

MANAGING ANXIETY AND FEAR

DURING COVID-19

Here are some helpful tips for positive coping, using three antidotes to fear and anxiety: *creativity, humour, and curiosity.*

CREATIVITY

Activities that draw on our creativity allow our emotions and actions to come together in order to help our emotions move and shift. This can be anything that has a beginning and an end, and allows us to use our senses to create something we enjoy.

EXAMPLES:

- crafts
- cooking
- baking
- puzzles
- building
- sewing
- organizing
- drawing
- making music
- scribbling
- dancing
- woodworking

HUMOUR

Spending time with anything that brings you joy – whether it's through your own activities or enjoying other people's expressions of joy – relaxes our minds and bodies.

Tell a joke, read a funny book, get silly with your family, or watch a comedy. Finding humour and engaging in joy is a healing activity!

CURIOSITY

When we are under a lot of stress, it is easy to catastrophize and have fearful thoughts take over. This is part of our mind's way of trying to protect us by getting ready for anything that might happen. This is when it is important to remember:

DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU THINK!

Some strategies to help us stay curious:

- Catch the "what-ifs" and worries in your thoughts, and label them. They are just thoughts – label them as "anxiety," "fear," or "worry."
- Use reality checking to sort out which thoughts to listen to, and which ones to let go.

Reality checking steps:

- Notice and name it: "anxiety," "fear," "worry."
- Is this true? Even though something is possible, is it probable?
- What parts do I know are true, and what parts of it might not be true?
- What steps can I take? What is in my control?