



Wellbeing

COVID-19

It's like finding the bottom of the swimming pool

When we are learning to swim, one of the scariest feelings we have is not knowing if we are going to be able to touch the bottom of the pool. We do a heap of thrashing about with adrenalin pumping through our bodies as we try and get our toes onto the floor. Something inside of us knows that if we can *just* get our feet firmly onto the ground then it will all be okay.

Now, many of us have been experiencing that same kind of anxiety or emotion over recent days during the coronavirus outbreak and, as a result, we may be feeling disorientated and like our heads are spinning.

Thankfully, there are some things we can do to find our bearings and gain a sense of steadiness and peace, and bring the rush of adrenalin and perhaps overwhelming sense of anxiety under control. Primarily, we need to do things that bring us more fully into the present and firmly into this moment.

Here are three very simple actions that you may like to try:

Action One

When we place our feet on the ground it has a centring effect on us. Very rarely do we notice the actual feeling of what is solid beneath our feet. But if we stand or sit with our feet slightly apart and stop just for a moment with our eyes closed, and notice the sensation of our weight passing down our body, down our legs and seemingly entering the ground, it really does calm us and bring us back to the present.

Action Two

It may feel like this whole breathing thing is being talked about a lot at the moment but it's because it works! To help us with this, if we look at one of our hands, palm turned up, and run our index finger from our other hand up and down either side of all the fingers and thumb, breathing in and out as we go, to a nice steady pace, this gives us a good rhythm for our breathing that adds depth, and supports us in feeling grounded, rooted and present.

Action Three

Writing a list of how we feel is cathartic and helps to clarify our thinking. Jotting down some positive statements such as 'I am here', 'I am able', 'I have people who I can reach out to', 'I have got through hard things before' can make a huge difference; these kind of phrases, when we write them and read them back to ourselves, can breed confidence and belief in us so that we can do the next thing we need to do. Just take things one step at a time right now, prioritising what you need to.

These are just three simple practices, each of which help us to find 'the bottom of the pool', help stop our head from feeling like it is spinning, and help each of us to be fully present to ourselves in this moment.