



Managing Worries

A guide for young people during
the Covid-19 lockdown

A lot of changes are going on around us at the moment. Worry and Anxiety are common problems at the best of times, so when faced with an issue such as Coronavirus, it can take over. At Mind we wanted to share some different ways of dealing with worry and tips to make ourselves feel better.

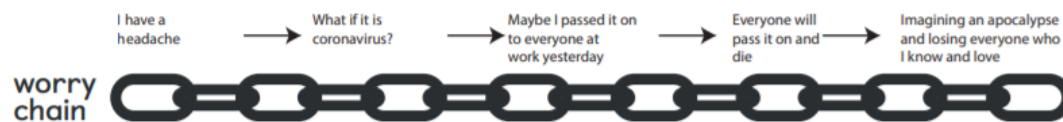
Remember: It's very natural to struggle when times are uncertain, so the most important thing is to remember to be kind to yourself, and those around you.

What is 'Worry' and why can it help us?

As human beings we are amazing at thinking about the future. We can think about solutions to solve problems that lie ahead, which can be very helpful. For example, washing our hands and staying inside are useful solutions to stop us from spreading the virus. However, worrying is a way of thinking ahead that can leave us feeling nervous or anxious.

What does worrying feel like?

Worrying can feel like lots of thoughts or images which can progress into more unlikely and upsetting situations. A lot of us recently may have noticed ourselves thinking about the worst-case scenario. The way worries build up can be thought of as a worry chain.



[Click here to see more about this](#)

When worrying becomes excessive we can feel it in our bodies too. This could feel like:

- Aches and pains in our muscles
- Not feeling able to relax
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling very tired
- Not being able to sleep

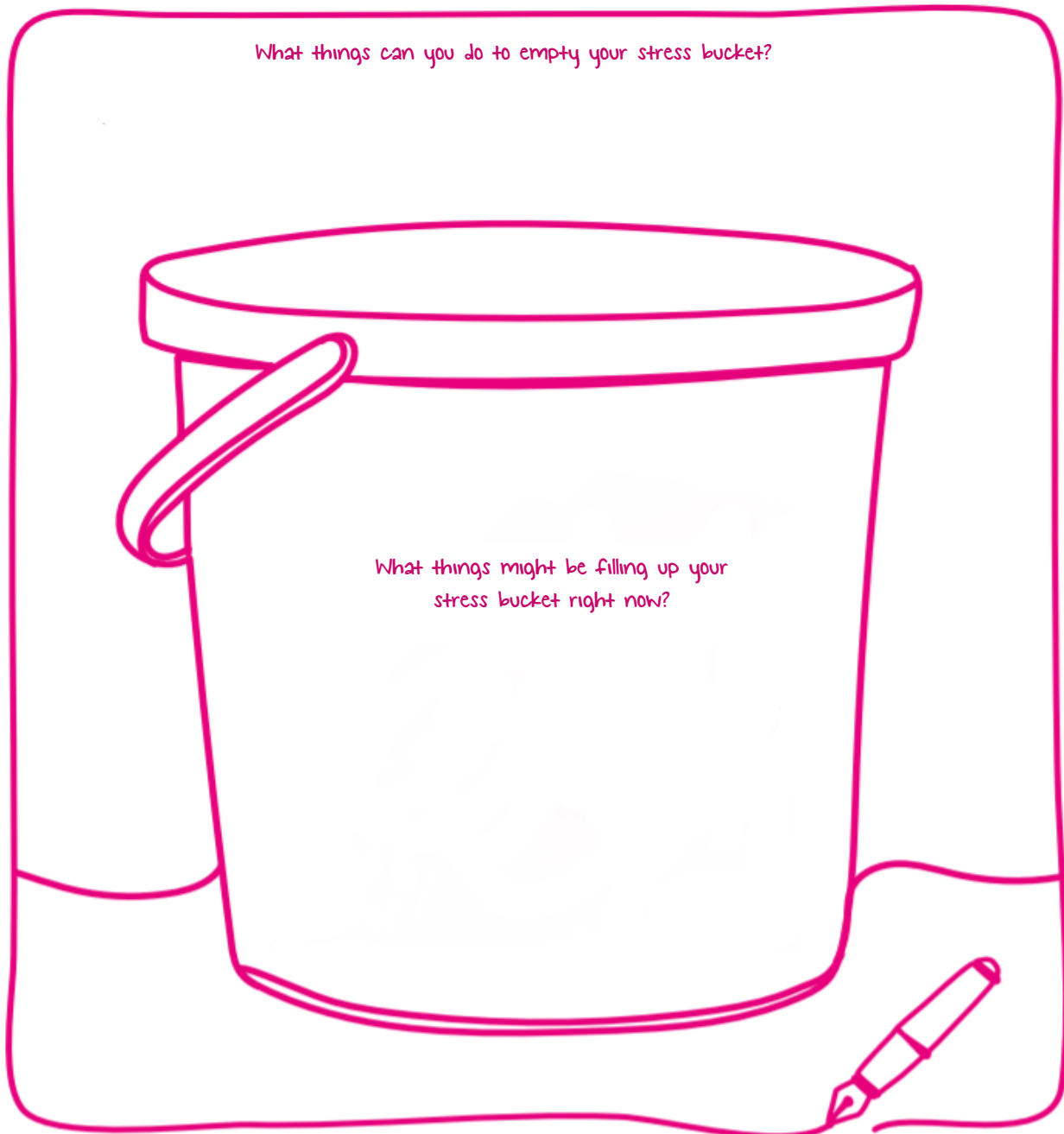


Hammersmith, Fulham,
Ealing and Hounslow

In our newsletter, 'Talking about mental health', we said that it's important to take the time to reflect on how you are feeling. If you feel you have a lot of things you are worried about then this stress bucket activity may be helpful.

