

### Tips if you are feeling anxious

News reports about a new coronavirus outbreak is making some people anxious. Here are some tips to help you manage your anxiety, put news reports in perspective and maintain a positive outlook.

1. **Keep things in perspective.** Take a deep breath and remind yourself that the number of confirmed infections in WCAR is low and the recovery rate is high. The fact that there is a great deal of news coverage on this issue does not necessarily mean that it presents any threat to you or your family.
2. **Get the facts.** It is helpful to adopt a more clinical and curious approach as you follow news reports about the virus. To that end, you will want to find a credible source you can trust: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>, [External – UNICEF COVID-2019 Guidance for Parents](#).
3. **Communicate with your children.** Discuss the news coverage of the coronavirus with honest and age-appropriate information. Parents can also help allay distress by focusing children on routines and schedules. Remember that children will observe your behaviors and emotions for cues on how to manage their own feelings during this time.
4. **Basic wellbeing practices.** Maintain a balanced diet, exercise and try to get enough sleep.
5. **Work/life balance.** Ensure you are providing ample time for working as well as ample time for personal issues and family. Often in emergency or other high -pressure environments there is a tendency to overwork or to lose boundaries between work and leisure. Monitor this! Also underwork can be a source of stress. Perhaps the office can discuss alternative work assignments or work modalities.
6. **Self -Regulation and Tracking.** In the same way we are all tracking our physical symptoms at this time, it's important to track your psychological and emotional fluctuations. Am I feeling anxious for long periods? Am I feeling frustrated? There is plenty of evidence that simple Mindfulness techniques can be very effective in helping us do this. There is plenty of guidance online for this and there is also the Headspace App- free to UNICEF staff.
7. **Watch your media monitoring.** Given the media coverage globally seems to be tending towards catastrophization, it's important not to be swept along to a point of irrationality. In general, it might be advisable to consciously set boundaries around your consumption of social and mainstream media.
8. **Stress and worry** can be mitigated by an awareness of our sense of CONTROL. It's important to identify what is beyond our sphere of control and what is within our control- and do what we can to mitigate it. You might find yourself worrying too much. Some people find it useful to negotiate a 'Worry Window' with themselves, whereby they set 'windows' periods, say 15 minutes, when they should worry as much as possible and the agree to STOP when the time is up. Any worries that pop into mind between periods should be postponed to next 'window'. Can be tricky-but effective!

9. A good antidote to adversity is **KINDNESS**. Acts of kindness can provide a real boost, both emotionally and neurologically, therefore you could do two acts of kindness per day. One to another person and one to yourself.
10. **Seek additional help.** UNICEF and the broader UN system are monitoring the situation in the region very closely and stand by to support. Individuals who feel an overwhelming nervousness, a lingering sadness, or other prolonged reactions that adversely affect their job performance or interpersonal relationships can consult the UNICEF Staff Counsellors for support:  
<https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/portals/hr/Pages/Wellbeing/Counselling.aspx>

(Adapted from APA <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/bird-flu>)