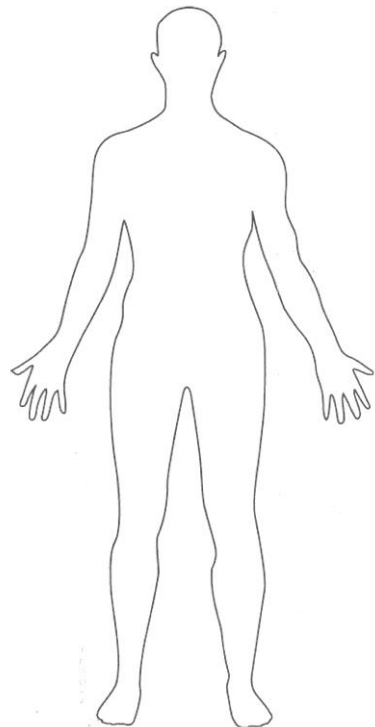


Reduce Anxiety Worksheet

This cheat sheet to reduce feelings of anxiety and help keep your sanity can be done whenever you want and as many times as you need to get through this strange and difficult time. Print many copies ahead of time, keep them where you can easily find them, and use the supportive information whenever you need a little lift.

Step 1: Take in a few deep breaths and sigh three times.

Step 2: Notice any sensations in your body. You may keep your eyes open or closed. Start from the top of your head, then down to your face, neck, shoulders, right arm, left arm, chest, stomach, buttocks, right thigh, left thigh, right leg, left leg, right foot, and left foot. Mark the area(s) on the figure where you notice something in your body.



Step 3: How would you describe your feelings right now? It is perfectly okay to have more than one feeling or to have mixed feelings.

- | | | | | |
|---------|----------|----------|----------|--------|
| Anxious | Confused | Scared | Helpless | Lonely |
| Ashamed | Angry | Hopeless | Bored | Unsure |

Crazy

Tired

Hungry

Irritated

Embarrassed

Sad

Frustrated

Numb

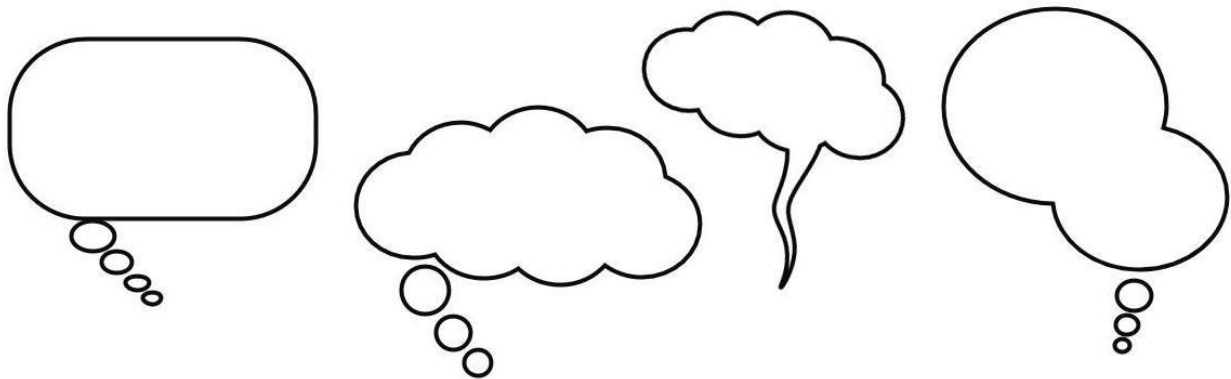
Lost

Empty

Guilty

Note: If you have been feeling sad, angry, restless, or fatigued and also struggle with fluctuations in weight, digestive issues, and memory struggles for more than 2 weeks, you may want to talk to someone to help you figure out how to receive more support during this difficult time.

Step 4: Are there any thoughts that are bothering you right now? Write each thought in a bubble.



Ask yourself if the thought(s) is/are helpful?

