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“Mindfulness Practice - 5 Easy Ways To Overcome Lockdown Anxiety”

If you are currently struggling with increased stress levels as a result of the current pandemic circumstances, you aren't alone. As if overnight, the world as we knew it changed beyond recognition.

We are all feeling the additional anxiety that the situation has brought into our lives.

The constant noise from news desks and newsfeeds has amplified any pre-existing feelings of worry or concern. Perhaps you're struggling with a challenging familial situation as a result of the lockdown limitations, or battling financial crisis.

No matter your situation right now, it's likely that you are in an increased state of anxiety.

The good news, is that there are some very easy steps that you can take to help yourself and those around you!

Here are 5 practical mindfulness methods for you to try:

1. **Inhale, Exhale.** You don't need any fancy equipment or expensive online classes to benefit from the calming effects of meditation. Settle yourself into a comfortable sitting position, and close your eyes. From there, concentrate on taking deep breaths into your belly, exhaling a little more slowly than you inhale each time. Try this once a day for ten minutes at a time, and you'll be amazed how much calmer you'll start to feel.
2. **Bring nature home.** Not able to go out? Then bring the outside world to your door. If you have a back garden, try introducing some plants and feeders that will attract wildlife. If you don't have an outside space, throw open the windows when you can and take some deep, nourishing breaths with the sun on your face. Every little helps!
3. **Disconnect, reconnect.** We have all rushed to our screens to be soothed. Technology can help us to feel connected with the outside world, but it can be a source of stress for a busy mind. Set aside time to be screen free when you can, away from the distracting lights of the television or your smartphone.

4. **Write it down.** Need a space to vent right now? We all do. To lessen the pressure on yourself and those you might be quarantined with, try writing out how you're feeling in a notebook. It doesn't have to be well written - it just has to detail exactly how you're feeling. Have a safe space to release your thoughts will help to balance your mind and bring your focus back to what's really important.
5. **De-clutter your space.** Take back control by taking charge of the things you are able to change. Having a spring clean and refreshing your home environment can be a great way to do this. Why not could start a home DIY project? Creative tasks also are a powerful mindfulness technique, drawing your mind to more positive perspectives.

Don't forget to take time to take care of yourself, along with those around you. Taking good care of our mental health and wellbeing has never been more important.

You are worth taking care of - both now, and beyond lockdown.

Be gentle with yourself, and allow yourself to feel the emotions that might be surfacing. You are doing your best, and that is more than enough.
