

Coronavirus

Tips to reduce anxiety and look after your wellbeing

1) Limit the news & unplug from social media

- Limit how often you read or watch the news by only checking in a couple of times a day.
- Decide when you are going to check the news, this will help you to think less about it and resist the urge to check updates.
- Only read or watch the news on trusted sites e.g. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51204456>
- Instead of watching or reading yourself ask your family to update if there are any major updates.

2) Stop talking about coronavirus.

- Don't start a conversation about the coronavirus.
- Change the subject if it comes up.
- Ask family and friends not to talk about it in front of you.

3) Normalise your anxiety

- Remind yourself it is normal to feel anxious when we over estimate danger and under estimate our ability to cope with it. This is the flight, fight, freeze response.
- Remind yourself of your ability to cope by making an action plan for how you will use your time if you have to self-isolate or if school closes. Having a plan reduces anxiety because you know what you are going to do.
- Check your thoughts. Are you thinking 'What If?' If you are thinking worse case scenarios, remind yourself of the facts and take time to reassure and calm yourself.
- The Clear Fear app is a great little app with tips about coping with anxiety
<https://www.clearfear.co.uk/>

4) Use healthy coping strategies

- Breathe – doing some breathing exercise calms the nervous system and can help us relax.
<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/relax-breathing.html>
- Imagine your own safe space. Shut your eyes and imagine yourself safe and relaxed in your safe place or if you enjoy drawing, take some time to draw your safe place.
<https://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/docs/SafePlace.pdf>
- Distract yourself by playing a game or doing a puzzle. It's hard to think if we are concentrating on something else.
- Have a specific worry time, perhaps 15 minutes during the day when you allow yourself to worry but then stop. Remember you can be the boss of your thoughts.

5) Plan your time if you have to stay at home

- Have a healthy balance of study and taking breaks. Use different ways of studying: books, online videos, making notes and discussing a topic with friends.
- Relax and be creative – make time to do a craft, colour, doodle, draw, play an instrument, sing or do something else which uses your creative side.
- Do some exercise – put some music on and dance, find a workout online or walk up and down the stairs.

- Keep in touch with friends digitally but remember to avoid talking solely about coronavirus. Perhaps even make a Coronavirus free zone.
- Open a window and let some fresh air in or take time to look at the sky.
- Change the rooms you spend time in.

If you are feeling anxious and need to talk contact:

<https://www.kooth.com/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/> 0800 1111

<https://www.samaritans.org/>

If you would like further advice and tops tips:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/>

Resource adapted from information found on:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/#collapse9c916>

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/news/news-from-bacp/2020/28-february-coronavirus-anxiety-how-to-cope-if-you-re-feeling-anxious-about-the-outbreak/>

<https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/what-to-do-if-you-are-anxious-or-worried-about-coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>