



# Crisis Management During COVID-19 for Burn and Trauma Survivors

## About the Authors

### James Bosch, LMFT

*James Bosch has spent the past decade working with children, individuals, couples and families. He knows that in the face of fear and wounding, we all struggle and feel alone. He became a therapist to accompany others on their journey back to wholeness. As a burn survivor, he brings a rich background and training in the healing from physical and emotional trauma.*

### Cindy Rutter, BSN, AMFT

*Using her personal experience as a burn survivor, Cindy Rutter has aided burn survivors clinically with her role as a medical professional, serving as a bedside nurse and Burn Center nurse manager. Beyond her duties as a nurse, she has made countless contributions to the burn community, encouraging the enthusiasm for life that she demonstrates every day.*

Alisa Ann Ruch Burn  
Foundation

50 N. Hill Ave. Suite 305  
Pasadena, CA 91106  
800-242-BURN  
www.aarbf.org

In times of natural disasters or crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic it is particularly important for burn and trauma survivors to manage stress and anxiety. Burn trauma by nature can lead to complex PTSD and this can create trigger some of these old trauma responses.

Here are some tips to help you during this time:

**Reaction versus action.** Am I reacting to panic or am I acting out of conscious action? Avoiding panic and fear responses that can trigger flight, fright or freeze effects.

**Don't sit in front of the TV or spend too much time on social media looking at the news.** Get facts from scientific sources rather than becoming activated by every alarming news story on the screen.

**Take time to take a breath and relax.** Spend quality time with people you live with – catch up on loving each other. Talk and listen, with your loved ones.

**Catch up on home projects or pick up that book you have been meaning to read.** Look at the social distancing time as an opportunity rather than a punishment. Reframing things in your mind can help relax your nervous system.

**Start a mindfulness or meditation practice.** There are many tutorials and how to videos online. This can be a great time to reflect, heal and reawaken.

**Exercise to reduce stress and strengthen your immune system.** Online workouts and yoga classes instead of gym are great.

**Get outside in nature.** You don't have to stay inside; you are just asked to keep distance between yourself and others. Go for a walk or hike in nature or get the rust off that bike in the garage and go for a ride; this will help change your state of mind.

**If your children are home play games with them.** Use this time as an opportunity to reconnect and grow in your relationship.

**Take advantage of online support groups.** There are many opportunities to meet with other burn survivors and family members online and share support. AARBF offers three online support groups monthly. Visit [www.aarbf.org](http://www.aarbf.org) for more details.

**Engage online therapy if you are in crisis.** It is okay to talk about the hard feelings that may be present for you.

**We can get through this as a community** and if you have the opportunity to be there for others use this time productively. Supporting your local communities is needed more than ever now and a way to give back.