

How to reduce stress and maintain a healthy life during COVID-19

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Stephanie Szeto, PhD, CPsychol

Research Associate, School of Nursing (SN), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU)

Today's topics

- Prevalence of stress, anxiety, and depression
- Signs of stress, anxiety, and depression
- Recharge and live a healthy life
- Breathing exercise



I'M WORRIED.

It is normal to feel fearful and anxious during this time.

Talking about your feelings will lessen your distress.

#MentalHealth #COVID19 #coronavirus

World Health Organization
Western Pacific Region

Stressors leading to anxiety and depression

- A scientific brief released by the World Health Organization (WHO) on worldwide prevalence...
 - 27.6% increase in cases of depression
 - 25.6% increase in cases of anxiety
 - Loneliness, fear of infection, and financial worries are some of the stressors that lead to anxiety and depression

Stress, anxiety, and depression in Hong Kong

- Showed mild to extremely severe symptoms
 - Stress: 61.6%
 - Anxiety: 38%
 - Depression: 45.4%
- Older adults:
 - 43.2% expressed anxiety about future
 - High digital health literacy associated with low anxiety

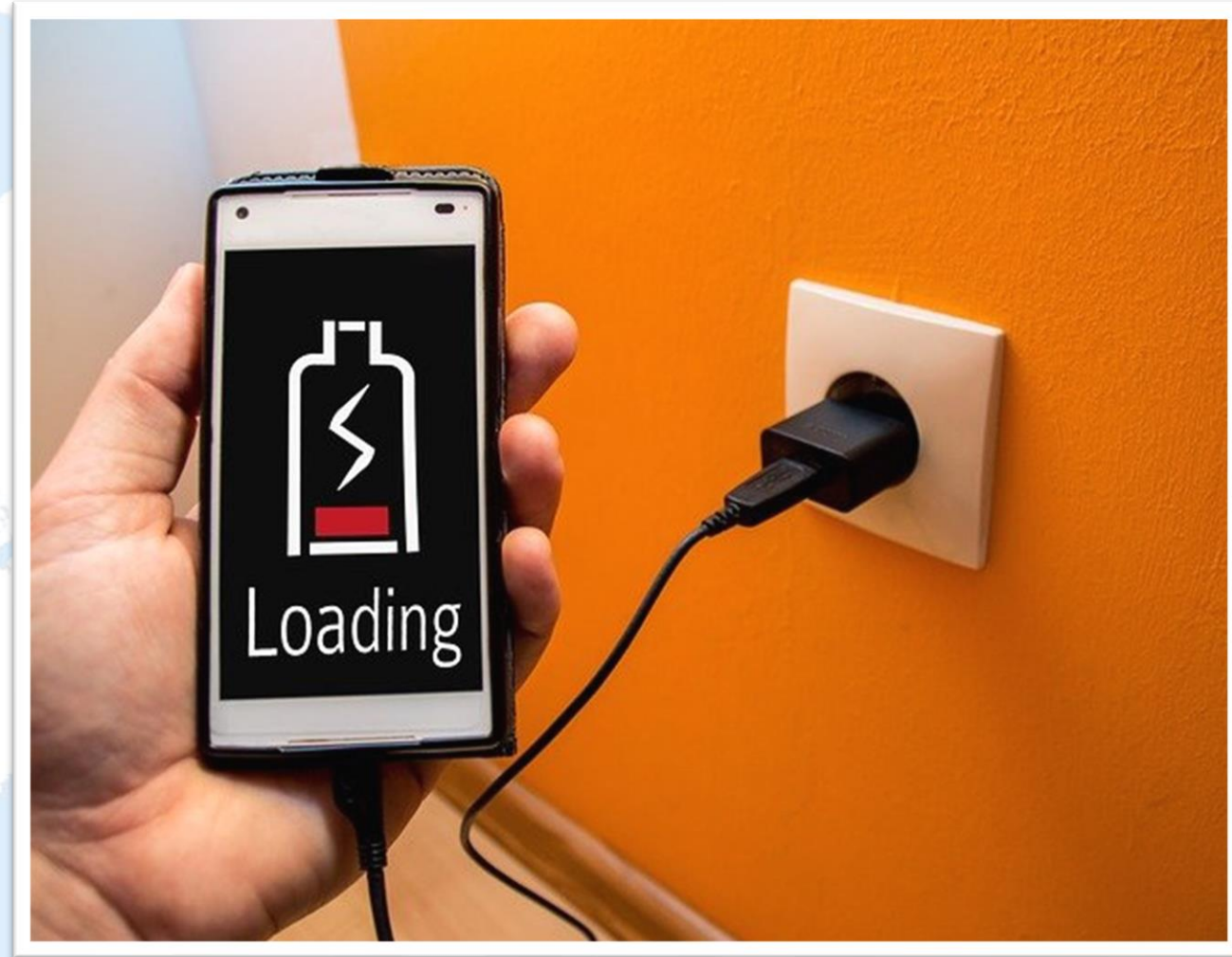
- Chan, A. C., Piehler, T. F., & Ho, G. W. (2021). Resilience and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic: findings from Minnesota and Hong Kong. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 295, 771-780. | Sample: 597 people of Hong Kong, aged from 18-85
- Leung, A. Y. M., Parial, L. L., Tolabing, M. C., Sim, T., Mo, P. K-H., Okan, O, Dadaczynski, K. (2022). Sense of coherence mediates the relationship between digital health literacy and anxiety about the future in aging population during the COVID-19 pandemic: A path analysis. *Aging and Mental Health*, 26(3), 544-553. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13607863.2020.1870206> | Sample: 266 older adults

