

# Letting Go of Worry

In times like this worry is natural. Human brains are exceptional at planning and predicting, and a good chunk of the time these functions serve to protect you as you are able to anticipate and avoid danger. In times of overwhelming stress worry can get out of control as your brain calculates potential dangers and cannot find further solutions to avoid these perceived problems. This tends to lead to avoidance (determining none of this matters and not following guidance because it increases anxiety and thereby increasing risk for yourself and those around you) or rumination (obsessive thinking about danger and uncontrollability).

## When you find yourself overwhelmed with worry first ask yourself:

1. **Am I taking appropriate precautions?** If you are not following national/local guidelines on self-isolation or taking unnecessary risks with social contact, change your behavior so you are doing all you can to avoid danger.
2. **Am I going too far?** If nobody in your home is symptomatic AND nobody in your home has been instructed to self-isolate quarantine then enjoy contact with in your home.

## You've already started on your path to improving the moment just by reading this far!

Acknowledge that this is hard, allow yourself to feel what you feel. Then do your very best to breathe deep, rest in the knowledge that you are controlling what you can, and try to let go of what you cannot control. Return your focus to what is most important to you and consider what you can do to improve this moment, right here, right now. Now take another moment to:

1. **Walk through the exercise on page 2.** Even if it feels silly see if you find something useful in it.
2. **Find a few activities on page 3 to try.** Challenge yourself to do something out of the ordinary for you. Add something unique to you to the list, share it with your friends and family!
3. **Reach out for support.** This has been tough. If you need more support, call the Mental Health Clinic at 01638-52-8603 and ask to receive a call from a member of the Disaster Mental Health team.



# Stuff I can do right now to make it ever-so-slightly better:

- ⇒ Maximize outside time whether it's braving a chilly day with the windows open or spending time in your garden
- ⇒ Try meditation (many great guides online!)
- ⇒ Read a book from your bookshelf
- ⇒ Plan your next vacation for when this is all over
- ⇒ Set up a video conference happy hour with your friends
- ⇒ Do a yoga video in your living room
- ⇒ Stretch
- ⇒ Learn a foreign language (try free apps like Duolingo)
- ⇒ Spend some quality time playing with your pets
- ⇒ Play a game with your quaran-team!
- ⇒ Find a healthy new recipe and make it
- ⇒ Clean up one room of your house
- ⇒ Call a friend you haven't spoken to in a while
- ⇒ Find a craft project (many ideas online)
- ⇒ Do something fun with all of those pictures you've been taking
- ⇒ Challenge yourself to find a recipe that uses only what is in your house (think of it as a cooking show like Chopped!)
- ⇒ Sort through your closet and prepare clothes to donate
- ⇒ Take advantage of virtual museum tours worldwide
- ⇒ Find a rarely-used ingredient in your spice rack, search out recipe that features it
- ⇒ Take a class online
- ⇒ Challenge each member of the family to teach the other members about something they're interested in
- ⇒ Take in an Opera or ballet through one of many top tier opera houses broadcasting their work during social isolation
- ⇒ Try a HIIT class from home
- ⇒ Build a fort
- ⇒ Breathe

