

Self-care strategies

It seems we have found ourselves in a very complex and layered situation.

As a MHFAider, you may be dealing with distressed clients/colleagues/team members, compassion fatigue, Zoom fatigue, international crises, increased workloads and workplace changes.

You may very well be a resilient human – but this is a lot, and you will not be alone in feeling exhausted and overwhelmed. Here are some reminders (or new tips) that may help you.

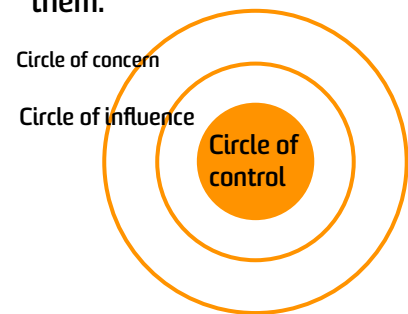


Define what is in your control.

Unfortunately, some things are just out of your control. Simple as that. The good news is there are many things are in your circle of control or at least in your circle of influence.

Unpacking your worries into three circles will help reduce your mental load and burden and allow you to focus on what you can control.

Stay mindful of how full your bucket is and allow it to be okay to be concerned about some things without feeling a need to control or act on them.



Source: Steven Covey (1989): 7 Habits of Highly Effective People



Choose your response

We can't always choose what happens to us – but we can choose how we respond.

When another layer of complexity in life is added, it's easy to react emotionally. Where you can, give yourself some time to process the change, assess the emotion behind your reaction and choose how you will respond.

For example, your reaction may be based off fear, loss, helplessness, grief, trauma etc.

Here are some response options available to you:

1. Growth mindset
2. Optimism
3. Gratitude
4. Positive Thinking



Set small goals

With so many things to discuss and deal with right now, that overwhelming feeling is likely to creep in.

Rather than looking at everything that needs to be done, break it down into smaller goals. Your list could be daily or weekly at max.

This will help reduce the mental load and yet still help you feel accomplished.

Don't worry if not everything gets done, just try to prioritise the things that must get done.

Today

This week



Prioritise self care

Here are some self care activities you may want to use to create your own list or add to your current list.

- o practice mindfulness
- o eat a healthy meal and drink water
- o speak with friends or family
- o keep breaks in calendar
- o stop for lunch
- o join a free yoga, pilates or meditation session available through your organisation or local council
- o walk outside or exercise
- o unplug from technology
- o listen to music
- o tidy clean or de-clutter
- o get a good night's sleep
- o practice gratitude



Limit your exposure



With so many avenues for news or updates (and never-ending notifications), we can become susceptible to overwhelming feelings of anxiety, fear or stress.

For some of us, limiting what we see and when is a way to feel in control of the amount of news we're consuming and be open to it when we're ready.

Some ideas that may help you

- Reduce or turn off notifications
- Stop or limit watching the news
- Set limits on how often you access social media
- Allocate specific times for checking emails or instant messaging apps



Talk to someone

You are not alone.

Talking to someone can help.

There are lots of people ready and willing to talk to you to support you through this time.

Family and friends

Manager or supervisor

Colleagues

Your organisation's employee assistance or wellbeing program

Lifeline 13 11 14

Beyond Blue 1300 224 636

Headspace 1800 650 890

✓ Mensline 1300 78 99 78