



A photograph of a person sitting alone on a sidewalk, facing away from the camera. The person is wearing a red and black striped beanie, a dark long-sleeved shirt, and dark jeans. They are sitting with their knees pulled up and their head down, suggesting a state of distress or anxiety. The background is a plain, light-colored brick wall.

Tips to Manage Your Anxiety

DURING UNCERTAIN TIMES

Having anxiety during a time of uncertainty is normal. It can be especially difficult to manage, though, if you don't have your usual distractions. What might be needed are new coping skills. Here are simple, tried and true ways to manage your anxiety. Just pick out a couple to try, no need to be an overachiever at a time like this!

1. **Breathe.** Deep breathing is a simple way to calm your nervous system. There are apps to help you do deep breathing.
2. **Meditation.** Use an app to learn meditation. *Calm* and *Insight Timer* are good, but there are others.
3. **Body scan:** Scan your body to see where you are carrying tension. Shake or massage out the knot or ask someone to do it for you.
4. **Rag doll:** Stand up and bend from the waist. Let your arms hang. Do this for several seconds and stand up. Pause, and repeat.
5. **Mindful check-in:** Stop and ask yourself, how am I right now? What is happening right now? Am I okay? Do I have food, clothing, and shelter? Do I have my health? If everything is good, remind yourself of that and move on.
6. **Be grateful.** Write down 1-3 things for which you are grateful today.
7. **Listen to music.** Find music that matches your mood first. If you are sad, play some slow cello music. Then switch to music that matches the mood you want to experience.
8. **Write in a journal.** Just writing is proven to help with anxiety and mood.
9. **Take a walk.** If it is safe in your neighborhood, go for a walk to clear your head.
10. **Connect!** Being in isolation doesn't mean you're alone. Now is the time to let your friends know you are thinking of them. Schedule a time to sit down and use Skype, FaceTime or Google Hangouts to share a cuppa.
11. **Stay away from the news.** Watch just 30-60 minutes per day—and not right before bed.
12. **Stay off your phone.** See #11. You don't need to update yourself to know the news isn't good.
13. **Feel your feelings.** Whatever feelings you have—fear, anger, grief—allow them to be and to move through you. Acknowledge the feeling, and then realize that it will pass.
14. **Get lost in a book.** Read something funny or download something engrossing like Grant.

15. **Play a game or do a puzzle.** It could be a video game but there are crosswords and other games you can download.
16. **Get enough sleep.** There are plenty of articles on “sleep hygiene” to help you, or you can play music on your meditation app.
17. **Ask for help** if you need it.
18. **Do some yoga poses.** Find “easy yoga” or “yoga for everybody” on YouTube. Give yourself permission to skip through anything that’s difficult.
19. **Watch negative thoughts.** Come up with a mantra, like “This too shall pass,” or “I may not like it, but I can get through this.”
20. Last but not least, **be gentle with yourself.**