

Mental Health Support; My Wellbeing

We understand that during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak, people may be feeling stressed and overwhelmed and especially, those who are considered higher risk of being effected by the Coronavirus.

Therefore, it is very important that you stay at home and avoid other people where possible.

Your emotional and physical wellbeing is extremely important and during the current Coronavirus outbreak, it's essential that you look after yourself. There are lots of things you can try that could help your wellbeing.

If you're feeling Anxious:

Don't ignore your anxiety

It's important that you don't ignore any feelings of anxiety or nervousness. These feelings are common and understandable during the corona outbreak.

If you're feeling particularly anxious about coronavirus, it might be worth thinking about limiting how much time you spend on social media or reading, listening or watching the news.

It might also be worth considering where you are getting information surrounding the coronavirus from. Are the reports sensationalising the situation and scaremongering? Or do you feel they are reporting responsibly and with balance?

Do something you can control:

It may be helpful to express the anxiety you're feeling in a way that you can control. This can be done in a number of ways and it's worth exploring these options to find the option that works most effectively for you.

- If you have panic attacks or flashbacks, it might help to plan a 'safe space' in your home that you'll go to. This could be a place you enjoy being in or somewhere you find peaceful or relaxing.
- You can also find ways to comfort yourself if you're feeling anxious. For example, there are games and puzzles you can use to distract yourself and also breathing exercises which may help (see below).
- It can help to allow yourself to worry for a **short** amount of time and write these feelings down a notebook or journal

Let it go:

However, it's important that once you have put your worries and anxiety down in writing, to put it away and let it go.

Bring it back to the present:

Often with anxiety, it feels as though you're 10 steps ahead, so try and bring yourself and your thoughts back to the present.

Try to be aware of what you're thinking. If you find yourself catastrophizing and focusing on all the 'what ifs?', bring things back to the present and what you actually know.

Try to reassure yourself and calm yourself. This is 'self-soothing'.

Self-management; how can I help myself?

It's important to make sure you are doing the usual-self management and looking after yourself. Things to consider are:

- Am I getting enough good quality sleep?
- Am I eating a balanced diet?
- Am I regularly exercising?

These are important things to consider which you may find helpful in reduce and controlling any feelings of anxiety.

Breathing Techniques



1. Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose. Keep your shoulders relaxed.
Your tummy should get bigger, and your chest should rise a little.
2. Breathe out slowly through your mouth.
3. Repeat this for 5 minutes or until you feel calmer.
4. If you regularly practise this, you may find that your breathing naturally follows this calming pattern helping you to stay calmer throughout the day

Useful Contacts

There are a number of charities or organisations that you can contact (for free) who have individuals that will provide emotional support. These individuals will listen to you and help to talk through how you're feeling and any worries or concerns you may have. These services are completely confidential and non-judgemental.

NHS volunteer responders



Check-in and Chat volunteer: This role provides short-term telephone support to individuals who are at risk of loneliness as a consequence of self-isolation.



Telephone: 0808 196 3382

Samaritans

Samaritans provide support to individuals who are experiencing distress or worry. You can phone, email, write a letter and where applicable, talk to someone face to face.

Telephone: 116 123 (24 hours a day, free to call)

Email: jo@samaritans.org

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

Mind Infoline

Mind provides confidential mental health information services. This is in the form of support and understanding that enables people to make informed choices surrounding their mental health. The Infoline gives information on types of mental health problems, where to get help, drug treatments, alternative therapies and advocacy.

Telephone: 0300 123 3393 (9am-6pm Monday to Friday) or text 86463

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Website: www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines

SHOUT

Shout is a 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks that are contactable if you feel you are struggling to cope, you are worried and need help.

Text: 85258

Website: <https://www.giveusashout.org/>