

STRESS IN TIMES OF CORONA: A NORMAL REACTION TO ABNORMAL CONDITIONS

In the past few days, have you **suffered** from:



Physically
headache, backache, muscle pain
decreased appetite
palpitations
clammy, sweaty hands
fatigue, trouble sleeping

Feelings
irritability
feeling restless, nervousness
sad mood, fear
feeling lifeless, listlessness
powerlessness



Thoughts
forgetfulness
memory problems
concentration problems
negative thoughts

Behavior
perform less, make mistakes
cry faster, burst into anger faster
eating excessively / less
smoking more, using alcohol or drugs



These are **stress symptoms!**



These symptoms are a **normal reaction** to abnormal conditions! It's normal to feel that way now, it's okay too. In *normal* circumstances we have a sense of **control** and **predictability**. When this sense of control **disappears** (like now for instance), feelings of tension and stress can arise and quickly take over.

Okay, but what can I **do** about this?



Exercise and be creative!
But above all, do what feels good for you! Your runs don't need to hit marathon standards all of a sudden.



Provide structure in your day!
*Make a daily **schedule**: get up at a fixed time, go to sleep on time and provide a healthy meal at fixed times (breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks).*



Follow reliable news and dose!
*You don't need to be up to date all the time. Choose **one moment a day** to check the news from a **reliable** source.*
www.info-coronavirus.be



Be gentle with yourself and others!
Take care of yourself and each other!

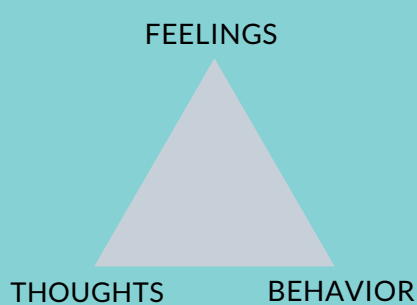


Stay connected with friends and family!
*Talk about your feelings, share your **#happymoment**, play an online game with friends, organize a "skyperitivo" (* see the App "Zoom")*



Relax and enjoy your #happymoment!
*Do a relaxation exercise *, read a book, cuddle with your pet, enjoy the little things, ... (* see the "Breathing Square")*

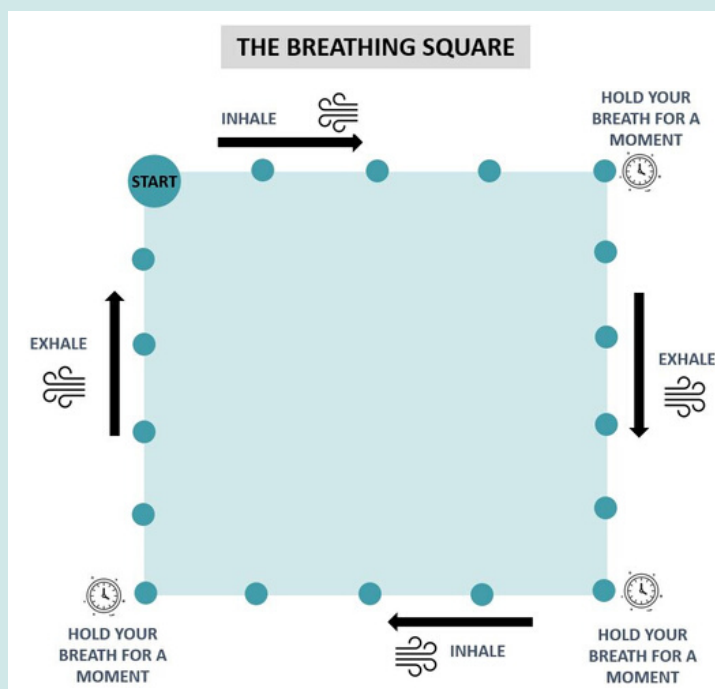
Is it still **difficult** to keep your stress under **control**?



Stress is often triggered by a particular situation. The way you **behave** in a particular situation, but also the way you **perceive** this situation (and the **thoughts** that automatically arise from this situation) will influence how you feel.

So when you're experiencing stress you can do two things:
Think differently! By consulting correct information and replacing *unhelpful* thoughts about the situation with *helpful* thoughts.
Or do things differently! By moving, talking or relaxing.

Let's **practice** on doing things differently!



Relax by using the "Breathing Square"
Among other things, you can relax by gently breathing in and out through your belly. The "Breathing Square" can assist you with that. It is very easy. You use it like this:

*Start at the top left dot and inhale. It can be helpful to follow the dots on the square. Hold your breath for a moment at the corner ... And exhale at the same pace of your inhaling. Again you can follow the dots on the square. Keep repeating this until your breathing deepens and you feel more relaxed *.*

** It is important to follow your own pace and do what feels right for you. Make sure that the duration of the exhalation is always equal to or slightly longer than the inhalation!*

Do you feel you would benefit from talking to a professional caregiver because it's getting too much for you?

Contact tele-onthaal

www.tele-onthaal.be
106

As a student, schedule an online session

<https://www.contentingent.be/waar-kan-ik-terecht>

Chat with a caregiver of JAC

<https://www.caw.be/jac/>

More useful links

