

COPING WITH UNCERTAINTY AMIDST A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

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UNEXPECTED TIMES

- COVID-19 has caused a lot of disruption in our normal way of living. With the impact of the pandemic, it's common to have worries about the uncertainties that lie ahead.
- We may experience worry with different degrees of intensity.
- For instance, a normal intensity may help us achieve realistic goals and motivate us to complete tasks. On the other hand, an excessive level of worry may interfere with how we want to live our lives and may leave us feeling very stressed, exhausted, and upset.
- Excessive levels of worry can then lead to anxiety.

WHAT IS ANXIETY?



- An unpleasant feeling of uneasiness; excessive worrying or fear
- Occurs in response to internal or external stimuli (i.e., environmental or internal stress)
- Mild anxiety is normal (for example, before a test or a performance)
- Severe anxiety interferes with a person's normal life such as the ability to study, socialize, and manage daily tasks
- Be mindful of "what is normal and what is not"

Signs & Symptoms: Anxiety

- Excessive worry
- Irritability
- Sleep disturbance
- Poor concentration
- Restlessness
- Muscle tension
- Fatigue



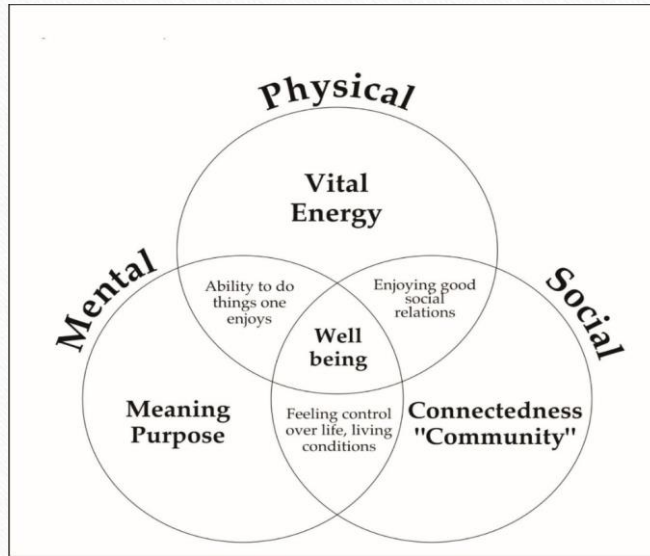
Adapted from DSM-IV-TR (2009) p.476.

COPING STRATEGIES



- Maintain structure and routine in day-to-day activities (i.e., regular sleep patterns and good eating habits)
- Stay mentally and physically active (i.e., take up a new hobby; spend time outdoors; exercise; read; meditate; yoga)
- Practice gratitude to help connect with joy, pleasure, and positive aspects of life
- Be aware of things that trigger worry and anxiety (i.e., over exposure to news; social media; discussing the pandemic)
- Stay connected (i.e., video calls; group chats; texting; emailing; calling)
- Maintain balance in your life (school and life balance)

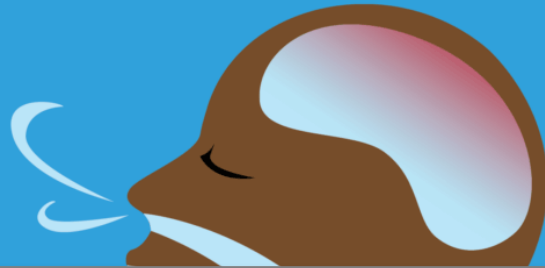
MAINTAIN BALANCE



COPING WITH ANXIETY

When we feel anxious, we sometimes don't breathe as deeply as we should. These short breaths can be bad for our bodies and our brains and make us feel more anxious. Practicing deep breathing can help to still your mind, calm your body, and control your feelings of anxiety.

***BREATHING EXERCISES
ARE A USEFUL TOOL TO
CHECK-IN WITH AND
CALM OURSELVES.***



Try to incorporate deep breathing practice into your daily routine

COPING DURING THE PANDEMIC

WHY GRATITUDE?



Quite simply, to make you **feel happier!** Research shows that expressing gratitude can help us feel happier, healthier, and more productive. Noticing **good things** around you, thanking others for the little things they do, or keeping a **hopeful** attitude are just a few examples of expressing gratitude.

Find out more at
jack.org/covid



School
Mental Health
Ontario

Santé mentale
en milieu scolaire
Ontario



Practice gratitude to help connect with joy, pleasure, and positive aspects of life.



RECOGNIZING SIGNS OF POTENTIAL MENTAL ILLNESS

IS MY YOUTH DEVELOPING IN A HEALTHY WAY? HOW DO I KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP?

WHEN SHOULD I GET HELP?

*behaviors you worry about are seriously interfering with your teen's ability to do things that are age-appropriate

What are the behaviors that are worrying you?

Evaluate your situation - observe and record specific concerns

How often does it happen?

Evaluate the *duration & intensity*

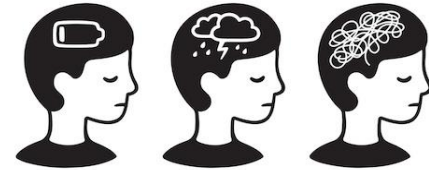
Are these behaviors outside the typical range for your teen's age?

Share your observations with a professional who sees a lot of teens

How much are the behaviors interfering with my teen's life?

Is the symptom/behavior disrupting the family & causing conflict in the home?

