**Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) Strategies**

**to Improve Mental Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

**PLEASE READ THIS FIRST**

This self-help guide is to assist people to improve their mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. We invite people aged over 16 years residing in Western Australia to assist us in evaluating the effectiveness of this guide which will involve a few online screening questions to confirm the study is suitable for you, a short (5 minute) online survey before reading the rest of the booklet; and another short (10 minute) online survey that we will email to you one week later. We will ask some participants to wait one week after completing the screening questions before they read the rest of the booklet. If you participate, we will also invite some people do an interview (telephone or online) to share their views about the guide. Participants will be provided a $20 Amazon gift voucher as a thank you when they complete the study and another $20 Amazon gift voucher if they complete an interview. If you are interested in participating in our research, ***please go to the following webpage to register before you read the rest of the booklet*:** **[add URL]**

**What is cognitive behaviour therapy? (CBT)**

Cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) is an umbrella term for a wide range of evidence-based cognitive and behavioural psychotherapies that involve techniques and strategies to help address unhelpful thinking and behaviour across many psychological issues, including anxiety and depression. Thousands of scientific trials have supported CBT as an effective treatment for a range of psychological problems. In these unprecedented times of global concern associated with the effects of COVID-19, we provide the following advice and resources. There are various internet-based CBT programs, websites, and self-help books available as e-books to help you recognise and address different types of unhelpful thought patterns and behaviours. The suggestions and resources provided are not complete and do not imply an endorsement, but are provided as examples of some resources available.

**Normalise worry and engage in helpful behaviours:**

**It is normal to feel worry and anxiety:** The lack of predictability and lack of control are two key factors associated with stress and anxiety. There is much that we do not know about COVID- 19, so it is an understandable and normal response to feel concern, anxiety, and worry about it. Accept and validate these reactions in yourselves and others, even as you take positive steps to respond to these reactions. Anxiety and worry are natural and adaptive reactions when we face danger. Worry is intended to help mobilise us to take appropriate action to face danger. Unhelpful worry remains in our minds and can drain us of energy. Take action to protect yourself and engage in helpful behaviours to help ease distress.

* **Take action to protect yourself:** Use your worry to be proactive and take the necessary steps to protect yourself from the COVID-19 virus based on guidelines suggested by experts: [www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/how-to-protect-yourself-and-others-from-coronavirus-covid-19/good-hygiene-for-coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/how-to-protect-yourself-and-others-from-coronavirus-covid-19/good-hygiene-for-coronavirus-covid-19). It is important to follow official guidelines around handwashing, but if you notice that your own or your child/family members’ handwashing has become excessive (for example frequent handwashing numerous times a day while at home over and above what is required), set some goals to reduce excessive handwashing to be more aligned with the suggestions by experts. If you have noticed that your own handwashing or concerns with germs/contamination has become excessive see: Challacombe, F., Oldfield, V.B., & Salkovskis, P. (2011). *Break free from OCD: Overcoming obsessive compulsive disorder with CBT.* London, UK: Vermilion, and for children and teenagers see: [www.ocdnotme.com.au](http://www.ocdnotme.com.au).
* **Engage in general self**-**care**: Set regular times to go to bed and wake up, exercise at home, and eat a balanced diet with regular mealtimes. Avoid naps or shifts in your sleep cycle, avoid excessive alcohol and caffeine, or doing things you might regret (e.g., excessive on-line shopping).
* **Engage in pleasant events:** Pleasant events are helpful to improve mood, so it is very important to do things you enjoy. Brainstorm the activities that you enjoy that you can do at home and engage in them every day. For example, you may want to listen to music, watch favourite movies, exercise at home, cook a nice meal and savour the food in the moment, read a book, play board games, arrange social events with friends and family via the internet, telephone or in person. Savour enjoyable experiences by anticipating them, enjoying them in the moment, and reflecting upon them afterwards. This website has ideas for pleasant events: [cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Depression](http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Depression)
* **Ways to deal with worry and rumination:** While it is normal to worry and be focusing more on health at this time, you can take some steps to try to manage your degree of worry. One idea is to limit the amount of time you worry by setting set aside a limited minute “worry time” at the same time each day. Set a limit on the amount of information you are reading on the internet; you might choose to set a limit of 30 minutes per day. Think about the best time to do this activity. It is not recommended to read worrying news just before bedtime, as it may interfere with sleep. Accurate information on COVID-19 can be found on the World Health Organization website: [who.int](http://who.int). A more detailed workbook for managing worry can be found through the Centre for Clinical Interventions website: [cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/For-Clinicians/Generalised-Anxiety-and-Worry](http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/For-Clinicians/Generalised-Anxiety-and-Worry)

