



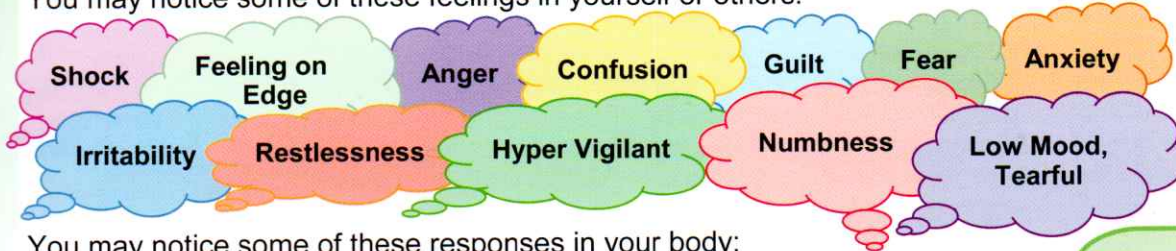
Minding our Mental Health during COVID-19



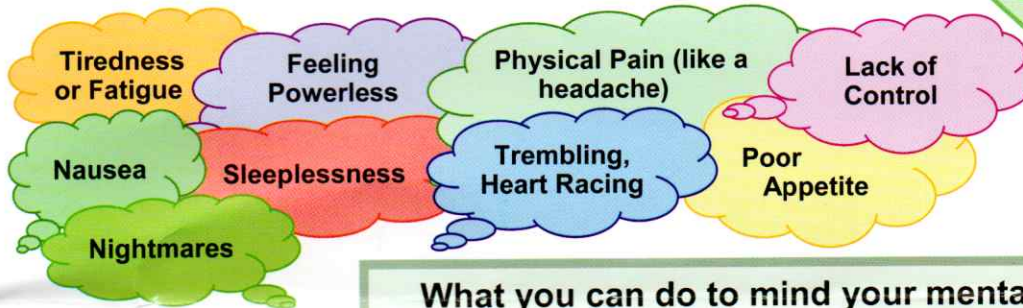
We're living through a difficult time and need to mind ourselves and each other. There's no 'right' or 'wrong' way to react to this situation. But being aware of our feelings and physical responses, as well as those of people around us, can help.

Normal feelings and responses in abnormal times:

You may notice some of these feelings in yourself or others:



You may notice some of these responses in your body:



Experiencing all or none of these is a normal response to a sudden, unexpected situation that is beyond your control.

What you can do to mind your mental health

Top tips to take care of yourself:

- ◆ Keeping up healthy routines is important. These may be affected by the coronavirus outbreak in different ways. But during difficult times like this, it's best if you can keep some structure in your day. Consider putting in place new routines that work for you and sticking to them.
- ◆ Be kind to yourself. What do you like doing? Little things that make you happy may help you rest and recover. Any hobbies or activities, especially physical activity like a nice walk (within the 5km from your home) are good. Watch TV that you enjoy, read or listen to music.
- ◆ If you're anxious or breathless, try a simple mindful breathing exercise, available on Youtube.
- ◆ Eat well. Avoid alcohol and drugs. These can make you feel worse and harder to sleep. Sleep is one of the best ways to look after your mental, and physical health.

Stay connected:

- ◆ It's good to talk, a phone call or video call is great for you and the person you ring.
- ◆ If you're having trouble, let your friends and work know. If they know, they can support you.

Children and teenagers:

- ◆ Involving your children in your plans to manage this situation is important. Try to consider how they might be feeling and support them in maintaining healthy routines.
- ◆ Give children and young people the time and space to talk about the outbreak. Share the facts with them in a way that is age appropriate and without causing alarm.
- ◆ For teenagers, staying in touch with friends is important, and social media may help with this. However, the sharing of information on Covid-19 (whether accurate or not) can also be overwhelming and may cause anxiety. Find ways with your children to limit their exposure to such information.

IT WILL PASS

Most responses will reduce in time. For some of us, talking to someone outside of our family will help. Freephone the Samaritans on **116 123** (any time, day or night) for support if you are in distress or struggling to cope.

Pieta are available on **1800247247** (any time day or night) if you are in need of support around suicide ideation or self-harm.