Is the symptom/behavior causing him difficulty at school or getting along with friends?



WHERE DO I GO FOR HELP?

If you've determined that your teen's behaviors, thoughts, or emotions need more attention, consult a professional

TEENS & TECHNOLOGY USE



- Excessive use of technology (ex. Computer, Video Games, Phones) can be concerning when it affects a teen's quality of life and emotional well-being
- **More than 90% of teenagers** use social media and play video games—two of the most addictive forms of technology
- **50% of teens** admit that they feel addicted to their smartphones
- Excessive use of technology can cause addiction to usage, vision-related problems, sleep deprivation, neck strain, isolation, low self-esteem, anxiety and depression

HEALTHY USE OF TECHNOLOGY



- 1) Turn off notifications on smartphones for social media apps
- 2) Create a daily timetable for your teen
- 3) Create the use of technology as a reward system
- 4) Set boundaries and hold accountability with your teen
- 5) Ensure that all technology is shut off 1 hour before bedtime
- 6) Create nighttime routine

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Ask open ended questions
- Ask your teen to share their feelings
- Listen without judgement or blame
- Give yourself time and space from your teen if disagreement arises
- Brainstorm solutions together
- Give your teen rewards and positive feedback
- Ask about teen's concerns, worries, goals and ideas
- Set clear expectations and limits for your teen, acknowledge good behavior
- Be non-judgmental
- Do things together



COMMUNICATION STARTERS FOR PARENTS

Starting conversations by simply asking how your teen's day has been
Communicating using I vs You statements wherever possible ex. I feel...




- **"I notice that you.... are spending much of your time alone these days..."**
- **"I was hoping we could..... sit with your favorite dessert after dinner."**
- **"You seem frustrated I'm available, if you'd like to share."**
- **"How do you find your online lessons? I'm interested in how it's going."**
- **"Do you have any ideas on..... how we could arrange your workspace to ensure there are minimal distractions?"**

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

- **310 COPE** - 1-855-310-2673 (COPE)
 - 24-hour (365 days a year) phone support during Pandemic, Mental Health Support, Community Crisis Response Service
 - 7:00 a.m. to midnight text support, and [live chat with a crisis worker at cope.yssn.ca](https://www.cope.yssn.ca)
- **Kids Help Phone** - 1-800-668-6868 or <https://kidshelpphone.ca/>
 - Available 24/7; 365 days a year
- **Mental Health Helpline** (<http://www.connexontario.ca>) 1-866-531-2600 (24/7)
- **Good 2 Talk** - 1-866-925-5454 (24/7)
 - *Post-secondary* crisis line for students after graduating high school

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES




WE'RE HERE
FOR YOU!

york hills
Centre for Children, Youth and Families

HERE TO HELP LINE

STARTING APRIL 6TH

 **905-503-9561**

Monday | Wednesday | Friday
9:30 AM - 4:30 PM

*For children and youth (0-18 yrs) and their
parents, caregivers or adult supporters.*

Visit www.yorkhills.ca for more information!

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

bouncebackontario.ca

- **FREE**, guided self-help program helps 15yrs+ with mild-moderate anxiety/depression/feel stressed/irritable

cmho.org/findhelp

- **FREE**, referral not required, treatment & support for youth & families across Ontario

AbilitiCBT: myicbt.com

- **FREE**, anxiety, depression, anxiety related to pandemic programs, help for 16yrs+

Parentline: <http://www.informationchildren.com/parent-support/parent-helpline>

- **FREE** helpline for parents with family life/parenting challenges

Wellness Together Canada - 1-866-585-0445

- **FREE** mental health & substance abuse website; immediate phone, text, video support & counseling, independent wellness programs with coaching

Family Navigation Project

- **FREE** for 13-26 yrs. with mental health/addiction issues
- Helps families navigate the mental health system and gain access to resources/treatment centres

www.ontario.ca/page/mental-health-services-children-and-youth

- Learn more about the signs/symptoms of children and youth with mental health issues, under 18 years

RESOURCE BOOKS FOR PARENTS

VOICE LESSONS for parents

- What to say, How to Say it & When to Listen, *Wendy Mogel, Ph.D*

CONNECTED PARENTING

- How to Raise a Great Kid, *Jennifer Kolari, MSW, RSW*

HOW TO TALK SO KIDS WILL LISTEN & LISTEN SO KIDS WILL TALK

- *Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish*

1-2-3 MAGIC, Effective Discipline for Kids 2-12, *Thomas W. Phelan, Ph.D*

BUSY PARENT GUIDE MANAGING TECHNOLOGY, with Children & Teens, *Laurie Hollman, Ph.D*

RESOURCE BOOKS CONTINUED

THE POWER OF NOW: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment Eckhart Tolle

- Beneficial to families supporting a loved one with mental health diagnosis

FALL APART: Heart Advice for Difficult Times, Pema Chodron

FROM PANIC TO POWER, Lucinda Bassett

- Anxiety, Depression, Self-Confidence

THE RIPPLE EFFECT, Greg Wells, PhD

- Sleep, Eat, Move, Think – *Better*

REFERENCES

- *DSM IV-TR*. 2009. p. 476.
- Jack.org/covid. School Mental Health Ontario. *Why Gratitude?* Online image. October, 2020.
- Living with Worry and Anxiety Amidst Global Uncertainty. 2020. *Psychology Tools Limited*.
- York Hills. *Here to Help Line*. Online image. 2020.



Questions are the path to learning