Coping With COVID-19

Struggling with anxiety during this time of uncertainty? You're not alone.

During this time of increased uncertainty and rapid change, it can be difficult to cope. Whether you are struggling with self-isolation, financial hardship, are working on the frontlines, or are simply feeling scared about the future, it's more important than ever to stay informed about how to take care of your mental health.

Limit the news & unplug from social media

Understandably coronavirus is the lead story for most news outlets. People on social media are likewise sharing information and stories, some of which are accurate but others may have little to do with reality. The general public is interested and wants to know the latest details. Yet when our attention is drawn to something, we are more likely to focus on it and continue thinking about it. As we think about and focus more on coronavirus, the PERCEPTION of threat increases (not the <u>actual</u> risk but our <u>perception</u> of it). By limiting or eliminating contact with media you can help yourself manage your own anxiety and worry. If you cannot eliminate contact with media, control it: Make sure that your information only comes from reputable sources, such as:

- BC Centre for Disease Control
- Government of Canada

If you do watch or read the news, try to limit how often you do:

- Commit to only checking in a couple of times a day.
- Set a regular time when you check the news everyday. Standardizing the times you check will help to both think less about it and to reduce fighting with yourself to check.
- Disable news alerts on your phone so that you get updates when you want them.
- It can also be helpful to rely on family and friends to provide major updates thereby making it unnecessary to check the media.

Not only will this help you feel less anxious, it'll help others too.