Do you have these signs?

- Stress: feeling threatened or under pressure, feeling physical, mental and emotional exhausted
 - Information overload, new arrangement at work/at school
- Anxiety: excessive worry, anticipation of impending danger, having physiological symptoms, e.g. fast heart beat/breathing, muscle tension
 - Uncertainty anxiety: will 6th or 7th wave come?
- Depressive symptoms: helpless, loss of energy, change in appetite, poor sleep/excessive sleeping, unable to experience happiness, no longer enjoy things that used to like
 - During lockdown/quarantine: lonely, lack of social connection

Low battery

- Negative emotions use up your energy
- Burnout
- need to **RECHARGE**

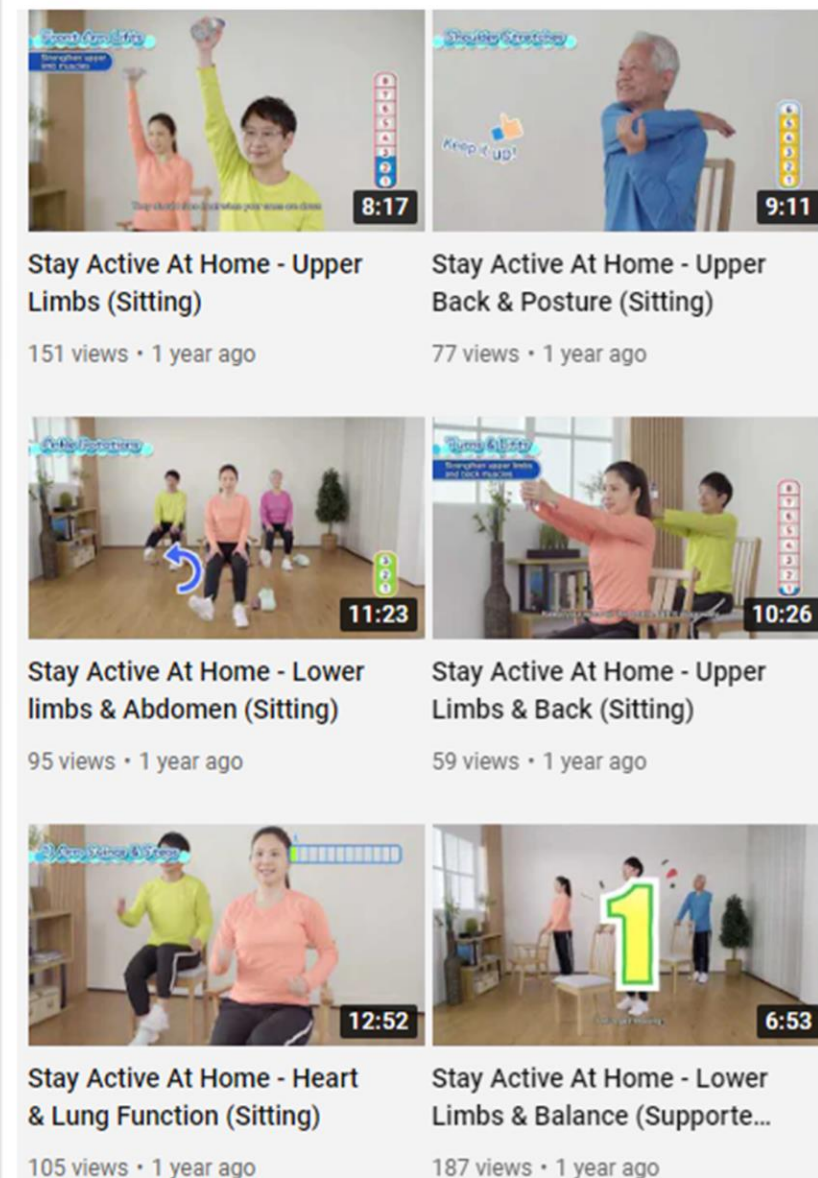


Recharge and live a healthy life

	Outdoor	Indoor 
Keep physically fit	Sports 	Indoor / at-home exercises 
Regulation of mood and stress	Enjoy the nature 	Mindfulness 

Indoor / at-home exercises

- Home-based YouTube video exercise training strengthened muscle and improve sleep quality
- Centre for Health Protection (CHP), the Department of Health
- Official  YouTube channel
 - <https://www.youtube.com/c/ChpGovHkChannel>
- Work up to your level

