

MANAGING WORRY AND UNCERTAINTY

Worries, doubts and anxieties are an unavoidable part of life. Although we can't predict the future, we can learn to accept the things outside of our control and learn skills to help us cope better with the situation.



IT'S NORMAL TO FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE

Adapting to changing situations can take you out of your comfort zone.

Allow yourself the time to adapt to changes. Treat yourself kindly and know that you are doing your best even if things aren't perfect.



CONNECT TO THE PRESENT

During times of uncertainty, we can get stuck worrying in an endless loop about different possible outcomes, often with the belief that we can prepare for the worst.

Remind yourself that this is unhelpful and shift your focus onto something you can do in the present and engage in what you are doing.



Try using your senses to refocus your attention. Look around you and notice:

- five things** you can see
- four things** you can hear
- three things** you can smell
- two things** you can taste
- Take one** deep breath



HAVE PLANNED WORRY TIME

Are you concerned about overthinking a specific task?

Instead of worrying constantly throughout the day, postpone your worries to a specific time set to worry. You can do this by writing it down and addressing the worry at a set time each night. Make sure you spend some of your allocated 'worry time' engaging in problem-solving.



For example, you can set your 'worry time' each night for 20 minutes at 7pm.



ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR FEELINGS

It can be easy to become overwhelmed with fear and anxiety when we are facing situations outside our control.

Give yourself the space to feel your emotions as they arise without any judgment or wish for it to be different.

Naming and acknowledging your feelings can help you release the emotion and manage the uncertainty with more clarity and peace.



When your feelings are really overwhelming, focus on taking one small step at a time, write down what you need, speak to a friend and be gentle with yourself.



TAKE DEEP BREATHS

Uncertain situations can often make us think about all the possible "what if" scenarios. For example "what if this terrible thing happens?"

These "what if" scenarios can make our breath more shallow and spike our anxiety levels. Taking deep breaths can make you feel more in control, calmer and relaxed in your body.



Try box breathing. Inhale slowly while you count to four, hold for four and exhale slowly as you count to four.



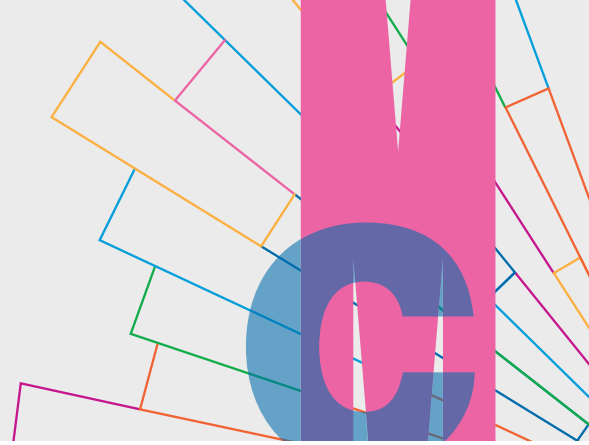
HAVE PLANS

Instead of asking "what if?", ask "what will I do if?"

Instead of imagining the worst case scenario, ask yourself what the most likely outcomes are.

If what you're worried about did happen, what useful actions could you take to manage the situation? Could you take any of those actions now?

MANAGING WORRY AND UNCERTAINTY



PRACTICE HELPFUL SELF-TALK

One of the most important things you can control in any difficult situation is your attitude. Positive and constructive self-talk can help you cope during difficult times.

Try these helpful coping statements:

- This will pass
- I can be anxious and still manage this
- I have done this before, and I can do it again.



REFLECT ON PAST SUCCESSES

It's more than likely that you have got through uncertain situations in the past and made it out the other end!

Think back to what helped you during those times and what you might do differently this time.



FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN DO

Feelings of anxiety and worry are natural responses to challenging or uncertain situations. However, the more we focus on what is outside our control, the more anxious we feel.

Instead, focus your attention on the things that make you feel calm, strong and present. This can help you switch from ineffective worrying to more helpful problem solving.



Remember there are many things in your day that you can control, for example your daily routine, weekly meal planning or a regular phone call.