

# CORONAVIRUS ANXIETY

## Coping with Stress, Fear, and Worry

By: Elaine Gower



**H**ow to keep your spirits up in these trouble times?

We are all likely experiencing some emotional discomfort (or worse!) - given the spread of COVID-19 and the disruption to our lives. Grief at losing out on experiences, frustration, uncertainty — all are normal reactions at this time. The situation is new and unpredictable!

Focus on the things we can control. Our emotions reside in our bodies, so take good care of yours! A few ideas to help:

First, limit the time you spend on news. It is coming at us from all directions and this can be downright overwhelming. Stick to trustworthy

sources such as the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and your local public health authorities. Instead, focus on staying healthy. Maintaining a regular sleep schedule helps, try to go to sleep and wake up at roughly the same time each day. Work towards maintaining good nutrition and regular meals. Get out and get some exercise! Staying active will help you release anxiety, relieve stress, and manage your mood. If possible, get outside as sunshine and fresh air will do you good. Practice deep breathing and relaxation yoga. Not sure how to do these? YouTube has a variety of free options for beginners.

Have you ever wanted to knit? Why not try taking up a hobby that requires use of your body and mind? Activities such as knitting, art, playing an instrument, etc. may give you a much-needed emotional break.



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Social connection is really good for us too! Maintain social distance, of course, but stay in touch with friends. You might even try the old-fashioned art of letter writing.

Maintain perspective. Remind yourself of what is good in your life and what is important: health, friends/family, and being alive. Some snuggle time with your pets can make a tough day a lot easier. Or take the focus off of yourself and do something kind for someone else!

Be kind to yourself. Go easy on yourself if you are experiencing more depression or anxiety than usual. You are not alone in your struggles. Consider keeping a journal about what this experience is like while ending with three good things about the day, however small, to help keep your spirits up.

Make sure to incorporate some of these ideas into your daily schedule and you will see your stress level drop. 🙌



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