Yes

No

Here is a big needle for you. Whenever unhelpful thoughts arise, imagine yourself putting one thought at a time in a bubble and popping it with the needle to make them go away.



Step 5: Using a Social Distancing Survival Jar

What: The Social Distancing Survival Jar is designed to offer ideas on how to cope with unhelpful thoughts and not so good feelings during COVID-19. Find a jar that you can use, then cut out the following suggested skills and ideas. Pick one or as many as you want at a time. Try to spend at least 20 minutes exploring what works or what doesn't work for you. And, feel free to add more of your own as you go 😊. This can actually be your forever survival jar as we embrace the new normal.

Here are some guidelines to help in dealing with feelings that one should be mindful of:

- Feelings come and go. They don't last forever.
- You are NOT your feelings and your feelings are NOT you.
- Most people react to get a quick release, but end up feeling guilty or regret having them afterwards. Feelings are generally not the problem; negative behaviors or actions are the problem.
- You can create a space between your feelings and actions using effective coping skills and come up with a response that reflects your true intention.

When: There are many ways you can use the Social Distancing Survival Jar. You can use it as a reminder in the morning when you feel neutral and fresh or a couple times throughout the day to keep you grounded. Another time that would be highly recommended is when you are aware that big feelings are coming up. If you look at the feeling thermometer rating scale here, a good time to use the jar is when you are between number 5 and number 7. Most people think of practicing coping skills when it is already too late. That's why the skill doesn't work as well as they had hoped.

Feelings Thermometer

1 = I'm feeling great

2 = I am relaxed and happy

3 = I am cool and collected - "I've got this."

4 = I am okay

5 = This is hard, but I am in control

6 = I'm starting to feel uncomfortable

6.5 = I just feel like crying when I watch too much news

7 = I am heating up

8 = I am boiling

9 = I am ready to explode

10 = I am exploding out of control



I am suffering right now, but I am NOT alone.

Call or video chat with your family and friends. Make a list of people you want to reach out to and do it.

Ask for help. People are happy to help, but they don't know what you need unless you communicate.

Try recording your dreams as soon as you wake up if you can remember them.

Start writing a journal about your daily experience during COVID-19 with the goal that your grandchildren will read about it one day.

Focus on your breathing and come back to the present moment. Leave your mind alone.

Walk barefoot on grass, sand, etc. Getting out of your comfort zone can be good for your soul.

Stretch your body. Loosen it up.

Take a bath or a nice long shower. Light a candle in your favorite scent if you will enjoy it more.

Find a therapist to talk to if you feel lonely, helpless, angry, guilty, overwhelmed, etc.

Put on make-up or get dressed up and feel amazing.

Put lotions on your body and massage your hands.

Create a space at home that is meant for your relaxation. What do you need to have and do to make it special, soothing, and relaxing?

Listen to a Podcast or an audiobook on topics that interest you.

Read a book.

Find a way to laugh out loud. Watch funny movies.

Unplug from emails, the news, and social medias for a couple of hours during the day.

Declutter your home slowly. One spot at a time.

Go for a walk outside and watch what goes on around you. You might notice something new and different.

Check out crosswords, puzzles, sudokus, or coloring books on Amazon.

Listen to calming music with a glass of wine or tea.

Set a reminder in your phone or write it on a piece of paper, "I am loved and needed." It might seem funny to you at first, but it is surely one way to rewire your brain.

People can change no matter how old they are. It's true.

Create a new relaxing evening and bedtime rituals.

People are human. They are far from perfect. It's important to learn to forgive and let go.

Share your favorite recipes with family and friends.

Bring nature into your home. Flowers and plants can lift up your mood.

Organize old photos and enjoy those precious memories.

Get a bird feeder. Bird watching can be fun and exciting. You can learn about birds.

Join a church or spiritual group if you are interested or try mindfulness meditation if you are curious.

Feelings are not good or bad unless you act on them. Notice, accept, and let go.