see also: [psychologytools.com/articles/free-guide-to-living-with-worry-and-anxiety-amidst-global-uncertainty/](https://www.psychologytools.com/articles/free-guide-to-living-with-worry-and-anxiety-amidst-global-uncertainty/)

* **Ways to deal with anxiety over your health:** It is normal due to the increased focus on disease and health during the pandemic to have some degree of concern over your health. If you find that worry over your health is interfering with your life the following website has useful information on health anxiety: cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Health-Anxiety for example by implementing strategies to reduce searching about symptoms and health excessively on the internet, or seeking excessive reassurance from GP/family regarding health over and above what is helpful to maintain good health.
* **Ways to deal with anxiety over your finances:** Given high unemployment rates and the economic downturn it is normal to feel concerned about your finances. - ***Normalise anxiety.*** If you are worried, normalise and validate your feelings. It is normal to get anxious when we perceive a threat, lose our jobs, or are living with uncertainty.

***- Get the information and keep a budget.*** Review information about your savings, assets, and sources of financial support. Keep a budget and keep track of spending to help think about where to cut back, for free financial counselling services see: dlgc.communities.wa.gov.au/AdviceSupport/Pages/Funded-Services-Directory.aspx

***- Challenge your worries.*** You can challenge your worries by considering how having less money is not necessarily a catastrophe, focusing on what you can still do with less money, and imagine possible ways of coping. For example, unemployment rates may currently be high, but the employment market is fluid and ever-changing.

***- Focus on other areas of your life.*** Rather than focus on money, think about a range of valued areas in your life, where you think of your life as a large pie with pieces of different sizes representing meaningful activities, for example being a partner, parent, friend, community member, someone who learns, exercise, relaxation, health, and kindness.

***- What can you do for free?*** Think about what you can do for free, for example, you can exercise, learn, connect with friends and family, show kindness, and meditate. Think about what you did to enjoy yourself when you had less money. Research shows that above a certain income level more money is not related to greater happiness.

* **Engage in problem solving:** Here are some steps to help solve problems: (1) identify the problem; name it, and be as precise as you can about the nature and extent of the problem, (2) generate potential solutions, (3) decide on a potential solution, (4) plan the chosen solution, (5) carry out the solution, (6) evaluate the result. This may be a useful strategy if, for example, you are having difficulty organising yourself while you are working at home, or find yourself getting distracted. Here are a set of possible problem- solving ideas:

1. The problem: Procrastination.  
2. Designate a certain amount of time to work before rewarding self by taking a

break.  
3. Set a timer for 30 minutes of work, then take a short break.  
4. Get a timer and set it. Sit down to work.  
5. After 30 minutes, stop and take a break. Get up and move around for a few

minutes.  
6. Did you manage to get some work accomplished during the 30 minutes? How

do you feel? Do you need to modify your plan? If so, start again and try it!

