

At-Home Coping Tools

Reinvigorate your sense of self. Being at home is a gift.

Being at home can be a challenge for most of us who find ourselves typically on the go. Instead of fighting it, it is encouraged that you try to embrace this experience. It is a great opportunity to get back in touch with you.

Being *busy* has become the new respected and new normal. Is it *healthy* though? As times have shifted, work has become the major focus of most of our lives. We often tend to neglect relationships that are closest to us. We also tend to neglect the aspects of ourselves that are not tied to work. If we take an exploratory approach to ourselves, what might we learn?

If you feel "stuck":

1. Embrace that you cannot change the circumstances.
2. Surrender to the feelings.
3. Ask yourself what you can control in this moment.
4. Try to find peace in surrendering.

Notes:

- You are not alone in this feeling.
- You have control over how you spend your time.
- You have control over how you process your emotions.

Questions to reflect on:

1. What do you enjoy about being home?
2. Are there areas of your life you neglected before this?
3. As you shift into this new way of being, what are you learning about yourself and others?
4. What would you like to continue doing that you're doing now when restrictions are lifted?
5. Are there people you feel you would like to connect to more?
6. Do you spend enough time speaking with your family? Friends?
7. When you put busy aside, what opens up for you?
8. How can you be creative right now?
9. How do you want to express yourself?
10. Are there elements of yourself you'd like to get back in touch with? If so, what are they.

During this time, try to focus on getting in touch with your mind, body & soul.

To do so:

1. Nurture your mind.
2. Nurture your body.
3. Nurture your soul.

Nurture Your Mind

What are your thoughts like right now?

What are the sensations that come with those thoughts?

What are the behaviours that come with those thoughts & feelings?

How are those thoughts, feelings, & behaviours serving you?

If you find you are in a negative space, ask yourself to shift to a place of acceptance. "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Practice deep breathing. Inhale deeply through your nose for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 5 seconds, exhale fully/vocally through your mouth for 6 seconds. Repeat 10 times.

Challenge your negative thoughts. Is there substantial evidence for this thought? Is there evidence contrary to this thought? Are you attempting to interpret this thought without all the evidence? What would a friend think about this situation? If you look at the situation positively, how is it different? Will this matter in a year from now? How about 5 years from now?

It can also be helpful to practice meditation daily:

Some meditation relaxation tools we like:

Relaxation Response- 17 Minute Guided Meditation
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdbzDMSGsyg>

Meditation for Anxiety- Yoga with Adrienne
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pLUleLdwY4>

Guided Meditations- Anxiety Relief/ Stress Relief – The Honest Guys
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_jcEpwKQXc&t=321s
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S92hR3YgblU&t=669s>

Nurture Your Body

Physical Health: How is your body feeling? Are you exercising? Are you eating healthy? Managing physical health during COVID-19 can be challenging. Here are some free resources to try (please note, these are not affiliate links—just sources we like):

Exercise

Yoga with Adrienne

<https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>

30-minute HIIT Cardio with No Equipment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ml6cT4AZdql>

30-minute Feel Good Dance Cardio Workout

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8TOIWNNAVADw>

Nutrition

Nutrition Source – Harvard

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/2020/03/25/food-safety-nutrition-and-wellness-during-covid-19/>

If you are feeling anxious, please **avoid** caffeine and sugar as best as you can.

Tips to do now:

1. Exercise for 45 minutes at least 4 times per week. Either do the at home exercises listed above or do something else to get your heart pumping.
2. Meditate & practice relaxation & breathing techniques daily.
3. Focus on the things that are in your control & try to accept the things that are not.
4. Try to not watch the news or consume lots of other media—it contributes to anxious feelings.

Nurture Your Soul

Have you been praying/ meditating lately?

Have you been communicating with your family/ friends/ acquaintances?

Have you been expressing yourself creatively?

Have you been respecting yourself & your boundaries?

Some suggestions:

1. Take walks in nature and notice everything.
2. Engage in creative art eg. create a scrapbook from your favourite photos.
3. Sing in the shower, the car, the bedroom, anywhere!
4. Listen to soothing music.
5. Put on some music and dance.
6. Read a good fictional book. Read a good nonfiction.
7. Savor every bite of your meal.
8. Meditate.
9. Soak in a bubble bath. Enjoy the sensations of a warm shower.
10. Learn a new recipe.
11. Watch a comedy. Laugh!
14. Write poetry.
15. Do a random act of kindness.
16. Daydream.
17. Play a musical instrument. Play on virtual instruments.
18. Connect with your romantic partner via an engaging conversation over tea.
19. Make peace with the person you just fought with.
20. Journal or write creatively.
21. Find every reason to celebrate and feel the joy when you do!
22. Practice gratitude for what is going well.
23. Practice self-compassion.

Protective Factors

Protective factors are things to help you to be more resilient in the face of challenges. It is important to focus on what *is* in your control.

Social Support: people to discuss concerns with, people to ask for practical help, people who you are friends with, intimate partners, & family

If you're living in Ontario, this also counts as social support:

If it's an emergency, or you or someone you know is in immediate danger, please call [9-1-1](tel:9-1-1) or go to your nearest hospital or emergency department.

If you are in crisis, please call the following:

Mental health helpline: [1-866-531-2600](tel:1-866-531-2600)

Ontario Crisis Line: [2-1-1](tel:2-1-1) or [1-866-330-3213](tel:1-866-330-3213)

If you are feeling down, it is helpful to reach out to those who care about you and those you care about. If you feel you would like to speak to a professional, you can reach out to the crisis line or set up a time to speak with a therapist.

Get updates through these sites instead (try checking only 1x/ day):

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

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

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus>

** This is based on Ontario, Canada. If you're in another part of the world, please check for your country's website.*

At the end of the day, you can only do the best you can. We are all in this together.

So, give yourself some good guidance.

- Note that you can handle this situation despite its difficulty
- Note that you can practice helpful coping techniques
- Note that access to therapy is available if necessary

STRENGTH STATEMENT

Create a mantra of strength that encompasses how you will get through this. Important: Include specifics of your plan.

For example: I can get through this. I have many things to distract myself with. I know how to practice relaxation techniques and I have ways to challenge my anxious thoughts. I can reach out for support if needed. If this gets overwhelming, I can call a therapist. I can make healthy choices.

Write out your mantra here:

You can get through this. We believe in you.

If you need extra support, feel free to book a phone consultation/ session with one of our therapists:

<https://www.consciouscounselling.co/services>