



## Let's Connect

Many of us will be turning our minds **to the upcoming weeks** and how we can stay connected, active and healthy. This newsletter is produced by Marrar Woorn Neighbourhood House with Otway Health and delivered by volunteers. Many people don't have internet so this is a chance to try to connect without face to face contact and to combat feelings of isolation or loneliness.



Great Ocean Road Health is always open and continues to provide home and aged care support as well as Urgent Care 24/7.

If you would like to speak to anyone from the Social Services Team please call the Otway Health campus on (03) 5237 8500 or email [Reception.OH@gorh.vic.gov.au](mailto:Reception.OH@gorh.vic.gov.au)

## Important contacts

For concerns regarding your **employment or tenancy** for example call Barwon Community Legal Service. They can provide free legal advice over the phone. Call 1300 430 599 or email [bcls@barwoncls.org.au](mailto:bcls@barwoncls.org.au)

For concerns about your **financial situation** please call Rhonda Mahoney at Colac Area Health for free financial advice. To make a phone appointment call on 0429 329 555 or 5232 5183 or email [rmahoney@cah.vic.gov.au](mailto:rmahoney@cah.vic.gov.au)

**NEWSLETTER** - Please email Anna on [anna.creasey@gorh.vic.gov.au](mailto:anna.creasey@gorh.vic.gov.au) or phone 0417 741 249 if you have any ideas for further newsletters, we'd love your input.

## What can we do to stay positive?

Our local Psychologist Dr. Tanya Harkness suggests reading '**Tips for coping with coronavirus anxiety**' (included in this mail out). The tips are easy to fit into our every day and are also helpful for those with children. Tanya is available for phone appointments for anyone who needs help managing their anxiety though this time, or with any other concern. For an appointment please contact Tanya on 0419 002 661 or [tkharkness@bigpond.com](mailto:tkharkness@bigpond.com)

To the right is a **Red Cross** Conversation card.



You can cut this out, complete it with your details & place it in the letter box of someone you think could use some help, or just a chat!



## HELLO! MY NAME IS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I live :

- Next door
- Over the road at \_\_\_\_\_
- Up the street at \_\_\_\_\_

Did you know it's most likely to be your neighbour or a passer-by, not emergency services, who will help you survive during an emergency? Neighbours can also provide practical and emotional support after an emergency, as well as important information about recovery services.

**My/our details are:**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**We are also good for:**

- Putting out the bins
- Collecting mail
- Watering the garden
- Feeding pets
- Cup of sugar

This newsletter was prepared and delivered using hand hygiene methods.

## Exercise Snacking with Louise

Many of you many know Louise Fairney from the different exercise classes she teaches in Apollo Bay, including Pilates, Strength for Life, Healthy Balance and Yoga.

Exercise snacking is a method of structuring exercise into short bouts that are performed twice a day. You might start at 10 repetitions of an exercise and then build up to 5 minutes of that exercise with 1 minute of rest between each exercise. The exercises themselves are safe for home and don't require a warm up before starting. They don't require any sports clothing or equipment, just a kitchen chair.

**How is each exercise performed?** During each exercise bout, you may spend 1 minute performing each exercise, resting if your legs become unduly sore during the exercises, you may stop and rest. Take 1 minute between each exercise to rest. Or simply repeat up to 10 repetitions at your comfortable pace.

**When practicing** the exercises should not be too demanding. Please work at your own pace, have a stable chair or kitchen bench to work with and hold on to support yourself if required for balance.

**I will send out a new exercise next time to add to your routine.**

Yours in health,  
Louise. 😊

### Exercise 1 : Sit to Stand

#### Execution:

- Scoot forward in the chair
- Bend knees so knees are over toes
- Lean forward with a straight back (bend at the hip)
- Rise to standing
- If needed use a chair with arm rests until your legs become strong enough to practice without



