



Tips Re: Coronavirus

New reports about the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, becoming more widespread are making some people anxious. Here are some tips to help you manage your anxiety, put news reports in perspective and maintain a positive outlook.

1. **Keep things in perspective.** Take a deep breath and remind yourself that the number of confirmed infections in the U.S. is extremely low. The fact that there is a great deal of news coverage on this issue does not necessarily mean that it presents any threat to you or your family. Limit how often and long you watch the news as much of it is full of time filling opinions & commentary, NOT FACTS.
2. **Get the facts.** It is helpful to adopt a more clinical and curious approach as you follow news reports about the virus. To that end, you will want to find a credible source you can trust. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has information on the coronavirus outbreak @ [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov). You may also find useful information from local or state public health agencies or even your family physician.
3. **Communicate with your children.** Discuss the news coverage of the coronavirus with honest and age-appropriate information. Parents can also help allay distress by focusing children on routines and schedules. Remember that children will observe your behaviors and emotions for cues on how to manage their own feelings during this time.
4. **Keep connected.** Maintaining social networks can foster a sense of normality and provide valuable outlets for sharing feelings and relieving stress. Feel free to share useful information you find on governmental websites with your friends and family. It will help them deal with their own anxiety. Consider limiting how much you let your conversations focus on the virus versus all the other interesting, positive and fulfilling topics you could be discussing.
5. **Spiritual Focus.** Spend time in the Bible, devotional and inspirational writings to stay aware of the big picture and to find comfort and direction.
6. **Create a gratitude list.** Counter all the negatives associated with the virus by listing all the things you are thankful for, that are positives in your life.
7. **Humor.** Deliberately, intentionally bring humor into your life via jokes, online funny videos, sitcoms, movies, etc. & then share them with others to help lighten their mood too.
8. **Stress Relief Techniques.** Now is the time to make time to use your stress relief techniques listed on the handout I've given you previously. Try 3 different ideas a day off the handout.
9. **Exercise.** Remember aerobic activity (as you are medically allowed) is an excellent way to work out stress.