

STAND-UP TALK



Let's Talk About Coping with Coronavirus Anxiety

Let's talk about some hazards associated with anxiety in the workplace.

.....

.....

.....

.....

ANXIETY ABOUT THE NEW CORONAVIRUS IS UNDERSTANDABLE

Dr. John Sharp is a board-certified psychiatrist on the faculty at Harvard Medical School. He is renowned for clearly conveying evidenced-based messages regarding health and well-being. He provides a great insight in how to manage coronavirus anxiety and this Stand-Up Talk is based on his article dealing with Coronavirus Anxiety.

He states there are actions you can take — or avoid — to help you cope with anxious feelings and choices you can make to help yourself and others.

Worrying about all the news on the new coronavirus and the illness it causes does in some way make good sense. But if it makes you anxious you may be wondering how to cope with anxious feelings that are surfacing. This team Stand Up talk can guide you through steps that may be helpful to you.

STEADY YOURSELF AROUND WORRIES ABOUT THE NEW CORONAVIRUS

Knowing how to manage your own anxiety always takes a little thought. Ask and answer these questions:

- What typically happens to your body when worries mount?
- How worried are you?
- What do you fear the most?
- What usually helps you handle worries?

When anxiety rises because we're facing a distressing threat like the new coronavirus, we need to focus on what tends to work for us to ease anxiety — that, plus doing a little bit more of some actions and a little bit less of others.

Keep these thoughts in mind. You're fully prepared to help yourself. You can take steps to calm and steady yourself. Remember what works for you — because as fellow humans we're not so dissimilar, but we do tend to have our own preferences and best practices.

TRY DOING THESE THINGS MORE

Connect with friends and loved ones through video chats, phone calls, texting, and email.

It really helps to feel the strength of your connections to your friends and loved ones, even though you may not be with them in person.

Stick with sources of credible information, so you can avoid misinformation about the virus and the illness it causes.

TRY DOING THESE THINGS LESS

Please don't overdose on hype or worry or misinformation.

Consider getting some regular updates from credible sources in the morning and check again briefly toward the end of the day. There's no need to stay tuned in 24/7 — it can actually make your anxiety much worse.

TAKE PRACTICAL STEPS TO LESSEN RISK OF CATCHING THE NEW CORONAVIRUS

Three healthy, sensible steps we can all take:

1. Avoid unnecessary travel and crowds and practice social distancing.
2. Wash your hands often with soap and water (or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) for 20 seconds.
3. Keep your hands away from your face, especially your eyes, mouth, and nose.

We do have to be careful and cautious and once we adopt key precautionary measures we can take a deep breath and do our best to calm ourselves. It's not necessary or helpful to be on high alert all the time. This will wear you down emotionally and physically. So, try to adjust your level of alertness to your immediate surroundings. Then once you come home, wash your hands really well and find ways to relax and feel safe. Safety is a basic need for all of us.

STAND-UP TALK



Let's Talk About Coping with Coronavirus Anxiety

Stand Up Talk Meeting Outline

1	FOLLOW UP	Follow-up on any outstanding issues from the previous meeting.
2	INTRODUCTION	Briefly introduce the topic (in 1-2 minutes) for employees. Let staff know that it is entirely appropriate to be anxious about coronavirus. We are all experiencing feelings of fear, worry, and apprehension. As worrisome as it is, we are doing everything we can to manage the risks in our workplace and it's important we all take steps to ensure we don't propel COVID-19 anxiety to the point where it may be counterproductive.
3	ADVISE	<p>Options to help you relax despite coronavirus worries include: Here are some tried and true ways to relax:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yoga. Not a yoga person? No need to start now unless you'd like to try it. Sometimes trying new things and discovering new activities you can benefit from and enjoy can be a welcome, healthy distraction. Yoga Studio and Pocket Yoga are good apps to consider.• Meditation. Regular meditation is very calming. Many apps teach simple forms of meditation, such as Headspace or Calm.• Controlled breathing. One simple technique is called square breathing. Visualise your breath traveling along a square. As you follow the instructions to inhale, hold your breath, or exhale, count slowly to three on each side. Try it now. Inhale up the first side of the square. Slowly count one, two, three. Hold your breath across the top. One, two, three. Exhale down the other side of the square. One, two, three. Then hold your breath across the bottom. One, two, three. After a few minutes of this you should be feeling calmer and more centred.
4	ADVISE	<p>Tap into other ways you like to relax, too. Maybe you like reading a good book or watching a good comedy. Eat the familiar foods that you always enjoy. Stay in contact with your friends and loved ones. Reaching out can help you and help them.</p> <p>We're all on this journey together. News about the virus will likely grow worse, then grow better. Listen to public health experts who can help us navigate the path ahead.</p> <p>Take sensible steps that can help us all: get your bearings; practice good hygiene; use calming strategies that work for you — and maybe try something new.</p> <p>Making healthy, reasonable choices about what to do and what not to do will make a big difference in being able to stay as safe and as well as possible.</p>

STAND-UP TALK



Let's Talk About Coping with Coronavirus Anxiety

5	ADVISE	<p>Seek support</p> <p>We encourage people who have experienced mental health issues in the past to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• activate your support network• acknowledge feelings of distress• seek professional support early if you're having difficulties. <p>For those already managing mental health issues, continue with your treatment plan and monitor for any new symptoms.</p> <p>Support is available if you are concerned about COVID-19.</p> <p>Coronavirus Health Information Line</p> <p>Call this line if you are seeking information on coronavirus (COVID-19). The line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.</p> <p>Department of Health Telephone: 1800 020 080</p> <p>Health Direct</p> <p>24-hour health advice Telephone: 1800 022 222</p>
6	THANKS	Thank everyone for their time and attention.