

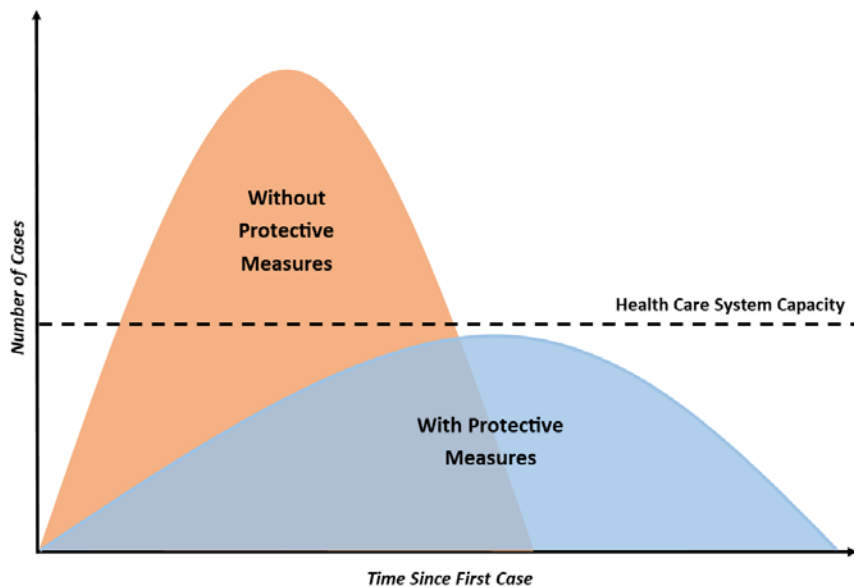
Calming Corona Concerns

Please read in conjunction with EASA tips sheets on *Stress, Sleep and Anxiety*
(partial material taken from APS)

Learn the Facts

Media keeps us in touch with the world, it has allowed, in the case of the Coronavirus, to see what could happen when the virus is managed in certain ways. The delay achieved through planned responses allows our health care and planners to be ready for how it may affect Australians. You may have heard about the 'curve' and this term is reassuring in that Australia has modelled their response on keeping the curve or the infection rate as slow as possible. Why? Because a fast rate of infection could outpace the health services needed at its peak.

Media also has the capacity to overwhelm us, as with any overload of information, try to find one credible, factual and up to date resource source and stick with this in the coming months. Consider: health.gov.au or who.int. Right now, every source of data is clear – you have a role to play in the Northern Territory and the easiest part of that is frequently washing your hands in the right way and physically distancing yourself from others.



Perspective - Panic vs. Concern

Panic can be brought about by over focusing on risks without the balance of resources i.e. Anxiety is an overestimation of risk and an underestimation of your resources.

Action → get great at estimating your chances of an event occurring i.e. what's the risk for someone of your sex, your age, your health whilst taking your precautions against your exposures?

Action → list all your resources and if there is an ability to research how to add another; plan for this, you could ask someone who knows you well and cares about you what other resources you have or could build.

Panic can be increased by focusing on speculation, doom-based conversations and overwhelming ourselves with information from less credible news sources.

Darwin (Head Office)

P. (08) 8941 1752

F. (08) 8941 0746

easadarwin@easa.org.au

Alice Springs

(08) 8953 4225

easaalicesprings@easa.org.au

Katherine

P. (08) 8941 1752

F. (08) 8941 0746

Toll Free (NT only)

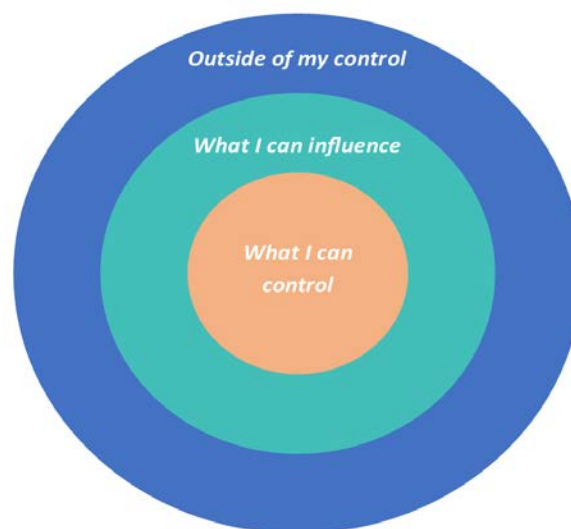
1800 193 123

www.easa.org.au

Calming Corona Concerns

Concern can lead to calm if you...

- Use facts in your planning i.e. *“I might have to work from home and therefore I need to check if I can do this”* and *“If I get the virus and it’s a bit like the flu, I probably need the things in the house that help me at that time such as easy to heat food, paracetamol, tissues, good movies and online resources”*.
- Be reasonable, consider the advice you would give right now to someone you love, use the same tone with yourself and the same messaging i.e. *“my immunity is good, I am following advice, take each day as it comes, one step at a time”*.
- Continue as usual where there is no current data suggesting to change, keep your routines as we find them comforting, try adapting only one thing at a time.
- Turn fear of the unknown into working effectively with what you can control, see this simple diagram that has been adapted from Covey’s Circles of Influence and Control.



