

**MANAGING FEARS  
AND ANXIETY**  
AROUND THE CORONAVIRUS  
(COVID-19)



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# ANXIETY IS A **NORMAL** **RESPONSE**

People are understandably anxious about the current coronavirus situation.

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Anxiety is a completely normal human response to an abnormal situation.

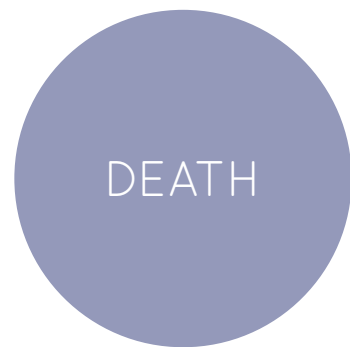
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The unpredictable and ongoing spread of the potentially fatal coronavirus is as abnormal as it gets.

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# WHY ARE WE SCARED?

The pandemic of coronavirus gets to the heart of three of our fundamental human fears:



The illusion of control is torn away from us. We have to accept that we interdependent creatures.

Accepting that we need each other can be positive!

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# 'FLIGHT OR FIGHT' REACTION

The 'fight-or-flight' response refers to a physiological reaction that occurs in the presence of an actual threat or a perceived threat, such as the coronavirus.

The response is triggered by the release of hormones that prepare your body to either stay and deal with a threat or to run away to safety.



# THE PHYSICAL INDICATIONS OF THE **'FIGHT OR FLIGHT'** RESPONSE INCLUDE:



These symptoms are similar to coronavirus which can cause worry and panic attacks.

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If you breathe and reduce your sense of threat these symptoms will disappear, if they are related to a 'fight or flight' response.

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Staying in 'fight or flight' response for a prolonged time can comprise your immune system.

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# HOW DO I **REDUCE** MY SENSE OF THREAT?

