

Tips for dealing with worry about world events

We understand it can be difficult hearing about current world events. It is normal to be worried but try not to let the worry take over. Finding ways to deal with uncertainty can be really helpful to build resilience. It's important we all look after our mental health particularly through uncertain times. We know that the human brain is instinctively biased towards processing negative data – this is linked back to the old brain and its role of looking out for threats. So when you feel you can't stop worrying and just can't think positively – one way to reframe this would be to say, "well actually this is just my brain looking out for me". Here are some of our techniques for managing worry...

The Apple Technique

We recommend using the APPLE technique to help you manage anxiety, which is a technique we discovered on www.getselfhelp.co.uk. The five phases of the APPLE technique are -

1. **Acknowledge** – Notice and acknowledge the uncertainty as it comes to mind.
2. **Pause** – Don't react as you normally do. Don't react at all. Just pause and breathe.
3. **Pull back** – Tell yourself this is just the worry talking, and this apparent need for certainty is not helpful and not necessary. It is only a thought or feeling. Don't believe everything you think. Thoughts are not statements or facts.
4. **Let go** – Let go of the thought or feeling. It will pass. You don't have to respond to them. You might imagine them floating away in a bubble or cloud.
5. **Explore** – Explore the present moment, because right now, in this moment, all is well. Notice your breathing and the sensations of your breathing. Notice the ground beneath you. Look around and notice what you see, what you hear, what you can touch, what you can smell. Right now. Then shift your focus of attention to something else – on what you need to do, on what you were doing before you noticed the worry or do something else – mindfully with your full attention.



Examine Your Reaction

Worry can make us think in circles, forever dwelling on a problem and imagining all the ways something can go wrong. Sometimes we need to break free of this loop and look at the situation more objectively. Ask yourself:

- What am I achieving by worrying about this?
- What can I do to change the outcome of the situation?

If the answer to both of these questions is "nothing", then it does not deserve to occupy this much of your time! Focus on the things you can change.



Positive Affirmations

As well as seeking reassurance, it is useful to learn how to reassure yourself in times of anxiety. It can be tempting to surrender to these feelings of despair but adopting and repeating positive mantras will help you reframe the way you see things. Try these:



- This is just anxiety, nothing more.
- This feeling will pass.
- I am safe.
- I am becoming calmer with each breath.
- I am in control.

Other Helpful Techniques

- Ensure you are eating well and exercising (both have a huge effect on mood and help rid anxiety!)
- Try to restrict your time watching/listening to the news. Limiting exposure to the news may be helpful. Aim to just check it once a day or even ask family/friends to just keep you up to date with any new information.
- Drinking a glass of warm water (not boiling) as this can soothe the nervous system or herbal teas especially ones that contain the herb valerian can be really helpful.
- Write a list of the worries, seeing things on paper helps put the worries into perspective
- Keep busy with hobbies, yoga, colouring or other crafts, reading a book, chatting to friends/family