**Ease physical stress and tension, mindfulness and exercise**

* **Relaxation Exercises:** Research shows that diaphragmatic breathing (slow, abdominal breathing, and progressive muscle relaxation exercises (alternating tension and relaxation to identify and combat signs of physical tension) are useful in reducing general physical tension and promoting relaxation. Applying these relaxation exercises in your daily life once you have learned them is optimal in gaining benefits. There are several apps and self-help books available online that can help you learn these exercises for example: [blackdoginstitute.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2020/04/relaxationtechniques.pdf](https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2020/04/relaxationtechniques.pdf)
* **Meditation and Mindfulness**: Meditation is a practice anyone can use to help manage their physical and mental health. Research shows that regularly taking time to develop present-focused, non-judgmental awareness (i.e. mindfulness) can reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and the burden of many chronic health conditions. Cultivating mindfulness usually involves a mix of structured meditation exercises (e.g. sitting still and following the flow of your breathing for 10 minutes) and ‘informal’ exercises where you apply this mindset to everyday activities (e.g. mindful cooking, mindful communicating). The more you practice mindfulness, the more automatic this helpful way of responding becomes. One of the reasons mindfulness is so beneficial in managing anxiety and mood problems, is that it changes your relationship to unhelpful thoughts and feelings. It helps you to acknowledge, accept and let go of troublesome thoughts, rather than getting stuck in a cycle of worry/rumination and unhelpful behaviours. There are many different ways to start practising meditation. Research shows that engaging in a structured program such as the 8-week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) or Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) program is a good way to start.
  + Oxford Mindfulness Centre’s MBCT courses: <https://www.oxfordmindfulness.org/learn-mindfulness/find-a-course/>
  + UMass Centre for Mindfulness: <https://www.umassmemorialhealthcare.org/umass-memorial-medical-center/services-treatments/center-for-mindfulness/mindfulness-programs/mbct-8-week-online-live>
  + Palouse Mindfulness free online MBSR program: https://palousemindfulness.com/

Another option is to guide yourself through a mindfulness program using a book with accompanying audio of guided meditations:

* + Williams, M., & Penman, D. (2011). *Mindfulness: a practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world,* [penguinrandomhouse.com/mindfulness-meditation-downloads/](http://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/mindfulness-meditation-downloads/)
  + Williams, M., Teasdale, J., Segal, Z., & Kabat-Zinn, J (2007). [*The Mindful Way through Depression: Freeing Yourself from Chronic Unhappiness*](https://www.guilford.com/books/The-Mindful-Way-through-Depression/Williams-Teasdale-Segal-Kabat-Zinn/9781593851286).
  + Burch, V. & Penman, D (2013). [*Mindfulness for Health: A practical guide to relieving pain, reducing stress and restoring wellbeing*](https://www.amazon.com.au/Mindfulness-Health-practical-relieving-restoring/dp/074995924X)*.*

There are also a vast range of meditation apps for your smart phone. For example:

* + Insight Timer: https://insighttimer.com
  + Headspace: <https://www.headspace.com/headspace-meditation-app>
  + Smiling Mind: <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/mindfulness>
  + Calm: https://www.calm.com

The pandemic has prompted some free resources and online forums see:

* + Jon Kabat-Zinn daily livestream of practices and inquiry: <http://www.wisdom2conference.com/live>
  + Oxford Mindfulness Centre Free Online Mindfulness Sessions & Introductory Course: <https://www.oxfordmindfulness.org/free-online-mindfulness-course-sessions/>
* **Exercise:** There is evidence that regular exercise has an important role in helping to regulate your mood and can be helpful for anxiety and depression. There are many ways to incorporate exercise in your daily routine, such as walking your children to school rather than driving, parking further from your destination and walking the remainder of the way, using one of the many apps or website exercise programs available, keeping a daily diary of how much exercise you engage in to help motivate you, finding exercise you enjoy such as cycling, walking, running, or yoga.

**Challenge unhelpful thoughts and take a balanced perspective:**

Stressful times often lead people to engage in unhelpful thinking, including negative predictions about the current or future situation, focusing on the negative, predicting the worst-case scenario, or pessimistic thinking. Taking a flexible, balanced and optimistic view of the situation can help ease stress. It is natural to have negative thoughts and fears and at the same time, taking a balanced perspective, not assuming the worst, and taking a long term, optimistic view can help reduce your anxiety. We have survived world crises before and this too shall eventually pass. There are various thinking styles which can be unhelpful and contribute to feeling anxious and depressed. Some examples include (see cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Depression for further examples):

**Catastrophising –** This is worst case scenario thinking, e.g. “*I will never find a job”.*

**All or nothing thinking** – This is when someone thinks about things in an all or nothing way, e.g. ‘*If I cannot finish the entire task, I may as well not event start it*’.

**Noticing the negative and discounting the positive -**  This is when you focus on negatives and discount positives, such as focusing on how you feel lonely and disconnected from friends after lockdown rather than how you might reconnect with friends.