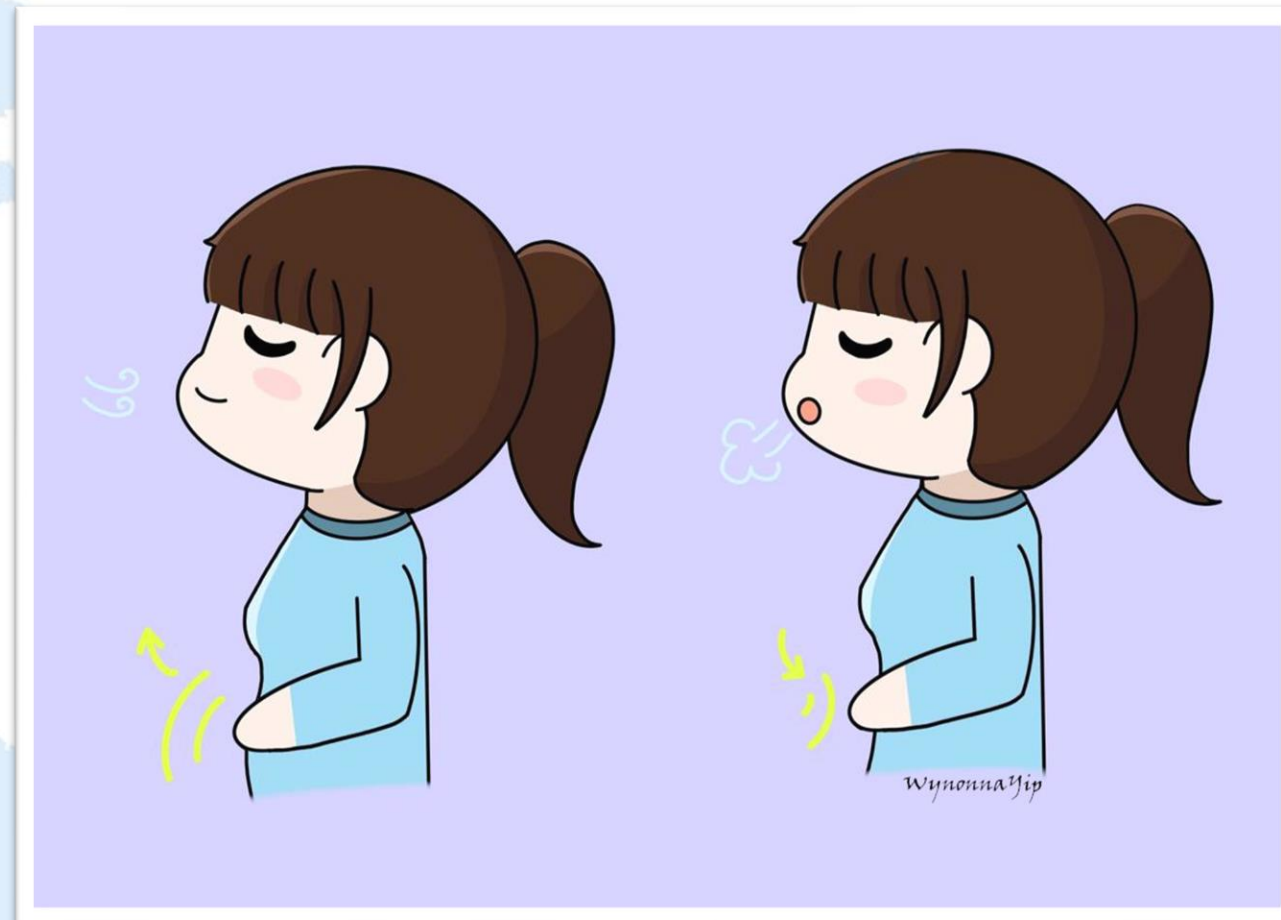


In a flow

- Very focus: transform your mental state to “in a flow” state
 - Tai chi
 - Prayer
 - Mindfulness: Non judgemental, acceptance of one’s moment-to-moment experience
 - Benefits: calm down, more optimism, more positive emotions

Breathing

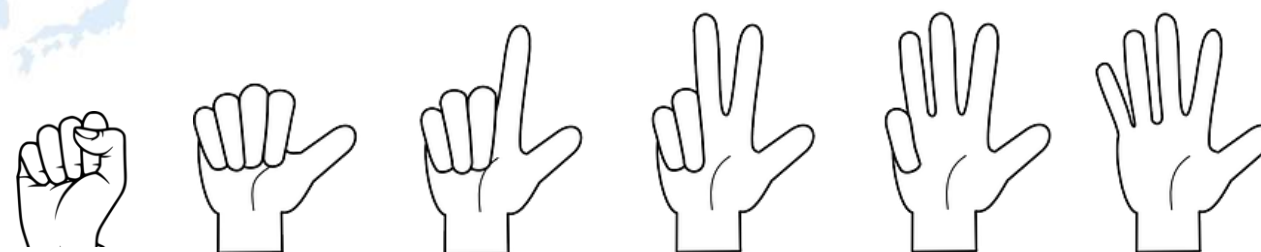
- Deep breathing
 - Belly: a balloon
 - Breathe in: balloon expands
 - Breathe out: balloon becomes flat
