

# KEEPING CALM

Southampton life coach **Carolynne Bennett** provides some top tips on how to create a little calm amongst the chaos and stress of the coronavirus crisis



**H**aving our lives turned upside down overnight, it has become increasingly difficult to find peace of mind. When we're surrounded by the trials of daily life and now the added stressors that Covid-19 presents it's natural to feel anxious, and as a result we may forget there are things we can do to make the journey a little easier for ourselves.

Because of the recent news of the outbreak it's never been more important to benefit from some strategies to keep you feeling calm as we pull together to navigate our way through until the storm blows over.

With uncertainty as to when the pandemic will end or how our lives may look when it does, perhaps the current uncertainty will pave the way to live a life with new forms of meaning and connectedness. When we emerge in the months to come, may we remember what is truly important and may life take on more purpose for us all.

With our stress being heightened we may from time to time get annoyed by the actions of others, we may worry how long this will last and question other people's motives. This is when it's important to realise these are the things we can do nothing about. Focusing on these will only make the situation harder and create more tension. However, there is still plenty in our control and when we focus on these things we will feel increased feelings of optimism and calm.

Whilst Covid-19 is a major public health concern which calls for vigilance in focusing on practical steps to protect ourselves and our families, here are additional steps that will assist physically and psychologically.

- Communicate regularly with your friends and loved ones. It's times like these that the Internet really is a blessing. Whilst you might not be able to catch up at the pub or coffee shop, it's never been easier to get in touch and have a chat. But how? One idea is that you can have dinner with your friends by propping up your phone at the dinner table whilst you eat and enjoy a good old dinner date.

- Maintaining a positive attitude by focusing on the positives in your life despite the current challenges by developing a glass half full mindset. Surround yourself with information which is uplifting by finding a positive quote or a mantra and put it up in a place that you will see every day. "This too shall pass".

- Keeping up-to-date with the news is one thing, but saturating yourself with it is another and will add to your stress. Consider turning off some notifications and limiting news updates if this is likely to cause you anxiety and distress.

- If you're cooped up at home, now is the perfect time to have a deep clean and even a little change up in your surroundings. This



- Create a daily schedule so that you have structure. By having structure, you will wake up with a sense of ownership of your day and instil good habits that make you feel good.

- Start an appreciation quest. Stop at various times of the day and appreciate precious moments like time with loved ones, having the Internet to be able to stay connected and food on the table which can all boost your health and happiness.

- Mindfulness works by practicing staying in the present moment and not getting lost in worrying about the future. Practice mindfulness by eating more slowly and savouring each bite or being more present when having a conversation with friends and loved ones.

will boost your mood by refreshing your environment whilst providing you with a sense of achievement. How do I get started? Think of that one cupboard or drawer that you have been meaning to tackle for some time now. You will feel a great sense of achievement ticking this task off your list.

- As the weather gets warmer there is no better time to open the windows of your home to create an open pathway to let fresh air flow in and flush away any stagnant energy.

**Here is an easy mindfulness technique that will bring you back into the moment**

Take a deep breath and then think about:  
5 things you can see  
4 things you can touch  
3 things you can hear  
2 things you can smell  
1 thing you can taste

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