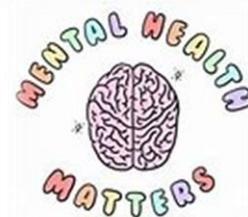


Dealing with Uncertainty and Worry

Here at Wellbeing we understand that the Covid-19 pandemic has increased panic, fear and anxiety, which can begin to take a toll on our mental health. This can also have particular impact on those already living with mental health conditions. During these difficult times, we are facing globally, it is important to take the correct measures to protect your mental health. We have put together some helpful resources and apps that you can utilise to limit the effects of Covid-19 on your mental health and we hope you find these beneficial.



Firstly, know that what you are feeling is totally normal. Most of us have never experienced anything like this before in our own lives, our communities, or our workplaces. That is true for everyone right around the world. But know that it is normal to be feeling stressed, anxious, and scared right now.

Most of our anxiety can be attributed to the uncertainty, especially in a world where situations seem to change so fast. We as human beings hate uncertainty and are looking for security and answers. Because we cannot get this our anxiety is likely to be high. Again, this is normal and it is ok to feel like that. Anxiety can often make us physically feel different too – and it's important that we take time to acknowledge that. We may worry that these physical symptoms are coronavirus and that is normal too.



What CAN we control? And what CAN'T we?

- Allow yourself to feel what you are feeling. It's ok not to feel ok.
- We cannot switch off our anxious thoughts and feelings but remember you are in control and you can find ways to cope with them.
- Different people will feel different things and that is OK too. It's important just to be able to be honest with those around us and acknowledge that we each have our own ways of coping.
- It is tempting to look to social media or the TV for help, and for hope. However, we know that this can often make things worse. Seek out good news stories.
- Stay connected. Remain connected with your social group and loved ones. Find out what people in your local community are doing to ask for help or support one another.
- Keep active. Join an online workout class. We are very fortunate that we have such a huge capacity for online connection – now is the time to utilise this. Try a home workout, go out for a walk, play with your pets, walk around your home every half hour.
- Stick to a daily routine. Although we are in a very uncertain time, it is possible and important to try and stick to a routine. By keeping to a routine, you are installing some structure and control. This feeling of control can be paramount in protecting our mental health during uncertainty. Wake up at the same time, have your usual breakfast. Dress as usual; continue to chat with your friends/colleagues. Have lunch at the same time, and finish work at the same time. It is important to learn what causes you distress and learn some coping mechanisms. Limit your exposure to things which cause you distress.



Having suicidal thoughts? Discuss with a loved one, call Samaritans on **116 123** or access your **G.P.** or **Crisis Service** via **NHS** on **111**.

Our recommended resources (click for direct access):

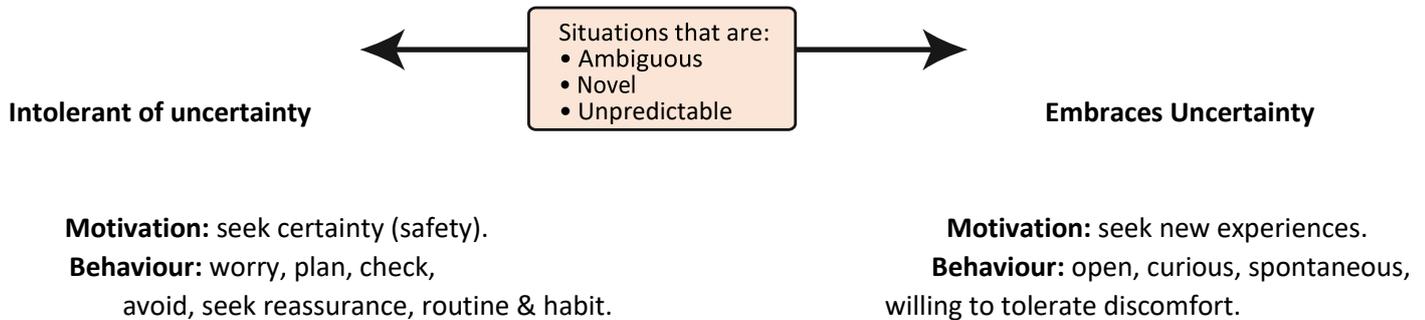
NHS Inform	Offers the most up-to-date information on coronavirus. Please visit: NHS Inform
Wellbeing	Our website offers a variety of self-help materials, groups, and courses for all sorts of problems that you may be facing. Anyone can download the self- help materials. Please visit: Wellbeing Website Glasgow
Mental Health Foundation	A range of content designed to give you more information about mental health and to help you to look after your mental health. Please visit: Mental Health Foundation - Coronavirus
World Health Organization	Trustworthy source for accurate and up-to-date public information regarding current pandemic. Please visit: World Health Organization - Coronavirus
Psych Central	Run by mental health professionals offering reliable, trusted information to individuals struggling with a problem in their lives. Please visit: PsychCentral for Mental Health
MIND	Information hub provides advice on how to support your mental wellbeing during this period. Please visit: MIND for Mental Health
SAMH	Hub of information and guidance about looking after mental health as the coronavirus developments continue. Please visit: SAMH Mental Health During Coronavirus