*Scoot forward in the seat*



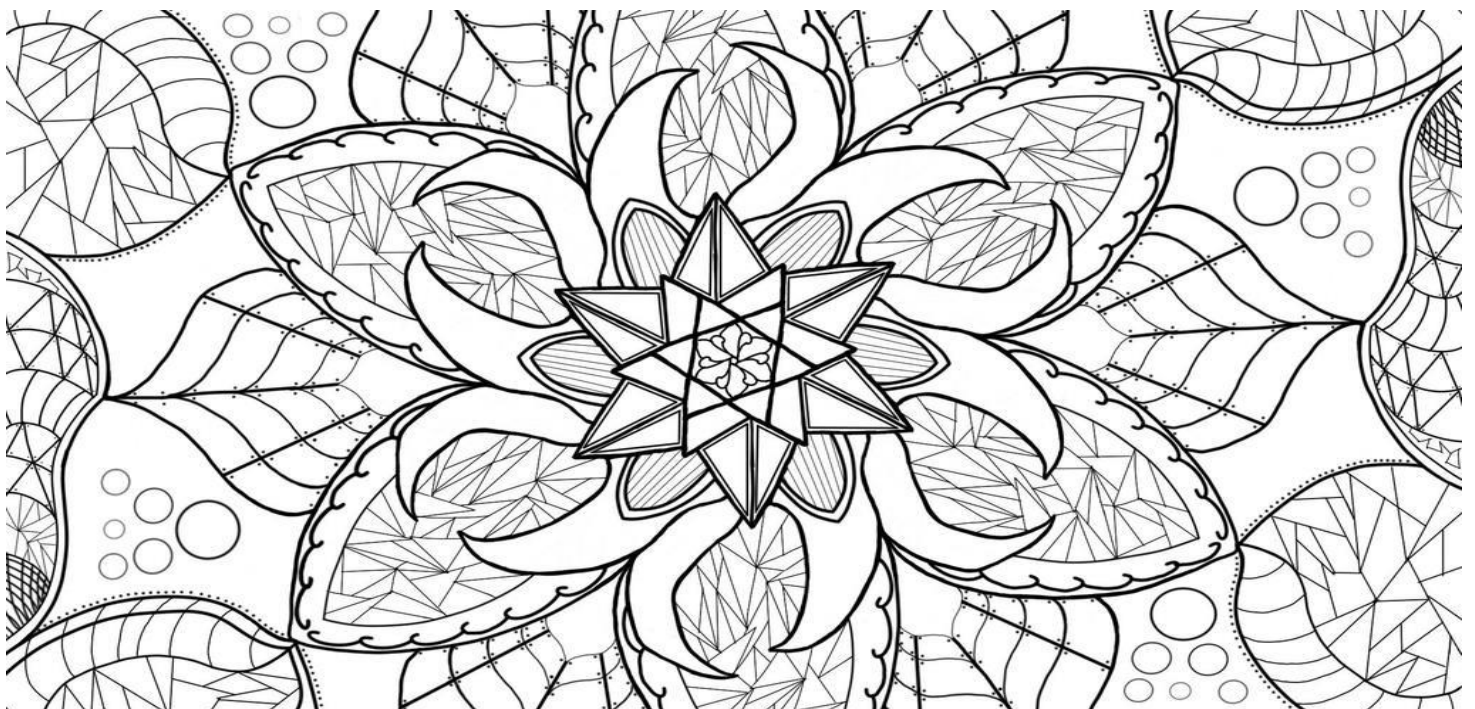
*Lean forward- straight back*



*Straighten the hips*



*Stand*



**Mindfulness colouring** is a calming activity that can be used to help lower stress levels and improve overall wellbeing.

**Mindfulness** is the process of keeping your attention and thoughts on the present moment and can help to improve mood, concentration, focus and well-being.

**Are you 70 years and over? Stay safe at home and have your groceries delivered. More information on the next page.**

## ***Tips for coping with coronavirus anxiety***

Information from the Australian Psychological Society from [www.psychology.org.au](http://www.psychology.org.au) 25/03/20

As the number of coronavirus cases rise across Australia, the level of anxiety within the community is increasing. Feelings of worry and unease can be expected following a stressful event, such as the recent declaration of a global pandemic, however, it is important that we learn to manage our stress before it turns to more severe anxiety and panic. This information outlines some useful strategies which can help both adults and children cope with the stress or anxiety experienced as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.

### **Learn the facts**

Constant media coverage about the coronavirus can keep us in a heightened state of anxiety. Try to limit related media exposure and instead seek out factual information from reliable sources such as the Australian Government's health alert or other trusted organisations such as the World Health Organization.

### **Keep things in perspective**

When we are stressed, it is easy to see things as worse than they really are. Rather than imagining the worst-case scenario and worrying about it, ask yourself:

- *Am I overestimating how bad the consequences will be?* Remember, illness due to coronavirus infection is usually mild and most people recover without needing specialised treatment.
- *Am I underestimating my ability to cope?* Sometimes thinking about how you would cope, even if the worst were to happen, can help you put things into perspective.

