

# COVID-19 Wellness Pack

## Coronavirus COVID-19



Coronavirus  
**COVID-19**  
Public Health  
Advice

## Minding your Mental Health during the Coronavirus Outbreak



There are many things you can do to mind your mental health during times like this. It might help to:

- Stay informed but set limits for news and social media
- Keep up your healthy routines and have some structure to your day
- Find alternative ways to stay connected with others
- Talk to your family, including your children, about how you can support each other
- Access online and phone supports

Visit [hse.ie](https://hse.ie) for updated factual  
information and advice or  
call 1850 24 1850

It's in our hands



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# A simple exercise to help stay calm in the face of coronavirus uncertainty

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Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychology and director of Penn's Positive Psychology Center.

Credit: University of Pennsylvania

The situation with coronavirus and COVID-19 is changing daily, and such uncertainty and flux can lead to anxiety and fear.

"The human mind is automatically attracted to the worst possible case, often very inaccurately," says Martin Seligman, who founded the field of Positive Psychology and runs Penn's Positive Psychology Center. "Catastrophizing is an evolutionarily adaptive frame of mind, but it is usually unrealistically negative."

To refocus the mind, Seligman suggests a simple exercise called "Put It in Perspective," which starts by conjuring the worst-case scenario, which our minds tend to do first, then moves to best case scenario, and finishes with the most likely scenario. The idea is to redirect your thoughts from irrational to rational.

## **Step 1: Ask yourself: What is the worst possible situation?**

This will change depending on your age and health. Seligman offers as an example his own scenario as a 77-year-old man who lives in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, which was recently shuttered to prevent the spread of the illness. His gravest thoughts automatically go to the extreme: "I am sure to get infected, since my daughter goes to school here. Once infected, I will get a severe case, and being in my 70s I will die."

## **Step 2: Then force yourself to think about the best outcome**

In this part of the exercise, Seligman might think, "I will not get infected, nor will any of my family. This will blow over, and we'll all be fine."

## **Step 3: Next, consider what's most likely to happen**

As Seligman explains, his most realistic outcome is this: "I will probably eventually get infected, but like most adults my symptoms will be non-existent or mild. Even though I am in the age of risk, I am perfectly fit, so I will likely just be uncomfortably ill for a week or so and then recover."

## **Step 4: Finally, develop a plan for the most realistic scenario**

This is different than wasting energy on something that's unlikely to occur. Rather, it's coming up with a contingency for what could be a challenging situation. Your plan will depend on your individual circumstances. For instance, do you need to secure child care if you're sick? If you have to stay home, do you have enough food and medicine? What does it mean for your job? If you fall into the higher risk group, will there be someone to care for you should you need it?

Seligman has tested this exercise in many circumstances and with many different groups. For additional exercises, look to his books, "The Hope Circuit: A Psychologist's Journey from Helplessness to Optimism."

# A Different Meaning for Pandemic

**P Present** be present in your day by using your senses

- 1 Touch as you go about your daily activities, feel your clothes and air on your skin..
- 2 Taste as you enjoy your meals, take time to savour the flavours, the textures..
- 3 See actively all around you. Notice the colours, the movements, do you see anything new?
- 4 Smell the scents around you, breathe deep and really take in the scents, do you like them?
- 5 Hear as you communicate with others and listen attentively to background sounds around you.

**A Affirmations** Positive affirmations lead to positive thinking

- I am doing my best
- I choose to be happy and love myself today
- I will not worry about things I cannot control
- I will be kind to myself and others today
- I am grateful for all that I have

**N Nurture** your **Needs** What do you need right now?

- Basic needs, food, shelter, sleep, my health, my family's health, feeling safe, friendships, connections, feeling confident, positive, and focused, acceptance of what is needed right now from me.
- HALT – Am I Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired?
- STOP – Stop what I am doing, Take time out, Observe how I am feeling, Plan to Proceed as is best for me

**D Discover** not every day is a good day, yet, there is good to be found in every day.

Discover 3 good things you are grateful for e.g., positive connections with friends and family, positive outlook – this too will pass- getting out for a walk in the beautiful weather, cooking healthy food...

**E Engage** with what you **enjoy**, now could be the time to do the thing you enjoyed doing in the past, puzzles, writing, reading, watching movies, board games, cards, etc

**M Me Time** finding time in each day just for you is really important, it will energise you and make you feel healthier and happier putting you in a better position to love and support the people you care about in this very challenging time.

