

8

TIPS TO TACKLE STRESS & SADNESS DURING COVID-19

Acknowledge Your Feelings



Be mindful of how you are feeling in the moment rather than masking them constantly and pretending you are fine. Brene Brown says, "Unexpressed emotions metastasise and come out in unpredictable ways." Acknowledge your real day to day emotions to yourself and others and control them before they control you.

Show Self Compassion



It's normal not to be feeling OK right now. We can intensify our anxiety by worrying about our worry! Show yourself some empathy by knowing that it's OK to feel stressed, depressed or fearful. Go easy on yourself and don't expect perfection at a time when the only constant is change.

Give Gratitude Daily



Our brains are naturally wired to notice the negative. And there is plenty of negative around right now. You can train your brain to notice more positive things simply by starting a daily gratitude journal. Each day note down between 5-10 things you are grateful for, it doesn't matter if they are big or small.

Connect with Others



We are cut off from others physically but not in actual connection. This is a good opportunity to drive more connection to loved ones who are far away as suddenly everyone is at home. Schedule individual and group catch up and make them fun with virtual games and quizzes.

Practice Box Breathing



Box breathing is a technique used by the Navy Seals to help them stay calm and focussed in stressful situations. Here's how to do it: Inhale for 4 seconds; hold for 4 seconds; exhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds. Repeat for five minutes, or as long as is necessary to feel refocused and relaxed.

Get a Routine



Routines help us to feel a sense of normalcy when life is anything but. Build your usual morning and evening routines into your new workday. Depending on your situation, you might be able to build some new routines into your day. These could be things for yourself or family activities.

Find your Happy Activities



If your usually happy activities are the beach and outdoor activities you are going to need to get creative and connect with yourself and find other things you like to do. We are lucky that a world of online activities is at our fingertips. Whether it is exercise, playing games, cards or online cooking classes, do what you love!

Start at Calming Practice



Many of us are spending a lot of time on zoom calls, or maybe on Netflix streaming. Whatever you are watching, screen time is no doubt going up! Find some time each day with a mindfulness activity that will settle your brain. It could be a daily meditation, a jigsaw puzzle, colouring book or sewing.