Useful Apps:

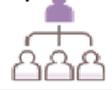
	Mind Shift	Rather than trying to avoid anxious feelings, Mind Shift stresses the importance of changing how you think about anxiety. It can encourage you to take charge of your life, ride out intense emotions, and face challenging situations
	SAM	SAM might be perfect for you if you're interested in self-help, but meditation isn't your thing. Users are prompted to build their own 24-hour anxiety toolkit that allows you to track anxious thoughts and behaviour over time and learn 25 different self-help techniques.
	Happify	Need a happy fix? With its psychologist-approved mood-training program, the Happify app is your fast-track to a good mood. Try various engaging games, activity suggestions, gratitude prompts and more to train your brain as if it were a muscle, to overcome negative thoughts
	Headspace	The Headspace app makes meditation simple. Learn the skills of mindfulness and meditation by using this app for just a few minutes per day. You gain access to hundreds of meditations on everything from stress and anxiety to sleep and focus.
	Calm	Calm provides people experiencing stress and anxiety with guided meditations, sleep stories, breathing programs, and relaxing music.
	Smiling Mind	Smiling mind is a way to practice daily meditation and mindfulness exercises from any device. This is really helpful during times of stress and is a fun and unique way to help you put a smile on your mind.

Embracing Uncertainty

Life is uncertain: we can never be 100% sure what is going to happen. Some people are OK with this and find it easy to embrace new experiences. Other people struggle with uncertainty: it is almost as if they have a phobia of it, and they often do things like worry or *plan* in attempts to reduce uncertainty.



Embracing uncertainty can allow you to enjoy more of life, and to respond more flexibly to challenges that come your way. One way of doing this is to gradually introduce uncertain events into your life. Try to embrace uncertainty by experimenting with some of the tasks below:

<p>Walk a different route. You can go out for exercise once daily. Follow social distancing.</p> 	<p>Make something different. A nice meal? Try some online recipes.</p> 	<p>Try a new class. (Online) Many online free fitness classes are available.</p> 	<p>Search online positive world news.</p> 
<p>Watch a film on TV, youtube or netflix.</p> 	<p>Have a different lunch every day.</p> 	<p>Read a different newspaper, or something by a new author.</p> 	<p>Talk online or to a neighbour from a safe distance... (ask a question, pay them a compliment).</p> 
<p>Wear something 'new' for you (e.g. style, brand).</p> 	<p>Do an activity that you might enjoy :0) (scrapbooking, gardening, baking, painting).</p> 	<p>Talk to people via skype, or telephone. Chat about future plans and goals!</p> 	<p>Listen to music that you wouldn't normally listen to.</p> 
<p>Sit in a different place than you normally do. (at home or in garden)</p> 	<p>Delegate tasks to others. (within the household)</p> 	<p>Sleep on a different side of the bed.</p> 	<p>Self-care activities such as pampering yourself at home.</p> 

Tips for embracing uncertainty:

- Adopt the mindset that it is good for you to take small risks and challenge yourself.
- Make 'trying new things' a regular part of your life.
- You're trying to build a 'tolerance of uncertainty muscle' so you will need to practice regularly.
- Maintain a curious and open approach by focusing on the outcome of your experiments, not on the emotional experience: What did you learn? What did you experience that was new and exciting? What did that experiment do for your confidence?