Stress Bucket

This stress bucket represents the amount of stress we can handle. If we have too many worries, our stress bucket will overflow. We need to think of ways that we can empty our bucket for example, reading a book, listening to music or doing some exercise.



Try to fill in this picture with things that are making you feel worried, and things that you think you could do to make yourself feel better.



Hammersmith, Fulham,
Ealing and Hounslow

Finding ways to empty your stress bucket is a bit more difficult to do if you are isolating due to the Coronavirus. If you are struggling to think of things to do at home, have a look at this list and pick out some activities that may make you feel better!



Make a bucket list
Make a 'To Do' list
Make a shopping list



Go for a run
Go for a cycle
Find a workout video online
Try a new sport
Try [Yoga online](#)



Learn a new language
Read a book
Cook/bake a [new recipe](#)
Watch a tutorial video
Make a quiz



Listen to a [podcast](#)
Play an instrument
Listen to your favourite music
Make a [playlist](#) for different moods



Take a Bath
Trim your nails
Have a nap
Put on a facemask
Soak your feet



Gardening
Go for a walk amongst nature
Pick some flowers
Find a sunny spot to sit in
Listen to the [birds](#) outside



Make a list of people or things you are grateful for
Make a gift for someone
Try a [Random act of kindness](#)
Make a list of all your good qualities



Make your bed
Do the washing up
Clean your shoes
Do some laundry

Is there something you have written in the stress bucket activity that you are particularly worried about?

If you are feeling anxious or worried, take some deep, slow breaths.

- Breathe in for 4 seconds through your nose
- Breathe out for 4 seconds through your mouth
- Put your hand on your stomach, and make sure you are breathing from low down in your body, near your stomach and not high up in your chest



Hammersmith, Fulham,
Ealing and Hounslow



[Click here for a video about a breathing technique!](#)

Once you feel a bit calmer and your shoulders have relaxed, ask yourself the following questions about the situation you've written down. You can write down the answers on here or on a bit of paper.

What's the worst that could happen?

On a scale of 1-10 how likely is it that it this would happen?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

If the worst did happen, what could you do?



Another way to tackle worries is through the apple technique
-[Click here](#) to find out more.

Unhelpful thinking Styles

When we are upset or stressed, our thinking can change in unhelpful ways.

- Here are some of the most common unhelpful thinking styles.
- Which do you think you fall into when you are upset?



Mental Filter

Only paying attention to certain types of evidence.

E.g. He didn't smile at me so he obviously doesn't like me.

Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes.

E.g. I'm so bad at maths.
All of my answers are wrong.

Emotional Reasoning

Assuming that because we feel a certain way what we think must be true.

E.g. I feel embarrassed so I must be an idiot. I feel stressed because it's never going to get any better.

Magnification (catastrophising and minimising)

Blowing things out of proportion (catastrophising).

E.g. This is all going wrong and there's nothing I can do to make the situation better.

Inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important (minimising).

E.g. I shouldn't be sad about my situation because it's not as bad as hers.

Disqualifying the Positive

Discounting the good things that have happened or that you have done for some reason or another.

E.g. That doesn't count. It doesn't matter now anyway.

Jumping to Conclusions

There are two types of jumping to conclusions:

1. Mind reading: imagining we know what others are thinking.

E.g. She said that because she thinks I'm stupid.

2. Fortune Telling: predicting the future.

E.g. I'm never going to achieve anything.

Challenging unhelpful thinking styles

First, write your unhelpful thought down on a piece of paper. Then follow these steps:

1. Decide if you are going to carry on thinking this way or follow the advice you would give to a friend

2. Look at what you've written - what advice would you give to a friend that's feeling like this?

3. Write down as much evidence that you can that your unhelpful thought is wrong

4. Write down all the positive things that have happened to you from thinking this way

5. Write down all the positive things that would come from following the advice you would give to a friend



Hammersmith, Fulham,
Ealing and Hounslow

It may be useful to set aside time to worry. That way you can decide when to think about it. We have a very useful video here about how to set yourself 'worry time'.



A nice way of banishing worrying thoughts is to replace them with more positive ones! Use this space or a piece of paper to write down three things you are grateful for...

1.

2.

3.



This could be a nice activity to try daily to remind yourself of the positives!

Remember, this pandemic will go away. Maybe not tomorrow, but it will end!

Take care of your physical and mental wellbeing, this can be a difficult time if you are feeling anxious, but there are many websites you may find helpful:

- <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>
- <https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>
- <https://www.themix.org.uk/your-body/using-healthservices/help-im-worried-about-coronavirus-35643.html>



Hammersmith, Fulham,
Ealing and Hounslow