

# Darcel Dillard-Suite

## MANAGING ANXIETY AS WE INTEGRATE INTO OUR OUTSIDE WORLD

Most of us are totally freaked out by what COVID-19 has done to our world. If you never had any relationship with anxiety, you do now. It's normal to feel the fear and trepidation of going back outside—we are all honestly a little scared of bumping into the invisible enemy.

So let's get ready, and work on that anxiety we are all feeling and suit up for safety: **WE HAVE TO CONTROL WHAT WE CAN CONTROL--*Don't leave home without making these new habits a part of your arsenal against the invisible enemy:***

**WEAR YOUR MASK** - Even keep an extra with you, this has become almost mandatory now everywhere. It will help us feel safer.

**EYE WEAR PROTECTION** - Sunglasses, goggles, face shields? It will help protect our eyes from possible virus exposure as well.

**GLOVE UP** - Literally keep plenty of gloves on hand to use often. Not touching things and each other with our bare hands is now here to stay! Gone (for now) are friendly handshakes and hugs.

**WASH YOUR HANDS** - Wash your hands, did we say WASH YOUR HANDS? Constantly staying in control of our own cleanliness. The hands have it.

**SAFE DISTANCING - NOT TOO CLOSE** - 6 feet, 8 feet, give us even 10 feet! – don't underestimate what can travel from one person to another innocently.

**MOVE YOUR BODY. EXERCISE** - Walk, jog, yoga up! In a safe space – relieves stress anxiety and helps the body and mind feel better.

**PAY ATTENTION TO SLEEP** - Both quality and quantity are important. Get no less than 7 hours. Key to high functioning and relieving anxiety. Dark cool room.

**EASE UP ON CAFFEINE AND ALCOHOL** - Caffeine is an “upper” and alcohol is a “downer”, they can make anxiety kick into overdrive.

**SCHEDULE YOUR WORRY TIME** - It may sound backwards to plan to worry, but doctors actually recommend that you pick a time to think about your fears on purpose. Take 30 minutes to identify what's bothering you-- a "worry session" - focus on what's making you anxious then let it go.

**BREATHE DEEP.** – It sends a message to your brain that you're OK. That helps your mind and body relax. Do it lying down if you can and really take a time out.

**BE THE BOSS OF YOUR THOUGHTS** - Try to turn any negative thoughts into positive ones. The VIRUS is out there, but picture yourself facing your fears head-on. The more you do this in your mind, the easier it will be to deal with the negative anxiety filled thoughts of fear.

**TAME TENSE MUSCLES** - Relax them with this simple exercise: Choose a muscle group, tighten it for a few seconds, and then let go. Focus on one section at a time and work through your whole body.

**LOOK FOR TRIGGERS** - Think of times and places where you notice yourself feeling most anxious. Write them down, if you need to. Look for patterns and work on ways you can either avoid or confront the feelings of panic, fear and worry. Too much news on the Virus is the first place to look! If you know the causes of your anxiety, it can help you put your worries into perspective. Try and eliminate some of the sources.

**BABY STEPS** - One day at a time, take short walks, drives, practice safe physical distancing, go into stores only if you have to and don't linger or stay too long. Choose less crowded times. Try and stay in open air as much as you can. One day at a time, build up to going out more gradually.

**TALK TO A LOVED ONE** - Reach out and stay connected to friends and family and share the feelings of anxiety and fear with them. You are not alone and its healthy to process it and get the support from your love circle.

**FINAL POINT: PROFESSIONAL HELP** - Lastly call for professional help if you are feeling stuck and you need to process, talk and have someone guide you through your anxiety, a therapist or physician may need to explore medication or even nutritional changes. Or call Full Circle! tele-therapy!

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[www.fullcirclehealth.org](http://www.fullcirclehealth.org)

*We got This!*

# Video Links:

## Our Smile

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gtzoe8\\_CW-k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gtzoe8_CW-k)

## Life in Moderation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N5PnJSH885A>



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