Breathing with your belly



CLICK HERE  
FOR MORE  
INFORMATION

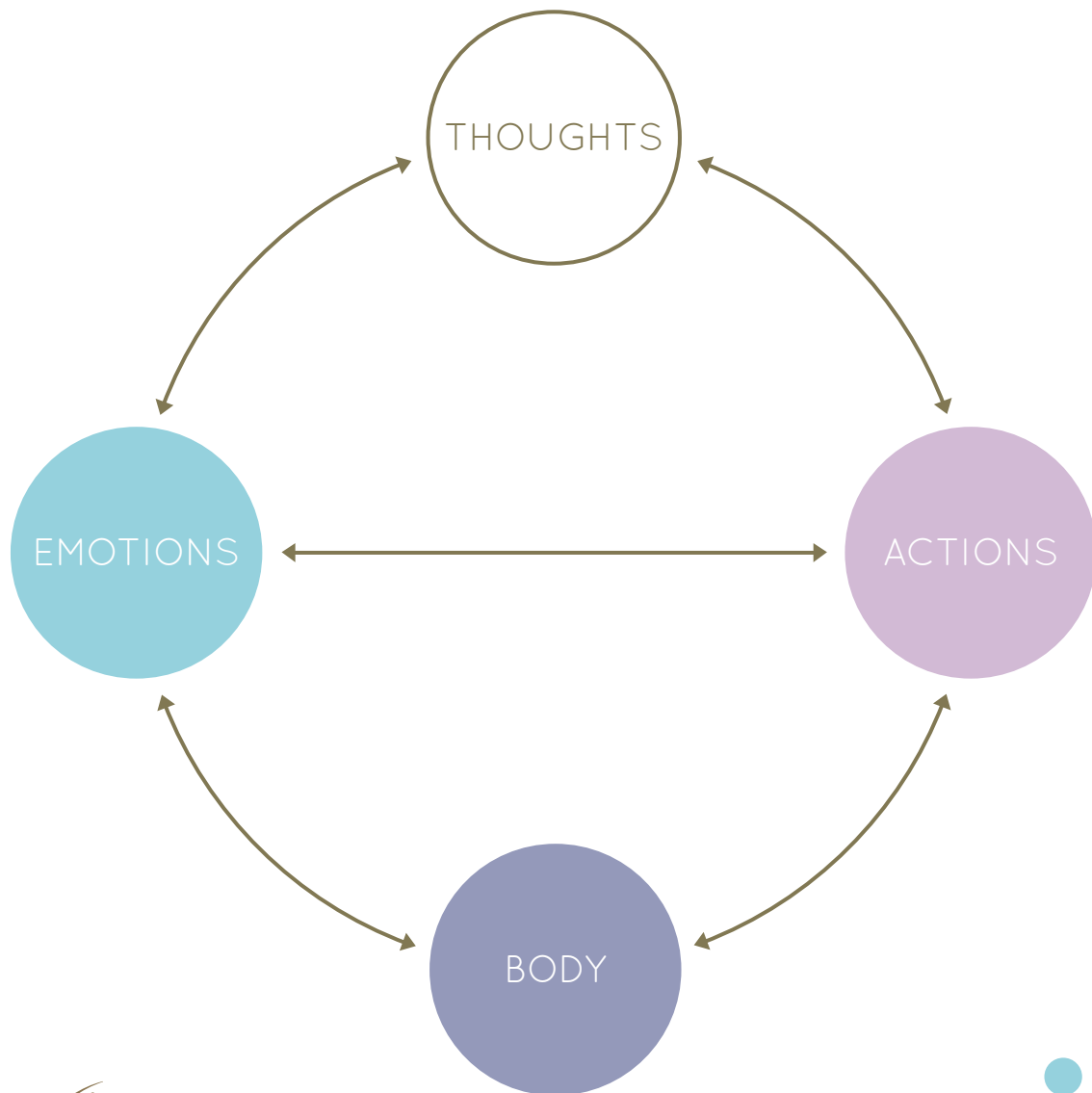
Try my Breathe and Let Go exercise



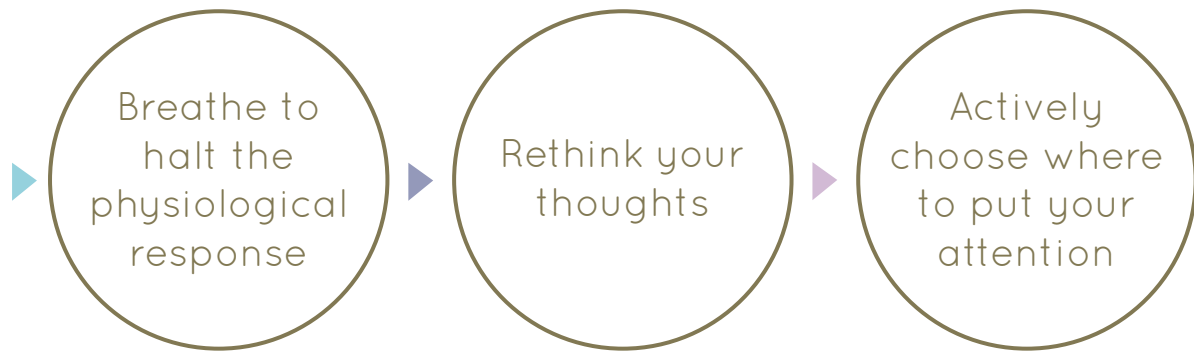
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INFORMATION

# NOTICE AND MANAGE YOUR THOUGHTS

How you think ultimately impacts on  
your body.



Try noticing your thoughts and how they impact on your body.



Here are some alternatives to unhelpful thoughts.



“ I absolutely must not catch the coronavirus ”

At first glance, this may seem pretty sensible. But, it's unhelpful because, despite sensible precautions, it's still possible to catch it. It doesn't make sense to say you must not catch it just because you don't want to catch it, and it doesn't help you.

Instead it makes you panic, panic buy, strip the shelves of supermarkets and pharmacies.

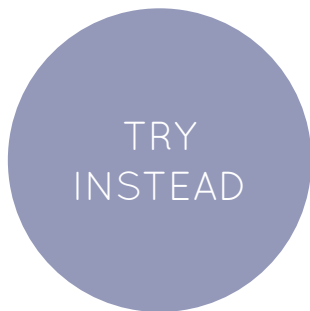
Stockpiling effects our whole eco-system that we have created.

