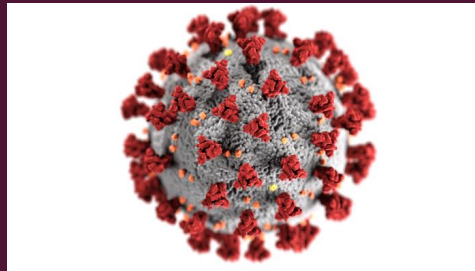


THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT OF COVID-19: MANAGING YOUR COVID-19 ANXIETY



DR. SAMANTHA LONGMAN-MILLS

WHAT IS COVID-19

- COVID-19 is an illness caused by a coronavirus. Human coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illnesses, similar to the common cold.
- Symptoms may be mild or serious and include:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Difficulty breathing
- Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to the virus (typically 5-7 days)
- A secondary infection (pneumonia) may occur approximately 10 days after symptom presentation and may result in the need for additional oxygen or the use of a ventilator to aid breathing.
- Most commonly transmitted from an infected person (whether presymptomatic, asymptomatic or symptomatic) through respiratory droplets when you cough, sneeze or talk.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/know-facts-about-coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

WHAT IS COVID-19

- The virus can spread due to close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands or touching something with the virus on it, then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands
- To prevent the spread of COVID-19:
 - wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
 - avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, especially with unwashed hands;
 - avoid close contact with people who are sick
 - wear non-medical masks
 - cough and sneeze into your sleeve and not your hands; and
 - stay home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/know-facts-about-coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

The COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) pandemic has brought about global fear and anxiety due to its easy transmission, unpredictable outcomes as well as its elevated mortality rate among older people.

“The impact is wide-ranging as it shatters families, devastates communities, and forces even the more developed countries to shut down. The impact is immeasurable and long term as this disease has a negative impact on business and global economies.”

“People are overcome with the fear of themselves, loved ones, and persons within their communities becoming infected and possibly dying. This has resulted in increased levels of panic and sometimes confusion, resulting in a run on shops, empty supermarket shelves, persons walking around with masks and gloves that should be spared for health workers. Although these emotions are normal and natural, it is important that we manage these.”

W. Abel April 7th, 2020. Jamaica Gleaner. The Psychological Impact of COVID-19. <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20200407/psychological-impact-covid-19>

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause physical and emotional symptoms in adults and children.

Physical Symptoms include:

- Muscular tension and body aches
- Restlessness, agitation and difficulty relaxing or concentrating.
- Sleeping difficulties
- Feeling easily fatigued

Psychological Symptoms Include:

- Excessive worry and anxiety
- Difficulty relaxing or concentrating
- Containment fatigue (feeling isolated)
- Catastrophic thinking
- Information addiction

MANAGING YOUR COVID -19 WORRY / ANXIETY



Helps you to get what you want

Helps you to solve problems in your life

Leaves you feeling demoralized, upset, or exhausted

Gets in the way of living the life you want to lead

https://www.psychologytools.com/assets/covid-19/guide_to_living_with_worry_and_anxiety_amidst_global_uncertainty_en-us.pdf

MANAGING YOUR COVID -19 ANXIETY

Manage your COVID information intake:

- Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can become addictive as well as upsetting.
- Recognise when information is obviously fake news.
- Go to WHO and government websites to get accurate information.

MANAGING YOUR COVID -19 ANXIETY

Reframe your perspective:

- Stop focusing on the negative.
- Many persons with the disease will have it in a mild form and many may not even know they had it.
- One to three per cent of persons with the disease die, but remember that 97-99 percent of persons survive so let's them stop the catastrophic thinking.

104-year-old WWII veteran recovers from COVID-19, celebrates birthday at the same time



BY MEAGHAN WRAY · GLOBAL NEWS

Posted April 2, 2020 3:01 pm



W.Abel April 7th, 2020, Jamaica Gleaner: The Psychological Impact of COVID-19. <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20200407/psychological-impact-covid-19>

MANAGING YOUR COVID -19 ANXIETY

Maintain a daily routine/ structure:

- Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate
- Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals.
- Exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs
- Be compassionate with yourself

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

MANAGING YOUR COVID -19 ANXIETY

Physical distancing and not social distancing:

- We are social animals and when anxious we crave closeness and connection with other people. But COVID-19 prevention requires physically distancing
- Physical distancing is when people stay apart from one another to avoid spreading disease. Six feet distance is recommended.
- Avoid texting and actually talk with others on the phone and also try to connect with others using teleconferencing.
- Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling
- Avoid persons who tend to catastrophize.

MANAGING YOUR COVID -19 ANXIETY

Schedule your worrying:

- Deliberately setting aside time each day to let yourself worry (e.g. 20 minutes twice daily) and only worry at these schedule times.
- It may feel weird initially, but it results in you not worrying for 23.3 hours in the day.

https://www.psychologytools.com/assets/covid-19/guide_to_living_with_worry_and_anxiety_amidst_global_uncertainty_en-us.pdf

MANAGING YOUR COVID -19 ANXIETY

Practice mindfulness:

- mindfulness can help us to let go of worries and bring ourselves back to the present moment.
- For example focusing on the gentle movement of your breath or the sounds you hear around you, can serve as helpful 'anchors' to come back to the present moment and let go of worries.

How to Practice Mindfulness

- 1 Take a seat.** Find a place to sit that feels calm and quiet to you.
- 2 Set a time limit.** If you're just beginning, it can help to choose a short time, such as 5 or 10 minutes.
- 3 Notice your body.** You can sit or kneel however is comfortable for you. Just make sure you are stable and in a position, you can stay in for a while.
- 4 Feel your breath.** Follow the sensation of your breath as it goes out and as it goes in.
- 5 Notice when your mind has wandered.** When you get around to noticing this—in a few seconds, a minute, five minutes—simply return your attention to the breath.
- 6 Be kind to your wandering mind.** Don't judge yourself or obsess over the content of the thoughts you find yourself lost in. Just come back.



mindful
mindful.org

https://www.psychologytools.com/assets/covid-19/guide_to_living_with_worry_and_anxiety_amidst_global_uncertainty_en-us.pdf

By Mindful Staff
mindful.org

THANK YOU

Any Questions??