
DIAL DOWN COVID-19 ANXIETY AND DIAL UP POSITIVITY.

Ways to maintain (and even improve) your mental, emotional & spiritual health during COVID-19



VOLUNTEER

Volunteering has physical and mental health benefits. It can support you to feel happier and less anxious. There are many ways to support your community even if you are limiting your contact with others and not doing your normal volunteer work.

Some organisations are now recruiting volunteers to do a range of online tasks that keeps you connected with your community and feeling helpful.



DONATE

If you can, don't stop donating and supporting your local charity or community organisation. But there are other things to donate if you have to stop giving financially. Perhaps you can share the organisation's social media posts or just write letters of encouragement to their staff and volunteers? Find other creative ways you can continue supporting the organisations that you love and care about.



PLAY

Have some fun! Put on some music and dance, sing, do some baking, learn to sew, colour a picture, organise your book shelf, have a lego challenge, build a cubby house, do that jigsaw puzzle sitting in your cupboard. You don't need children in the house to have fun and be creative. Research shows simply doing something creative can improve your brain function, mental and physical health.



READ

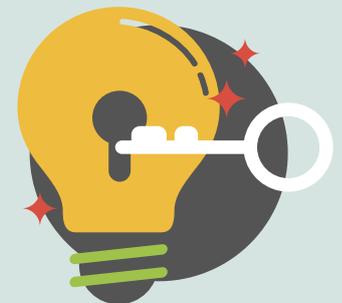
To become more emotionally and spiritually healthy, the research suggests reading books and listening to good stories that inspire you and teach you about how other people have overcome challenges.

Religious books, biographies, poems, fiction and nonfiction all have their role in helping you feel calm and focused on the positive. Writing your own story through poetry or journaling can also be therapeutic and helps you appreciate and understand yourself better.



SMILE

Having a person or a few people you can call, text or meet online regularly with is incredibly supportive and can help you to feel more optimistic. To support your friends, ask them to talk about what they are grateful for, one thing that they are proud of, how they are tackling negative self talk and what they are looking forward to in the next few days and weeks. There is always something to be grateful for, and something to be hopeful for! These conversations will help you, and others stay more optimistic. Also, share a joke or discuss something that you find funny. Research shows laughter increases positive emotions and might even improve your immune system.



LEARN

People who are able to keep their minds active, are open to new ideas and willing to experiment are more likely to find creative solutions to challenges. These skills are really important at the moment, as we find ways to organise and manage our lives differently, perform our work and communicate more online. Think of something you've always wanted to learn (e.g. your family tree or a new language) or learn about and take some time to do some reading, online learning or study. There are plenty of free and low cost online courses and many study options are also online.

• These evidence based strategies can make you feel good physically, mentally and spiritually because happiness comes when you feel you are living a good life that has meaning. •

USEFUL LINKS

The **Australian Citizen Science Association** (ACSA) was formed to advance citizen science through the sharing of knowledge, collaboration, capacity building and advocacy. Check out what you can get involved in at citizenscience.org.au

Vollie is an online marketplace that connects skilled people to non-profits and charities for skills-based online volunteering. Vollie projects are exclusively online, meaning that people can donate their skills and experience from anywhere in the world, and around their busy personal and professional schedule.
vollie.com.au

GoVolunteer is an initiative of Volunteering Australia. Our aim is to match people who are interested in volunteering with appropriate volunteering opportunities. The website uses a national database of volunteering opportunities. These are listed by volunteering involving organisations, Volunteer Resource Centres and State Volunteer Centres.
govolunteer.com.au

Mindfulness is proven to lead to better attention, memory, regulation of emotions and self awareness so **Smiling Mind** offers mental health tools and a free app developed by psychologists and educators to help bring balance to your life.
smilingmind.com.au

Missing Maps is an initiative that asks volunteers to map some of the most vulnerable areas on Earth, so that crisis teams can respond whenever there's a natural or humanitarian disaster in a more efficient way. Helping this organisation and its partners (which includes the Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières) is as simple as looking at satellite images on your computer and then adding buildings and roads to maps. There's information on the organisation's website on how to edit maps and you'll have support throughout the process.
missingmaps.org

Lifeline is a national charity providing all Australians experiencing a personal crisis with access to 24 hour crisis support and suicide prevention services through their hotline. **13 11 14**

RESEARCH

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