**Shoulds** - These are common thoughts when we put unreasonable pressure on ourselves, which leads to self-criticism e.g., *’I should never waste time’*.

**Overgeneralising** – This is where someone takes one behaviour to conclude something negative overall about themselves e.g., *“I didn’t get the job I applied for, I am a failure”.*

Unhelpful thinking can be challenged in a range of ways including using thought records and behavioural experiments.

***Challenging unhelpful thinking with thought records***

Thought records are a way to challenge unhelpful thinking. Try these steps using the example worksheet

**A: Activating event** – Record what was happening at the time you were having strong feelings, it may be a situation, an image or memory.

**B: Beliefs** – Ask yourself, *‘What was going through my mind?’* Rate how strong the belief is (0 = not all, 100 = completely believe it). Identify unhelpful thinking styles.

**C:** **Consequences** – Ask yourself, *‘What was I feeling?’* for example, angry, sad, anxious and rate how strong it was (0 = not at all, 100 = strongest feeling possible).

**D: Disputation –** Ask yourself questions to help view the thought in a more objective way for example,’ *What would a friend say about this thought?’, ’How else could I view this?’.*

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| **A - Activating Event** | **B - Beliefs** | **C - Consequences** | **D – Disputation** | **E – Evaluate outcome** |
| What was going on at the time? (situation thought, image, memory) | What went through my mind? Rate 0-100%  Which unhelpful thinking styles am I using? | What was I feeling?  Rate 0 -100% | Is there another way of viewing it?  What advice would I give to a friend? | How do I feel now?  Rate 0-100% |
| (e.g., thinking about feeling isolated and lonely) | (e.g., I feel lonely  I will never have a good group of friends - overgeneralising) | (e.g., Sad – 90%) | (e.g., I do have a few friends but lost contact during lockdown) | (e.g., Sad – 30% - I can reconnect with friends) |

***Challenging unhelpful thoughts with behavioural experiments***

One of the most useful ways to challenge unhelpful thoughts is through behavioural experiments. Behavioural experiments involve testing out your negative predictions to find out what happens when you behave in a different way.

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**Steps to complete a behavioural experiment:**

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1. Identify an unhelpful thought to test.

2. Set up an experiment to test the thought.

3. Specify what you think will happen in the experiment (your prediction) and rate

how strongly you believe it.

4. Describe your feelings and rate how strong they are (0-100).

5. Record the results of the experiment.

6. Develop a revised belief based on the evidence you have found.

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**Behavioural Experiment Worksheet:**

**Unhelpful thought:** *(e.g., I will never find a job)* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Experiment:** *(e.g., apply for five jobs)* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Prediction:** *(e.g., because I did not get the last job from the interview, I will not get this one)*

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**Results:** *(e.g., applied for jobs, have been short listed for interview from one application)* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Revised belief:** *(e.g., It is not true that I will never find a job, times are tough but I will find a job)* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**General CBT Resources**

This website provides you with symptoms of common conditions and how they are treated using CBT: [abct.org/Information/?m=mInformation&fa=FactSheets](http://www.abct.org/Information/?m=mInformation&fa=FactSheets)

**Specific CBT Resources to manage anxiety and worry**:

These websites have information about managing worry and anxiety:   
[cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/For-Clinicians/Generalised-Anxiety-and-Worry](http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/For-Clinicians/Generalised-Anxiety-and-Worry) [abct.org/Information/index.cfm?m=mInformation&fa=fs\_ANXIETY](http://www.abct.org/Information/index.cfm?m=mInformation&fa=fs_ANXIETY) [abct.org/Information/?m=mInformation&fa=fs\_WORRY](http://www.abct.org/Information/?m=mInformation&fa=fs_WORRY)

These websites have information about managing health anxiety: [cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Health-Anxiety](http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Health-Anxiety) [abct.org/Information/index.cfm?m=mInformation&fa=fs\_HEALTH\_ANXIETY](http://www.abct.org/Information/index.cfm?m=mInformation&fa=fs_HEALTH_ANXIETY)

