Supporting individuals, teams and organisations

Tool: Three top tips for containing Covid-19 anxiety

"*We are dealing with two contagions – the virus itself and the emotions it generates*" (Schwartz, 2020).

https://hbr.org/2020/03/coping-with-fatigue-fear-and-panic-during-a-crisis?referral=03758&cm_vc=rr_item_page.top_right

Brewer (2020) suggests three key strategies for containing the "emotional infection" of anxiety which "coupled with some simple mindfulness practices, can help us all stay mentally connected and spread calm".

https://hbr.org/2020/03/anxiety-is-contagious-heres-how-to-contain-it?referral=03759&cm_vc=rr_item_page.bottom

1. Run a code	Use **CPR** as an acronym, for example: > **C**alm your thoughts. Build skills to help 'get in touch with your calm', noticing rather than absorbing the emotional contagion of anxiety. > **P**ause for breath. Breath in for 4 counts, hold for 4, and breath out for 6 counts. Do this three or four times and then focus on the task in hand. > **R**elax your muscles. Shake your shoulders, your arms and then your hands. Wriggle your toes. Regularly check you are not clenching your teeth or your fists, nor hunching your shoulders.
2. Get in touch with your calm	Take a moment to pause and notice what it feels like when you are calm among anxious people. The more you practice it, the more it will become your norm rather than your exception. You can also look around to see if your calm catches. It might not be as contagious as fear, but done over and over, it can go a surprisingly long way.
3. Take it one day at a time	Our brains are hardwired to plan for the future. We don't have enough information right now about how this pandemic is going to play out to plan for a month, 6 months or a year down the road. If or when you notice that your brain is starting to spin out into future thinking and worry, take a mindful pause and remind yourself to take it one day at a time for now.

Adapted from Brewer, 2020