



Handy Hints for COVID-19 Anxiety

With more restrictions being implemented, we may notice that our bodies are feeling tense or that we may be holding on to some strong worries or feel our anxieties heightening.

Our routine has to again re-adjust and adapt which can also contribute to our anxiety.

Below is a range of things we can do to help manage our anxiety or these big worries that we might be holding on to.

Talking about COVID and Daily Routine



Be available to Talk and it is okay to feel things.

Talking to a psychologist or a mental health professional can be daunting, but remember we can also talk to our partners, family and friends about how we are feeling. As we are allowed to feel a feeling, as all feelings are validated.

Limit exposure to the news.

Even without realising at times, we are often picking up on what is around as such as things we see or hear on the TV, Radio, social media or even just conversations with family and friends. As just hearing the tone of the presenter can sometimes make us feel more anxious. If you wish to keep informed, wait for summaries of press conferences and always check the resource as what is on Twitter or Facebook isn't always right.



Routine, Routine, Routine

As humans we love routines, as by having a predictable routine as well as boundaries can be comforting to us. This can include waking up, having meals at their usual time, exercising, going to work or clients at a set time and going to bed at a set time.

Strategies to Help Manage Anxiety



Practice Controlled Breathing (also known as diaphragmatic breathing)

This is a technique that helps you slow down your breathing when feeling stressed or anxious. Calm breathing involves taking smooth, slow, and regular breaths. Sitting upright is usually better than lying down or slouching, because it can increase the capacity of your lungs to fill with air.

Diaphragmatic Breathing:

1. Take a slow breath in through the nose, breathing into your lower belly (for about 4 seconds, pushing out of belly to look like a balloon).
2. Hold your breath for 1 or 2 seconds
3. Exhale slowly through the mouth (for about 4 seconds) and imagine as though you are blowing out candles on a birthday cake and seeing your belly push inwards your spine.
4. Wait a few seconds before taking another breath and repeat.

Grounding

Grounding is techniques that help reorient us to the present moment when we are feeling anxious.

These techniques help us connect with the present moment and the environment that we are in. One way to practice grounding is by using the 5,4,3,2,1 sense strategy. This is when we work backwards from 5 naming different things we see, hear, touch, smell and taste.

5 - 4- 3- 2- 1 Senses

Name: _____

5 things you see: _____

4 things you hear: _____

3 things you smell: _____

2 things you can touch: _____

1 thing you taste: _____

Progressive Muscle Relaxation



Without even realising anxiety can make our muscle tense and a way we can relax our muscles and ease this tension is by using Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR).

PMR teaches us how to relax your muscles through a two-step process. First, you systematically tense particular muscle groups in your body for a few seconds, such as your neck and shoulders. Next, you release the tension and notice how your muscles feel when you relax them. With PMR we start from our toes and work our way up through the different muscle's groups of our body.