When we consider the above diagram, bring to mind certain things that may fall into each circle for you.

- 1) Things outside of our control
 - i.e. weather, traffic jams, legislation, government directives
- 2) Things that we can influence, (do your research about how to do this)
 - i.e. the behaviour of others
- 3) Things that we can control
 - i.e. our own behaviour, like washing your hands, showering after work.. that’s you in control of you

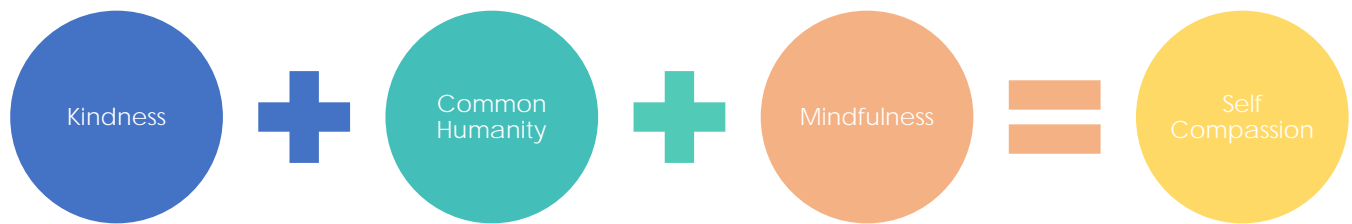
By acknowledging aspects of life, especially ones that may be stressful, as things that are outside of our control, we are able to refocus our energy on what we can influence and control. For example, you as one individual cannot control the spread of the novel coronavirus across the country, but we can influence the behaviours of those close to us by having conversations about what efforts can minimise the spread in our immediate community. We also know that we can directly control our own behaviour to help with the efforts to minimise the spread by limiting unnecessary socialisation, working from home if we’re in a position to, washing our hands frequently and keeping up good sanitation at work and home. We can also closely monitor our own health throughout this time and ensure we seek medical advice should we develop any flu-like symptoms.

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Still Panicking? Try Self-Compassion

Put your hands over your heart – feel the heat of your skin under your palms, notice how that feels. Now acknowledge how you are feeling, your anxiety, your upset and your fears. Then take your attention to where you are feeling the most tension in your body. It will likely to be in your gut, chest, throat or jaw. When you find it, focus on it, put all your attention on it, you could imagine it's a shape or texture or colour... (i.e. a black lump, pink smoke etc.) stay focussed on this area of tension and give it permission to leave, allow it to start to go, stay focussed on it, allow it to get smaller, paler, thinner and fade away, drain away, stay focussed on it until gone.

You are a resource that needs care...



What can I do when I feel overwhelmed?

- Don't sweat the small stuff, identify and stick with priorities. Focus on the essentials that require your energy right now and let the other stuff go.
- Use your breath to calm your body and mind – try taking a deep breath, push your tummy out when breathing in to breathe deeper, then hold it for the count of 3. Now breathe out of your open mouth slowly like breathing out of a straw. Repeat 10 times. What do you notice?
- Try progressively tensing, holding for the count of 3 and then releasing your muscles in your body. Start with your toes, scrunch them right up, hold and then release. Don't forget facial muscles and do your gut and shoulders 3 times. Now what do you notice?
- Try staying in the present moment, we can mind wander into the future or the past, neither of which we have current control over. Spending large amounts of time trying to predict the future or change the past is linked to depression. So, catch yourself then bring yourself to now, you could:
 - Notice 5 things you can hear, see, smell, feel, taste
 - Walk or drive looking out for some of the NT's amazing wildlife, plant life, sky scapes or views – when you notice, really get absorbed... what can you see? What do you like about it? Appreciate it, ponder on it.
 - Get a worry book, on one side open up and download what's going on in your thoughts, then underline real issues, turn the book over and using each issue as a header fill in below it:
 - Clearly define the *issue*
 - Write down a list of options which may solve it (include do nothing and something creative that someone you admire might say i.e. your role model). Feel free to do some research online or ask a mate
 - Evaluate the above based on what is not so good and what is good about them
 - Rate your options based on above
 - Create a plan, tiny steps defined
 - Get on with it

Sleep

Get adequate sleep (8-9 hours) to boost your immune system. If you're waking at night or finding it hard to turn your brain off in bed, use the 'Eye Fix' method. Look up at the ceiling, then without moving your eyes, take a nice deep breath and hold for 11, then slowly breathe out, repeat until your eyes close, continuing to look up under your eyelids and breathing this way until sleep claims you. If after a sudden wake up this can take up to 30 minutes due to adrenalin in the gut.

In the afternoon eat foods containing tryptophan (amino acid that develops serotonin and melatonin) i.e. bananas, nuts, eggs, hot milk.