### **Take reasonable precautions**

Being proactive by following basic hygiene principles can keep your anxiety at bay. The World Health Organization recommends a number of protective measures against the coronavirus, including to:

- wash your hands frequently
- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- stay at home if you begin to feel unwell until you fully recover
- seek medical care early if you have a fever, cough or experience breathing difficulties.

### **Practise self-care**

To help encourage a positive frame of mind, it is important to look after yourself. Everybody practises self-care differently with some examples including:

- maintaining good social connections and communicating openly with family and friends
- making time for activities and hobbies you enjoy
- keeping up a healthy lifestyle by eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, getting quality sleep and avoiding the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs to cope with stress
- practising relaxation, meditation and mindfulness to give your body a chance to settle and readjust to a calm state.

### **Seek additional support when needed**

If you feel that the stress or anxiety you or your child experience as a result of the coronavirus is impacting on everyday life, a psychologist may be able to help. Psychologists are highly trained and qualified professionals, skilled in providing effective interventions for a range of mental health concerns, including stress. A psychologist can help you manage your stress and anxiety using techniques based on the best available research. If you are referred to a psychologist by your GP, you might be eligible for a Medicare rebate. You may also be eligible to receive psychology services via telehealth so that you do not need to travel to see a psychologist. Ask your psychologist or GP for details. There are number of ways to access a psychologist. You can:

- use the Australia-wide Find a Psychologist™ service. Go to [findapsychologist.com.au](http://findapsychologist.com.au) or call 1800 333 497
- ask your GP or another health professional to refer you.



# Tips for talking with children about the coronavirus

Information from the Australian Psychological Society from [www.psychology.org.au](http://www.psychology.org.au) 25/03/20

Children will inevitably pick up on the concerns and anxiety of others, whether this be through listening and observing what is happening at home or at school. It is important that they can speak to you about their own concerns.

## Answer their questions

Do not be afraid to talk about the coronavirus with children. Given the extensive media coverage and the increasing number of people wearing face masks in public, it is not surprising that some children are already aware of the virus. Providing opportunities to answer their questions in an honest and age-appropriate way can help reduce any anxiety they may be experiencing. You can do this by:

- speaking to them about coronavirus in a calm manner
- asking them what they already know about the virus so you can clarify any misunderstandings they may have
- letting them know that it is normal to experience some anxiety when new and stressful situations arise
- giving them a sense of control by explaining what they can do to stay safe (e.g., wash their hands regularly, stay away from people who are coughing or sneezing)
- not overwhelming them with unnecessary information (e.g., death rates) as this can increase their anxiety
- reassure them that coronavirus is less common and severe in children compared to adults
- allowing regular contact (e.g., by phone) with people they may worry about, such as grandparents, to reassure them that they are okay.

## Talk about how they are feeling

Explain to your child that it is normal to feel worried about getting sick. Listen to your child's concerns and reassure them that you are there to help them with whatever may arise in the future. It is important to model calmness when discussing the coronavirus with children and not alarm them with any concerns you may have about it. Children will look to you for cues on how to manage their own worries so it is important to stay calm and manage your own anxieties before bringing up the subject with them and answering their questions.

## Limit media exposure

It is important to monitor children's exposure to media reports about the coronavirus as frequent exposure can increase their level of fear and anxiety. Try to be with your child when they are watching, listening or reading the news so you are able to address any questions or concerns they may have.



## Grocery Delivery Service

### Registrations now open

**Are you 70 years and over? Are you a permanent resident living in Apollo Bay, Skenes Creek or Marengo?**

**Would you like your groceries or bread delivered so you can stay home and safe?**

Great Ocean Road Health can arrange for your weekly shop to be delivered to your doorstep so that you can stay safe in your home. Delivery will be at no extra cost to you and of course, groceries are subject to availability.

To take us up on the offer, call to register with Great Ocean Road Health on **5237 8500** and ask for our grocery delivery service, or email [Reception.OH@gorh.vic.gov.au](mailto:Reception.OH@gorh.vic.gov.au)



## Phone support is available

In Apollo Bay, we have a social worker employed by Great Ocean Road Health and she is available for free phone consultation on Wednesdays and Thursdays. It is an emotional time for everyone and if you need to talk with someone local, please contact her through Great Ocean Road Health reception on **5237 8500**.

Alternatively, you can call Beyond Blue on **1300 22 4636** as they are available 7 days a week.