It increases our sense of threat when we notice that we are running out of essential resources.





# MORE **HELPFUL** THOUGHT

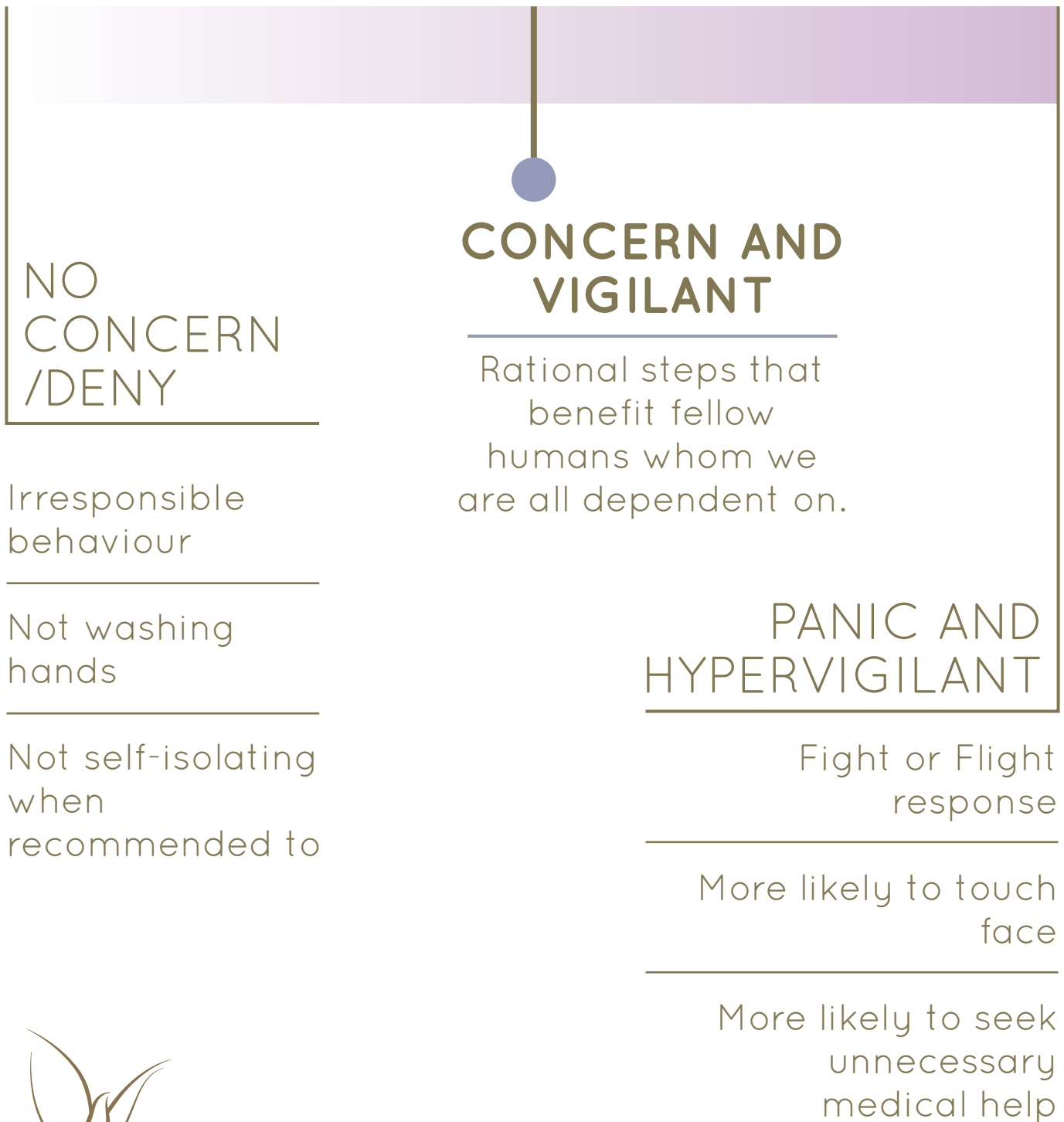


“ I would prefer not to catch the coronavirus but it might happen ”

This thoughts allows you to take sensible precautions rather than panic purchase every little thing. ‘No Concern’ and ‘Panic’ are on the same continuum. This thought keeps you balanced between the two extremes.

