



How to manage our anxiety about coronavirus (COVID-19)

This factsheet offers useful advice for anyone who may be feeling anxious about coronavirus.

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 seems 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's 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.

NHS Inform offers the most up-to-date information on coronavirus and to view, visit: www.nhsinform.scot

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

- Allow yourself to feel what you are feeling. It's ok not to feel ok.
- 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. So if you are going to do this, limit the time you watch the news.
- Find out what people in your local community are doing to ask for help or support one another. Try facebook or WeLoveStornoway.
- Use trusted sources such as www.nhsinform.scot which have latest information and help support.
- Seek out good news stories and consider how you might be able to support or keep in touch with others.
- We cannot switch off our anxious thoughts and feelings but remember you are in control and you can find ways to cope with them.

Hot to look after your own mental health

- The key thing is to be kind to yourself and recognise that your body and your mind need that right now.
- Eat well, for mind and body.
- Take exercise when and where you can, at a distance from others. Keep a routine, pace yourself. Look after yourself.

- If you are not coping, recognise that that is ok and do not feel bad. Talk to others about your experience and how you are feeling. Be open and honest. Others are probably feeling the way you are too.
- Be kind to others.
- Use this time to do things that you enjoy doing, think of all the projects you have put off, all the books you have not had time to read, the box sets you'd like to watch, the garden if you have one. This is a great time to do all the things you have not had time to do for yourself before.
- Be in touch with people you like and trust - use the time to be with those you love and focus on how you can make the time feel positive together.

The following are some free websites, online therapies and Apps you can also use to help you manage your feelings...

When in self-isolation affected by coronavirus

- www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak
- www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2
- <https://psychcentral.com/blog/coronavirus-anxiety-4-ways-to-cope-with-fear/>

General self-help about managing your own mental health and sleep

- www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/mental-health-problems-introduction/self-care/
- www.samh.org.uk/about-mental-health/self-help-and-wellbeing
- <http://mentalhealthsupport.co.uk/ns/>



Online self-help programs you can access to help support your mental health and sleep





- www.beatingtheblues.co.uk
- www.sleepio.com/

And for help with more severe anxiety and depression from an on line therapist:

- www.iesohealth.com/en-gb

Useful apps

	Mind Shift	Mind Shift is a mental health apps designed specifically for teens and young adults with anxiety. 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 (Self Help for Anxiety Management)	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. You can also use SAM's "Social Cloud" feature to confidentially connect with other users in an online community for additional support.

	Happify	<p>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</p>
	Headspace	<p>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. The app also has a handy “get some headspace” reminder to encourage you to keep practicing each day</p>
	Calm	<p>Calm provides people experiencing stress and anxiety with guided meditations, sleep stories, breathing programs, and relaxing music. This app is truly universal; whether you’ve never tried meditation before or regularly practice, you’ll find the perfect program for you.</p>
	Smiling Mind	<p>Smiling mind is a way to practice daily meditation and mindfulness exercises from any device. Smiling Mind is a unique tool developed by psychologists and educators to help bring balance to your life. This is really helpful during times of stress and is a fun and unique way to help you put a smile on your mind.</p>

There are many other apps you could try which could be helpful but these are some suggestions to try or you may find your own that you like better.

There are also many organisations which can provide support which you might find helpful.

Disclaimer

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