

Tips for Battling Anxiety During this Public Health Situation

Considering the level of attention and seriousness being paid to the COVID-19 pandemic, it's normal to feel anxious. Here are some tips to help people to remain calm and balanced as this public health situation unfolds.

1. Try not to avoid, ignore or suppress anxious thoughts. Instead, be aware of your anxiety and accept that you're feeling anxious in this situation.
2. Try to keep things in perspective; notice and challenge your thoughts if they may be extreme or unhelpful.
3. Lean on social supports (virtually if needed), try to get enough sleep, eat healthy, exercise and engage in enjoyable activities (use caution and follow health and safety guidelines while doing them).
4. Seek information from reliable news sources only. Limit checking in on the latest news to short, defined periods.
5. Remain focused on things that are within your control, such as washing hands, covering your mouth during coughs and sneezes, avoiding non-essential travel, etc.

If you're noticing that your symptoms of anxiety (in association with COVID-19 or otherwise) are causing you significant distress or are interfering with your ability to function normally, reach out for formal mental health supports from a healthcare provider, a recognized agency, such as Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) or consider contacting Crisis Services Canada, for crisis support by phone, in French or English: toll-free 1-833-456-4566 Available 24/7.

Adapted from CMHA's York and South Simcoe's CEO Rebecca Shields and Clinical Director Dr. Deanne Simms
CMHA offers tips to support mental health amid concerns of COVID-19 pandemic