

COPING WITH COVID-19

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A Calm Within the Storm

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted practically everyone around the world in one way or another. While the specifics of this impact will differ for everyone based on circumstance, it is also probably fair to say that the pandemic has, at a minimum, thrown most people out of their routines and general sense of normalcy. This can be a source of considerable stress because it removes the sense of security and control that we usually rely on for navigating our day-to-day lives.

When we feel insecure and out of control it is common for us to strive to regain our feelings of normalcy. The problem is that sometimes – such as in the current circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic – “normalcy,” as we would like to have it, is simply not available. In such circumstances as this, becoming more mindful of our experiences can be a way of regaining a sense of security and calm, even despite our lives being anything but normal.

Being mindful means paying attention, on purpose, to the present moment, without judging it as “good” or “bad” / “right” or “wrong.” When we allow ourselves to be with the experience of our lives in this way, it is possible to notice some interesting things. One of the first things we can notice is that everything is always changing, including our environment, our perceptions, our thoughts and our feelings. As such, what we regard as “normal” is always changing too.

One of the next things that can be noticed is that there is an unperturbable steadiness that can be found, despite all the change. This unperturbable steadiness is the observing quality of our minds. It is our capacity to be mindful itself. We can sit like the calm at the eye of a storm and watch the change all around us, knowing that in this moment we are okay.

With all of this being said, it is probably also worthwhile to note that for many people it is simply not realistic to practice being mindful all day long – even at the best of times. The good news is that constant practice is not necessary to experience significant benefits from mindfulness. Even just 5 minutes a day of sitting still and quiet and paying attention to the flow of your breath can help you to get in touch with the calm steadiness at the centre of your being. If you feel even more inclined, using a guided meditation app on your smart phone or tablet can also be a helpful way to learn and practice mindfulness. Below is a list of a few popular meditation apps:

Insight Timer – www.insighttimer.com

Calm – www.calm.com

Headspace – www.headspace.com

May this practice and these resources help you gain a greater sense of calm amid all the change and disruption you may be experiencing at this time.

Mindfulness: the intentional use of attention. – Leah Weiss, Ph.D

And people stayed at home
And read books
And listened
And they rested
And did exercises
And made art and played
And learned new ways of being
And stopped and listened
More deeply
Someone meditated, someone
prayed
Someone met their shadow
And people began to think
differently
And people healed.
And in the absence of people
who
Lived in ignorant ways
Dangerous, meaningless and
heartless,
The earth also began to heal
And when the danger ended
and
People found themselves
They grieved for the dead
And made new choices
And dreamed of new visions
And created new ways of living
And completely healed the
earth
Just as they were healed.

By Kathleen O'Meara, 1869
(Reprinted during Spanish flu
Pandemic, 1919)

New Mental Health Resource for Canadians

Not everyone is lucky enough to have access to mental health support through their employer or other means. Recognizing this, and the exceptionally difficult times that we are living through, a new resource has been developed by the Federal government.

On April 15, 2020, the Federal Minister of Health, Patty Hajdu, launched an online portal dedicated to mental wellness. Wellness Together Canada will connect Canadians to peer support workers, social workers, psychologists and other professionals for confidential chat sessions or phone calls, and will make it easier to find credible information and help address mental health and substance use issues.

"Mental wellness is difficult to maintain with the disruptions happening now. It's not easy to maintain a routine. People in every community are struggling and need our help. That's why we are acting today to make it easier for Canadians to identify, understand and address issues they are facing, with multiple tools and resources available on one platform. - "The Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Health

We encourage you to share this information with family and friends so that they may also pass it on to the people that they know. And remember, we are in this together.

Resources:

www.wellnesstogether.ca

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

<https://ca.thrive.health/covid19app/home>



**If you have any questions or would like to book an appointment,
please give us a call**

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