The British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Therapy (BABCP) has a useful podcast on dealing with anxiety about coronavirus: [letstalkaboutcbt.libsyn.com/coping-with-anxiety-about-coronaviru](http://letstalkaboutcbt.libsyn.com/coping-with-anxiety-about-coronavirus)s

Resources for children and teenagers on coping with anxiety and depression:

Although adults may be stressed at this time, children also need to be cared for, particularly when feeling anxious about COVID-19. Be mindful about your child’s level of development, as you choose what to tell them about the COVID-19 pandemic. We encourage you not to let them watch media about the pandemic, especially without some discussion about what they understand about these media encounters. Remember that children may not understand things the way adults do. It is common for children and teenagers at this time to have anxiety about getting sick or being behind in school work, and some may have feelings of depression and social disconnection after lockdown. The following website provides evidence based information for anxiety and depression during the pandemic: [mq.edu.au/COVID-19-weve-got-this-covered](http://www.mq.edu.au/COVID-19-weve-got-this-covered)! Specific tips from this website include if your child is feeling anxious to make time to listen to them while avoiding giving excessive reassurance, focus on ways your child has been courageous before in dealing with anxiety, and being a calm role model for your child in coping with anxiety. If your child is feeling depressed check in regularly with how they are feeling, spend one-on-one time with them, focus on pleasant events and family plans, balance screen use with daily physical activity away from screens and encourage social connections with friends.

The following websites also provide advice:

* [emergingminds.org.uk/wp.content/uploads/2020/03/COVID19\_advice-for-parents-and-carers\_20.3\_.pdf](https://emergingminds.org.uk/wp.content/uploads/2020/03/COVID19_advice-for-parents-and-carers_20.3_.pdf)
* [bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/talking-children-about-coronavirus](http://bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/talking-children-about-coronavirus)
* [brave-online.com/beating-stress-and-worries-about-coronavirus-covid-19/](http://www.brave-online.com/beating-stress-and-worries-about-coronavirus-covid-19/)
* Information booklet explaining coronavirus for children: [mindheart.co/descargables](http://mindheart.co/descargables)
* The National Child Traumatic Stress Network: [nctsn.org/resources/parent-caregiver-guide-to-helping-families-cope-with-the-coronavirus-disease-2019](http://www.nctsn.org/resources/parent-caregiver-guide-to-helping-families-cope-with-the-coronavirus-disease-2019)

The following websites provide information on CBT for anxiety and depression in youth:

* A list of CBT e-books for children: [reading-well.org.uk/children](http://reading-well.org.uk/children)
* A list of CBT e-books for teenagers: [reading-well.org.uk/books/books-on-prescription/young-people-mental-health](http://reading-well.org.uk/books/books-on-prescription/young-people-mental-health)
* Cool kids online therapy for anxiety in youth: [mq.edu.au/about/campus-services-and-facilities/hospital-and-clinics/centre-for-emotional-health-clinic/programs-for-children-and-teenagers/online-treatment-accordions/cool-kids-online](https://www.mq.edu.au/about/campus-services-and-facilities/hospital-and-clinics/centre-for-emotional-health-clinic/programs-for-children-and-teenagers/online-treatment-accordions/cool-kids-online)
* Youth Beyond Blue: [youthbeyondblue.com/](http://youthbeyondblue.com/%20)
* Online therapy for children and teenagers with stress and anxiety in Australia: [brave-online.com/](http://www.brave-online.com/)
* Online therapy for obsessive-compulsive symptoms in children and teenagers: [ocdnotme.com.au](http://ocdnotme.com.au) (this may be useful if excessive handwashing and concern over germs/contamination has become a significant problem).
* US: The National Child Traumatic Stress Network - [nctsn.org/](http://www.nctsn.org/).
* ReachOut has online support and resources to help teenagers and their parents: [au.reachout.com/](http://au.reachout.com/)
* Cathy Creswell & Lucy Willetts (2007). Overcoming Your Child’s Fears and Worries. Constable & Robinson.
* Ron Rapee, Ann Wignall, Sue Spence and Heidi Lyneham (2008). Helping Your Anxious Child: A Step-by-Step Guide for Parents, 2nd edition. New Harbinger Publications.