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# THE RIGHT BALANCE OF CONCERN





UNHELPFUL  
THOUGHTS

“People who wear  
face-masks are freaks”

“People who don't wear  
face-masks are  
irresponsible”

We have a tendency to blame others when we feel that our  
sense of control is being lost.

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REMEMBER  
INSTEAD

“This is a new virus and  
we are all learning about  
the best way to respond”



UNHELPFUL  
THOUGHT

“The impact on economy  
will be a disaster”

The global economy will be impacted. To what  
degree, we don't know.

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## MORE **HELPFUL** THOUGHT

If you can afford it, consider not asking for refunds from  
cancelled events. The sense of solidarity this will give you,  
will be very beneficial for your mental health.



REMEMBER

“We are all in this  
together. We need each  
other to get out of it”



UNHELPFUL  
THOUGHT

“The social isolation will  
be a nightmare”

The social isolation will be a problem. We need to find  
new ways to connect and work together.

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FOCUS  
ON

“At least, we live in an age with  
lots of ways to find alternative  
sources of connection”

“Such a crisis brings out the extreme  
good and bad behaviours in humans. I  
have a choice which behaviours I will  
demonstrate in this crisis”

We need to get creative about how we live our lives until we  
pass this. Set up communities of help. Talk to your  
neighbours about how you can help each other.

# DAILY ROUTINE

It's very important to set up a daily routine if you have to self-isolate. Consider starting your day with some gentle exercises.

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This 5 minutes morning yoga routine is good for most ages.

CLICK  
HERE



There will be more domestic chores if you have to self-isolate at home.  
Consider a cleaning routine.

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Clearly define or redefine the responsibilities all domestic duties. Involve children in domestic chores. It is important that most of the domestic chores don't fall on one person.

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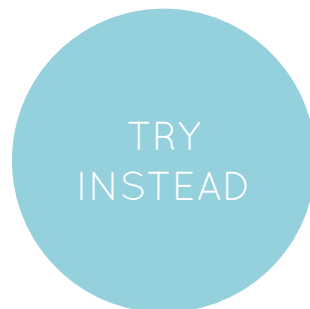
The inequity of balance of domestic chores is a common source of tension in lots of couples. This is a time for clear communication about domestic chores.

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“Coronavirus is a total nightmare and I’m going to die”

There is no doubt that this is a difficult time. However, this thought keeps you in ‘fight or flight’ mode. As this is an ongoing situation, ‘fight or flight’ mode is not useful. The rational brain shuts down in ‘fight or flight’ mode. We really need the rational part of your brain to be running the show right now.



“To get through this, I need to be resilient which means being adaptive and practical. The symptoms range from mild to deadly with the majority of cases falling into mild. It is highly likely that most people will recover”

Clearly, if you are elderly or have an underlying health condition (or are both) then your levels of precautions need to be more stringent than most.





UNHELPFUL  
THOUGHTS

“It’s the fault of the  
Chinese/Italian”

“People who have coughs and  
colds are plague-carriers”

Coronavirus is not a plague. Unfortunately, I have heard some discriminatory comments which are not helpful.

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TRY  
INSTEAD

“People who cough and sneeze  
are not plague-carriers, they  
are worthwhile, fallible human  
beings”

Be mindful of how you talk about coronavirus and react to people who have coronavirus or have come from a place where coronavirus started. Some people are already feeling that they are being discriminated against and made to feel like an outcast.

# TRUSTED SOURCES

Avoid the pull to seek reassurance by checking lots of resources of information. This can take you down a rabbit hole of fake news.

Only read trusted sources of information.

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All of our health and medical strategies require people to behave in prescribed ways to avoid exposure, prevent infection, or halt disease transmission.

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The UK government have had a Pandemic Flu plan in place since 2014.

SEE HERE

Positive emotions do improve your immunity. Finding ways to laugh, as a means of coping with the current reality, is not a bad thing right now.

