

Uncertainty Toolkit

There's no doubt that one of the biggest challenges of the Covid-19 epidemic is the uncertainty that it has created for our home lives, work, money and relationships.

When uncertainty causes us to worry and become stressed, it can have a significant impact on our mental health. You may find it hard to focus or sleep, become irritable with loved ones or experience irrational or paranoid thoughts.

By learning to cope with uncertainty, it's possible to control these negative behaviours and prevent yourself from feeling overwhelmed. This new-found resilience is based on three important rules:

1. Be kind to yourself.
2. Accept and let go of things you can't change.
3. Seek support from those you trust.



Solent

...this short guide will give you tips to help you cope with uncertainty.

Changing your thinking

We may not always be able to control the outcome of our fears, but we can learn to control how we respond to them.

Have a look at this exercise and see if you can create your own using things that you are worried about.

Adapted from resources created by www.thecounsellingteacher.com

I cannot control
...so I can let go of these things:

Predicting what happens next

If others follow the rules of social distancing

I can control
...so I will focus on these things:

How I can structure my day

Limiting my social media

How I can support my loved ones

How long this will go on for

My own social distancing

My kindness

Turning off the news

Other people's happiness

Finding fun things to do at home

The actions of others

Changes to my workplace, studies or children's schooling

What the government decides to do next

The Worry Tree

In a time as difficult as this it's easy to get overwhelmed by worrying about what might happen. You may feel out of control, or feel like you need to keep worrying because it feels useful – or that bad things might happen if you stop.

There are always practical steps we can take that will make us feel more in control of our worries. This worry tree may help you deal with some of those intrusive thoughts and worries and help you feel less anxious by helping you focus on the present.

When using the tree, it's helpful to think about the kind of worry you have. Worries can be separated into hypothetical situations and current problems.

Hypothetical situations are those “what if?” thoughts about things that may or may not happen, like “what if one of my loved ones gets ill?”. This is often followed by imagining the worst-case scenarios. These kinds of worries can cause a lot of anxiety, when there is perhaps little we can do about the situation. This may be especially difficult at the moment, when we are all worried about things that we have not had to think about before.

Current problems are those that relate to a real situation, which we often CAN do something about. In which case we can decide what to do, when and how. Even if we cannot solve the current problem that is causing us worry, we can still find ways to feel better about situations we are in, for example by proactively developing new coping strategies such as trying [mindfulness techniques](#) or the [five ways to wellbeing](#).

Adapted from resources created by www.getselfhelp.co.uk