**I Intention** consider how you would like your day to be and create your intention. Positive intentions lead to a positive attitude and keep one grounded in the present moment.

**C Connect** with **Compassion** Social distancing does not mean social isolation, connect with your friends and family, , everyone has their own unique story, yet we are all essentially the same, bring empathy into our everyday life.

You may have seen that the Department of Health and the HSE, in collaboration with key cross-Government and cross-sectoral partners, have developed a **mental wellbeing campaign** aimed at offering support and resources to help deal with the stress, anxiety and isolation currently experienced by many people during this time

### The 'Together' campaign #Together

Nothing has ever felt so abnormal in living memory. We want people to know that whatever they're facing right now, and in whatever personal way they're responding to this crisis ... that they are not alone.

Because whilst some of us are feeling a little anxious, some of us might be feeling very worried about money and some of us might just be bored. This campaign is about uniting all of us. Bringing us together in the name of wellbeing to support us all, because 'All of us are Some of us'

The campaign emphasises the importance of collective support and staying connected to others, and while all of us are experiencing different concerns, it highlights:

### KEY MESSAGES:

We wish to encourage anyone who is struggling, to reach out and avail of a range of online and phone supports, provided by the HSE and our partners, that can be found on [YourMentalHealth.ie](http://YourMentalHealth.ie).

For people who need help managing at home the following are the top ten pieces of advice

1. **Stay connected** - keeping in touch with people, and talking about how you feel, can really help
2. **Create a routine** - if you're at home, getting up, staying active and eating at regular times helps you feel more in control
3. **Stay Active** - whether you're indoors or can still go out for exercise, move around as much as you can
4. **Have a healthy diet** - this advice never changes - but eating well really does help your mood
5. **Reduce stress** - you're not working from home - you're at home, in a crisis, trying to work or homeschool children. There's lots of great ways to reduce stress.
6. **Stop scrolling** - switch off - it's good to keep informed but try to limit how much news you're following and take a break every day
7. **Get creative** - try some activities like painting, singing, dance. No one is watching.
8. **Help others** - see if your neighbours need any help with shopping or medicines
9. **For those cocooning** - look for supports from the Community Call lines in each area

### Free online Stress Control classes

HSE Health and Wellbeing are offering a **free Stress Control programme online** via [Stresscontrol.org](http://Stresscontrol.org) from the 13th April. Stress Control is an evidence-based programme that teaches you practical skills to deal with stress.

The programme helps participants recognise the signs of stress. It covers topics including how stress affects our bodies and our thoughts. It teaches skills to overcome panicky feelings and tips to getting a good night's sleep. Dr Jim White will live-stream the classes, free-of-charge, starting on Monday 13th April. You can watch the sessions either in the afternoon or evening.