**Resources for parents and carers of children with a disability during COVID-19**

Parents and carers of children with a developmental disability, such as autism, intellectual disability, or cerebral palsy, face a number of additional challenges during the pandemic. For instance, these children may find it more difficult to understand changes in routine and social distancing restrictions that are in place. See the following websites for resources:

* [Stepping Stones Triple P Guide: Parenting children with a disability during COVID-19](https://pfsc.psychology.uq.edu.au/covid19-resources)
* [Top Parenting Tips During COVID-19 For parents and carers of children with a disability](https://pfsc.psychology.uq.edu.au/covid19-resources)
* [Supporting children with diverse needs. *Parenting in a Pandemic Podcast*](https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/episode-12-supporting-children-with-diverse-needs/id1508089649?i=1000476519587)
* [Talking to children about coronavirus with alternative/augmentative communication boards](https://janellesampson.wordpress.com/2020/03/12/talking-to-kids-about-coronavirus/?fbclid=IwAR3eDjHfUfNOVg7XPNHxFTqp-axoJa1L2h_HjDquM4iK9nnBC3MBiqASKWU)
* [Carer information sheet for carers and children with a disability](https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/192744/covid-carer-info-resources-disability.pdf)
* [Supporting children with autism spectrum disorder in the COVID-19 environment](https://www.psychology.org.au/getmedia/29f773d8-e7e7-4ac7-bbd5-53b575c2fff0/20APS-CCN-IS-COVID-19-supporting-children-with-autism-P1.pdf)
* [raisingchildren.net.au/guides/coronavirus-covid-19-guide/coronavirus-physical-distancing-disability](https://raisingchildren.net.au/guides/coronavirus-covid-19-guide/coronavirus-physical-distancing-disability)

**Resources for older adults during COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented particular challenges for older adults given the media attention to serious complications in this age group. It is understandable older adults may feel stressed at this time due to worry over COVID-19. Government advice is available at: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/advice-for-people-at-risk-of-coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-older-people>. In addition to the other strategies in this guide we recommend:

* Engaging in pleasant events: You may temporarily have lost access to some of your favourite activities, but it is important to do things you enjoy every day. It can be helpful to reflect on what you liked an brainstorm alternative approaches see: <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Depression>
* Maintain social connections: It is important for older adults to find ways to maintain social connections to prevent social distancing becoming social isolation. Depending on your personal situation, some older adults may be able to continue social activities outside the home while maintaining social distancing, others may need to use telephone and internet-based communication.
* Challenging unhelpful thoughts: While it is true older adults are at higher risk from negative outcomes of COVID-19, most older adults who contract it recover. Useful information to help keep concerns in perspective: <https://www.psychology.org.au/getmedia/97749742-7030-40a0-945e-d91834b418cc/20APS-IS-COVID-19-Public-Older-adults-P3.pdf>

Websites offering CBT information and treatment

* Australian Association for Cognitive and Behaviour Therapy (AACBT): [aacbt.org](http://aacbt.org) and World Confederation of CBT (WCCBT): wccbt.org - information on CBT.
* Headtohealth.gov.au – Information on a range of online mental health resources.
* Get self help – A UK website offering CBT resources: [getselfhelp.co.uk/](https://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/)
* Anxiety online: [anxietyonline.org.au](http://anxietyonline.org.au) – online information about anxiety.
* Mindspot Clinic: [mindspot.org.au](http://mindspot.org.au) (phone 1800 61 44 34) – online assessment and CBT for anxiety and depression.
* The Centre for Clinical Interventions: [cci.health.wa.gov.au](http://cci.health.wa.gov.au) – online information about mental health problems and their treatment.
* Beyond Blue: [beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au) (phone 1300 22 4636) – information and support for anxiety and depression 24/7.
* Virtual clinic: [virtualclinic.org.au](http://virtualclinic.org.au) - online CBT for anxiety and depression.
* Black Dog Institute: blackdoginstitute.org.au
* E-Mental Health in Practice: emhprac.org.au – information on online mental health services in Australia.