- Do it whenever and wherever



Breathing exercise

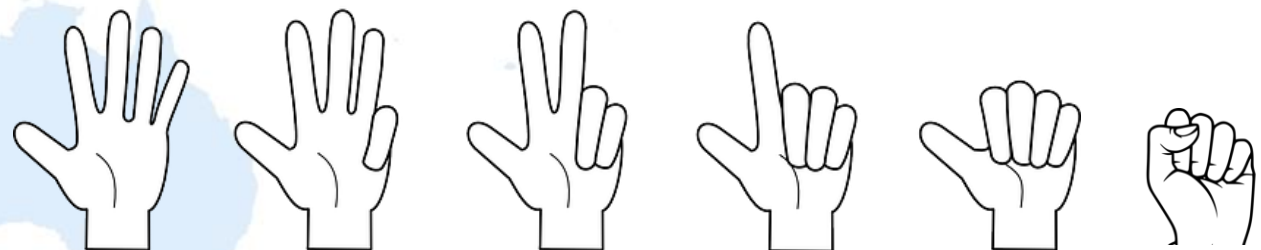
- **Breathe in:**

- Relax your forehead
- Count to 5



- **Breathe out:**

- Relax your shoulder
- Count to 5



Thank you for your attention

It's a wonderful thing to be optimistic. It keeps you healthy and it keeps you resilient.

~ *Daniel Kahneman*

Psychologist, Nobel Memorial Prize laureate in Economics