### How to Participate

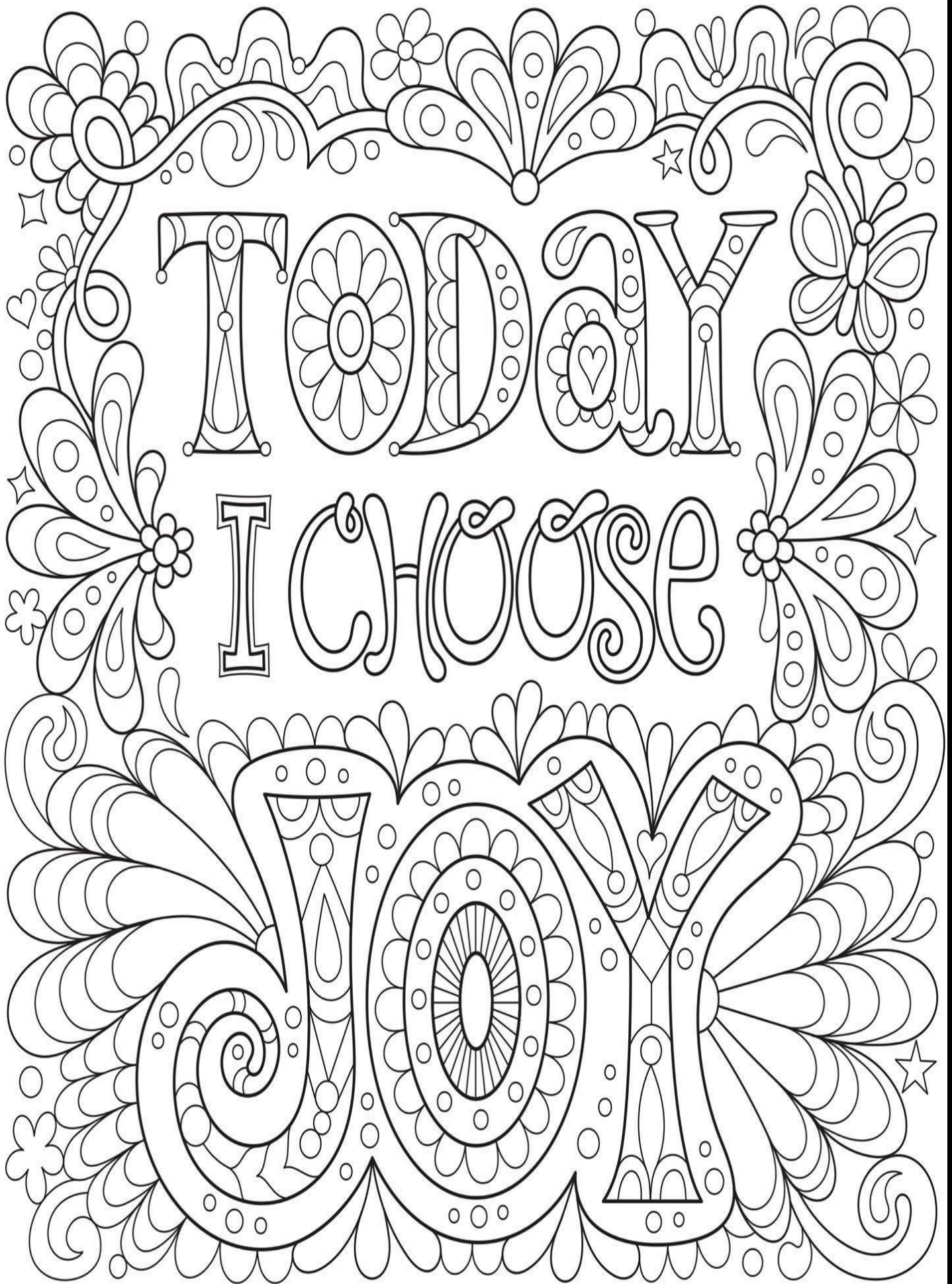
Click [Stresscontrol.org](http://Stresscontrol.org) and follow instructions about how to 'Subscribe' to Stress Control's YouTube page. You will then receive notifications when a new session is available. You can also follow this link:

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL\\_BKErJ\\_jlSQHKFtHPCRmEctDtcNCCowB](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL_BKErJ_jlSQHKFtHPCRmEctDtcNCCowB)





Have  
courage  
and be  
kind!



# Covid 19 Survival Wordsearch

P	N	N	W	C	O	M	P	A	S	S	I	O	N
C	R	L	A	U	G	H	T	E	R	E	E	N	O
C	Y	C	F	R	E	S	I	L	I	E	N	C	E
R	O	C	O	A	C	T	H	T	T	I	P	Y	T
E	J	O	S	P	I	O	I	O	E	W	S	A	S
A	V	D	A	E	I	T	N	E	P	S	L	D	M
T	P	I	V	D	M	N	H	N	E	E	N	O	I
I	S	L	O	J	I	U	G	N	E	O	A	T	L
V	U	O	U	O	A	R	D	U	E	C	T	C	E
I	P	V	R	S	H	N	E	P	A	R	T	G	E
T	P	E	I	P	I	C	K	H	U	M	O	U	R
Y	O	N	N	K	I	O	N	I	G	H	Y	O	H
S	R	L	G	V	S	H	T	W	O	R	G	O	G
I	T	R	G	O	O	D	H	E	A	L	T	H	C

CREATIVITY

KINDNESS

CONNECT

JOY

GROWTH

FAITH

COPING

COMPASSION

SAVOURING

SUPPORT

RESILIENCE

GOOD HEALTH

PEACE

TODAY

LAUGHTER

HOPE

SMILE

LOVE

HUMOUR

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/1036484/>

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