Self-help books

Many self-help books are available in an online format, some examples include:

* NHS Reading Well (formerly Books on Prescription) [reading-well.org.uk](http://reading-well.org.uk): This website contains a list of evidence-based CBT books for anxiety and depression.
* The Overcoming series: There are numerous self-help books on CBT listed on the website: [overcoming.co.uk](http://overcoming.co.uk)

An example of CBT self-help books for adults (search the internet for e-book versions):

* Abramowitz, J.S. (2018). *Getting over OCD: A 10-step workbook for taking back your life,* 2nd ed. New York: Guilford Press.
* Antony, M.M., & Norton, P.J. (2009). *The anti-anxiety workbook: Proven strategies to overcome worry, panic, phobias, and obsessions*. New York: Guilford Press.
* Asmundson, G.J.G., & Taylor, S. (2005). *It’s not all in your head: How worrying about your health could be making you sick – and what you can do about it.* New York: Guilford Press.
* Clark, D.A., & Beck, A.T. (2012). *The anxiety and worry workbook: The cognitive-behavioral solution.*  New York: Guilford Press.
* Gilbert, P. (2009*). Overcoming depression: A self-help guide using cognitive-behavioural techniques.* London, UK: Little Brown Book Group.
* Greenberger, D., & Padesky, C.A. (2016*). Mind over mood*, 2nd ed. New York: Guilford Press.
* Kennerley, H. (2014). *Overcoming anxiety: A self-help guide using cognitive-behavioural techniques,* 2nd edition. London, UK: Little Brown Book Group.
* Owens, K.M.B., & Antony, M.M. (2011). *Overcoming health anxiety: Letting go of your fear of illness.*  Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.
* Manicavasagar, V., & Silove, D. (2017). *Overcoming panic: A self-help guide using cognitive-behavioural techniques*, 2nd edition. London, UK: Little Brown Book Group.
* Meares, K., & Freeston, M. (2015). *Overcoming worry and generalised anxiety disorder,* 2nd edition. London, UK: Little Brown Book Group (LBBG).
* Myles, P., & Shafran, R. (2015). *The CBT handbook: A comprehensive guide to using CBT to overcome depression, anxiety, stress, low self-esteem and anger.* London, UK: LBBG.
* Robichaud, M.R., & Buhr, K. (2018). *The Worry Workbook: CBT skills to overcome worry and anxiety by facing the fear of uncertainty*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.
* Teasdale, J., Williams, M., & Segal, Z. (2014). *The mindful way workbook: An 8-week program to free yourself from depression and emotional distress.* New York: Guilford Press.
* Veale, D., & Wilson, R. (2009). *Overcoming health anxiety: A self-help guide using cognitive-behavioural techniques.* London, UK: Little Brown Book Group.

Crisis Services – Western Australia

* **000**for emergency services (police, ambulance, firefighters)
* **Consult your General practitioner**
* **Mental Health Emergency Response Line** (staffed by mental health professionals)

o   Metro residents: 1300 555 788

o   Peel Residents (1800 676 822)

* **Rurallink**: specialist after hours mental health telephone service for the rural communities of Western Australia, phone: 1800 552 002
* [**Lifeline**](https://www.lifeline.org.au/About-Lifeline/Contact-Us): 13 11 14 (free crisis support 24/7)
* **Suicide Call Back Service**: 1300 659 467 (free counselling 24/7)
* **Suicide crisis text line** 0477 13 11 14 (crisis support via text)
* **National sexual assault, domestic family violence counselling service (1800respect.org.au):**1800 737 732

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With thanks to the following people for their input: Rod Holland, London, UK; Dr Joel Howell, Perth, Australia; Professor Peter McEvoy, Perth, Australia; Professor Roz Shafran, London, UK; Professor Tracey Wade, Adelaide, Australia; Professor Martin Antony, Toronto, Canada; Professor Keith Dobson, Calgary, Canada; Professor Lata K. McGinn, New York, USA; Dr Rebecca Anderson, Perth, Australia; Professor Susan Spence, Sydney, Australia; Professor Leanne Hides, Brisbane, Australia; Dr Trevor Mazzucchelli, Perth, Australia; Dr Rob Schütze, Perth, Australia; Christopher Gill, Perth, Australia, Professor Jennifer Hudson, Sydney, Australia; Dr Robert Leahy, New York, USA.

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