

# 5 Practical Tips for Managing Stress and Anxiety during a Global Pandemic

We all knew something like, a global pandemic, was possible. Knowing it was possible and living the reality, however, are two very different things. Most of us are more than 6 months into this semi-quarantined way of life and managing the stress and anxiety it brings with it has been more than many of us can comfortably tolerate.

So what can we do? A lot, actually. Here are a few practical tips for managing stress and anxiety during this very real-life global pandemic.

## **Managing Stress and Anxiety Tip #1: Let yourself Feel**

This sucks! There are no two ways around it. Kids are out of school - maybe even for another entire year. If you're still working, you are either juggling hand sanitizer and facemasks or navigating Zoom and team chats. If you aren't working, the stress is multiplied by 100 while you watch the news everyday to see what help is available to you and your family.

So let's say it again. This sucks! And you know what? That's okay. Let yourself feel what you're feeling. If you feel like crying because you can't go on vacation this year, cry. (we'll cry with you!) Too often people get caught up in perspective and it can feel silly to cry over a beach vacation when people are dying, but greater suffering somewhere else does not diminish your suffering.

Let yourself feel what you're feeling. It's your right.

## **Managing Stress and Anxiety Tip #2: Control What you Can**

There is a lot you cannot control right now, but there is still a lot you can. Maybe you hate working at home, you would rather be in the office where you have all your things, it's quiet, it's familiar and your entire family isn't there. You cannot control that though, so focusing on it won't do much to help you. Give yourself permission to hate working from home but then pivot to what you can control.

Can you set up an office space for yourself? Can you close the door? Can you light a candle or diffuse some oils? Can you purchase a new desk chair that feels more like the comfy one you have at work? Focus on what's in your control and you'll be surprised how much better things can feel.

*Pro-Tip: The same is true for kids. If they are struggling with anxiety and general worry pertaining to the virus try giving them something small and age appropriate to focus on. For example; give your child a hand sanitizer that's all theirs and encourage them to use it often whenever out. The fear likely won't disappear but the empowerment can help to diminish it.*

### **Managing Stress and Anxiety Tip #3: Let Go of What you Cannot Control**

After that last tip you had to see this one coming. Once you've controlled what you can, and felt the full brunt of it's awfulness, let it go. Mastering this skill now will only make the rest of the process easier and we're only a few months away from the holidays.

Maybe you had big plans to host Thanksgiving at your house this year. Spoiler alert: That is probably not going to happen. Let yourself feel it, plan an alternate (safer) Thanksgiving and let go of the disappointment. This is easier said than done; a fact, we fully appreciate, but it is so so important to your overall mental health.

### **Managing Stress and Anxiety Tip #4: Communicate**

Remember that first tip about acknowledging your feelings? Sharing them can be helpful as well. Schedule a time to chat with a friend, or share your frustrations over dinner with your family. Just put your feelings into words.

This is beneficial for so many reasons. First of all; it's likely the person you're opening up to also shares some of the same feelings. Bonding over shared feelings (even bad ones) can help to strengthen your bond and make everyone feel a little less alone.

It also serves to help those you open up to understand what you're going through. We're all experiencing this together but not all of us are affected by the same things. It's possible you and your partner are being negatively affected by different aspects of this situation and knowing that can allow you to step in and help the other person with their triggers.

Communication is (almost) never a bad thing.

### **Managing Stress and Anxiety Tip #5: Equip yourself with Helpful Resources**

There are so many great resources out there, including the source we referenced for most of this blog: FACE COVID by Russ Harris. We recommend reading through this short read when you have a chance. Our [\[REDACTED\]](#) also features some great resources for couples and individuals struggling to communicate and connect.

These are far from the only resources available however. There are support groups, webinars, group chats, countless resources for kids, e-learning how to's, meditation apps and that's just to name a few.

Identify the areas you feel you need the most support and seek out resources. There is no shame in struggling with the concerns of life right now. This entire year has been a shock to our systems. Remember to give yourself some grace and don't ever let yourself feel like you're alone, because you are far from it. We are all in this together.