://www.stanola.org>

**LGBTQ Center of New Orleans** mission is to combat homophobia, transphobia, racism and misogyny by supporting community-driven projects and organizations in the greater New Orleans area. The Center's vision is to create a Greater New Orleans area where gender and sexual minorities are equitable and empowered.

<https://lgbtccneworleans.org>

**NOAGE** NOAGE New Orleans hosts socialization/educational events for LGBT older adults, and works to increase the cultural competency of providers through trainings and workshops.

<https://www.noagenola.org>



**NEW ORLEANS  
MUSICIANS' CLINIC  
& ASSISTANCE FOUNDATION**

**BE KIND AND STAY SAFE.  
YOUR LIFE MATTERS.**

**NOMAF.ORG/COVID19**