

# COPING WITH UNCERTAINTY

DURING  
COVID-19



Worrying is our brain's natural response to a crisis and it helps alert us to the fact that the situation needs to be taken seriously, allowing us to take the precautions needed. However, over-worrying about the pandemic is unhelpful, and affects our functioning in daily life.

## HOW WORRYING WORKS

### Loss of a sense of control

Having plans and expectations for the future helps us feel secure and in control. However, the constantly-changing COVID-19 situation creates uncertainty over the future of our jobs, relationships, health and that of our loved ones.

### Catastrophizing

Uncertainty causes us to overthink and worry uncontrollably, thinking of our situation as worse than it really is.

We might also think that worrying will help us find a solution even when it does not.

### Effects

- **Interrupted sleep**
- **Reduced focus**
- **Physical symptoms (faster heart rate, breathing problems).**

Over prolonged periods, worrying can also affect our immune system, making us less able to fight off illnesses!

# ACCEPTING UNCERTAINTY

## 1 Identify triggers

Reading the news, social media, talking to anxious friends



## 2 Recognise the signs

Thinking of “what ifs”, muscle tension, shortness of breath, loss of focus



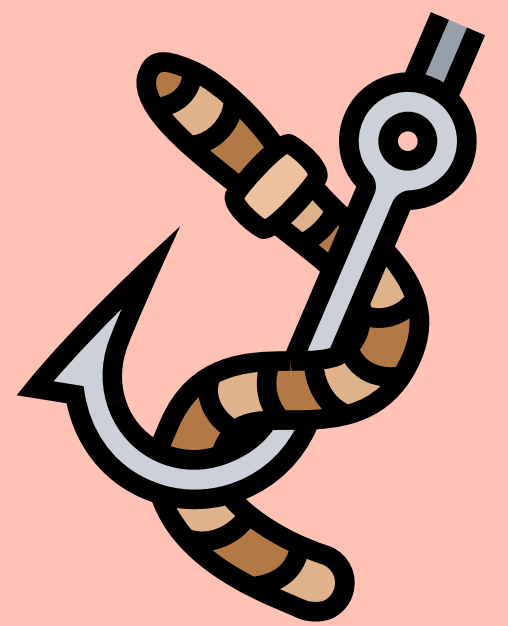
## 3 Acknowledge feelings

Take deep breaths and write down how you feel, allowing yourself to experience the worry and let it pass when you're ready. Use a meditation app or online meditation guide to help!



## 4 Don't take the bait

When “what if” questions pop up in your mind, don't dwell on them or speculate about how bad the crisis might become.



## 5 Change your focus to worries you can solve

### NOT IN MY CONTROL

### IN MY CONTROL

The economy



Staying prepared for work, searching for a job

The possibility of getting infected



Reducing risks by maintaining good hygiene, following safe distancing guidelines, looking out for loved ones

The daily number of new cases

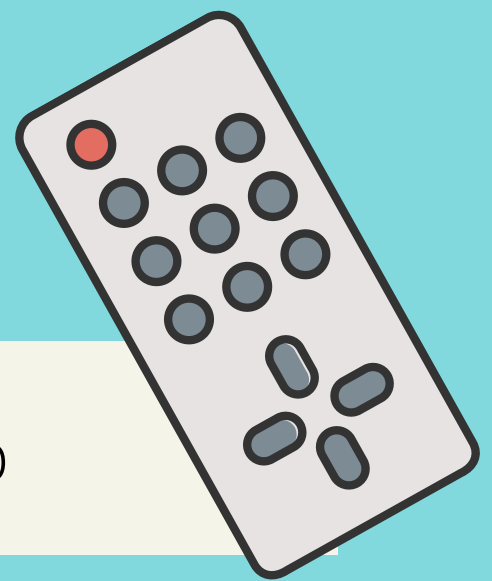


Charities you can support / neighbours you can help

When Circuit Breaker measures will be lifted



Planning your schedule for the next day/week, maintain a routine



## 6 Set a worry time



Limit yourself to half an hour at the end of the day to worry about problems you cannot solve, read news updates or talk to a friend about the pandemic.