



# COVID-19 & MENTAL HEALTH

Managing anxiety & worry, staying connected, and focusing on reliable and helpful information and resources

## Managing Anxiety & Worry

Uncertainty is a part of life that can cause anxiety and worry. There are times when world events, such as COVID-19, that can bring forward even more uncertainty, anxiety and worry. Keep in mind though that you have been navigating uncertainty all along and you have skills and tools that will help you navigate this time as well! Also remind yourself that it is normal to have more difficult feelings during times such as these, however there is no need to jump onto the panic bandwagon! Here are a few things you can do to help manage increased anxiety any worry during this time:

- **Use your coping skills!** In times where you have been anxious before, what has helped? This may include deep breathing, engaging your 5 senses, utilizing a guided meditation
- **Educate yourself.** On what the virus is, the signs and symptoms and preventative measures that can be taken
- **Don't inflate the risk.** When anxious or worried, our minds can "catastrophize" which means we start thinking "worse case scenario." Try to slow down your thinking and ask yourself if your thought is based on facts and is it helpful to you right now?
- **Keep perspective.** While it's important to stay informed, it's also important to keep perspective and not spend too much time checking the news, social media, etc. Try to commit to only checking in a couple of times a day for 5 minutes.
- **Take recommended precautions.**
- **PRACTICE SELF COMPASSION.** Don't be too hard on yourself!

## How to stay connected while practicing social distancing

Social distancing involves taking steps to limit the number of people you come into close contact with. Social distancing is an incredibly important step in helping limit the spread of COVID-19. While this may mean we need to physical distance ourselves from others, there are many other ways we can remain connected with one another. Here are following suggestions to help keep connected:

- Video and/or phone calls are a great way to connect and check-in with those close to you
- Text messages are a quick and easy way to stay connected
- If you are working from home, create an online working group, meeting for a "video lunch", schedule check-in times

### Other helpful tips:

- Stay active! Plan movement breaks, go for a walk, do some yoga, etc.
- Engage in enjoyable activities such as: cooking, reading, listen to podcast, draw, etc.
- Nurture your body through exercise, good nutrition and sleep.

### Helpful resources:

[www.bigwhitewall.ca](http://www.bigwhitewall.ca)

[www.anxietycanada.com](http://www.anxietycanada.com)

App: MindShift

App: Stop, Think, & Breathe

App: Insight Timer

**Peel CMHA 24.7 Crisis Line**

(905) 278-9036

or

1 (888) 811-2222 (for

Caledon and Dufferin)

**Kids Help Phone 24.7**

1 (800) 668-6868

or

Text CONNECT to 686868

### Where to find accurate and reliable information:

[www.canada.ca/coronavirus](http://www.canada.ca/coronavirus)

[www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus](http://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus)

[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)