



Anxiety during this time of uncertainty (COVID-19)

Maintain balance in your life. Well-being comes from living a life with a balance of activities that give you feelings of pleasure, achievement, and closeness. Remember that we're social animals – we need connections to enrich, thrive and flourish. Trying to do at least some activities that are social and involve other people. In times like these, you might have to find some creative ways to do social things at a distance. Use technology for your advantage (join online community via popular social media, create your own virtual group, set small goals each day)

Try identifying whether your worry is 'real problem' worry, or 'hypothetical worry'. If you're experiencing lots of hypothetical worry, then it's important to remind yourself that your mind is not focusing on a problem that you can solve right now, and then to find ways to let the worry go and focus on something else. Same strategy could work with children if they are struggling to cope.

Postponing your worry. Worry is insistent – it can make you feel as though you must engage with it right now. But you can experiment with postponing hypothetical worry, and many people find that this allows them to have a different relationship with their worries. In practice, this means deliberately setting aside time each day to let yourself worry (e.g. 30 minutes at the end of each day). Sometime, labelling your worry as unhelpful thought could assist you to distance from such thought.

Be compassionate. Worry can come from a place of concern – we worry about others when we care for them. A traditional cognitive behavioural therapy technique for working with negative, anxious, or upsetting thoughts is to write them down and find a different way of responding to them.

Practise mindfulness. Learning and practicing mindfulness can help us to let go of worries and bring ourselves back to the present moment. For example, focusing on the gentle movement of your breath or the sounds you hear around you, can serve as helpful 'anchors' to come back to the present moment and let go of worries.

Free apps like Breathe2Relax, Mindfulness Coach and many others could assist you.

Acceptance of uncertainty. Try not to over do by trying to change, control of what you can't change. Rather, take small steps to divert your energy / attention towards what matters to you at the very moment.

Remember, it is not you alone, we are all going through.

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