



# Q2 PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

01/04/20 – 30/06/20

# Coronavirus: Are you feeling 'post-lockdown anxiety'?

NATIONAL | HEALTH | CORONAVIRUS | ⌚ Thursday 28 May 2020, 12:09pm

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Post-lockdown anxiety is really that fear and that worry that we are going to experience or might already be experiencing about what's going to happen once these restrictions are lifted.



If you're anxious about a life after lockdown, you're not alone, many are experiencing what experts are calling 'post-lockdown anxiety'.

**Anxiety UK** has seen a huge rise in people contacting them for support over the last few weeks in relation to worries about the easing of lockdown restrictions - they've seen a 430% rise in calls to their helpline from the year before.

ITV News spoke to Dave Smithson from Anxiety UK to find out how to identify and manage anxiety in uncertain times.

# Coronavirus anxiety: How to cope with life after lockdown

By Amelia Butterly  
BBC 100 Women

## Effects of lockdown

It won't necessarily just be people with an existing mental health condition who will be affected either.

"After you've been inside for a long time, it can feel very strange to go outside," says Nicky Lidbetter, CEO of **Anxiety UK**, a charity that supports people with mental health conditions.

"You perhaps lose your confidence to do things you haven't had to in a while."

She gives examples of face-to-face work meetings or using cramped public transport - situations that might have stressed or worried people even before they were concerned about the risk of infection.

"These things might have been difficult in the first place and having to return to them after having quite a sustained break might actually be very challenging," she says.

- [\*\*Tips on how to manage your mental health in lockdown\*\*](#)
- [\*\*How to cope with lockdown while living alone\*\*](#)

While some people have been safe in the relative comfort of their own home, others have faced difficult and upsetting situations.

From the medical workers on the front lines, to the people trying to stop their businesses from failing, for them last few weeks may have been incredibly busy and stressful.

But one common factor we all share is the amount of change we have all gone through, in a very short space of time.



ANXIETY

## How to cope with panic attacks during lockdown

Help is still available for those suffering.

“There are many ways to manage panic and anxiety attacks as well as anxiety,” say experts from Anxiety UK. “Mindfulness and meditation is a great way to remain calm and present, and not to be controlled by fears and worries. With an Anxiety UK membership you will receive a subscription to Headspace, a guided mindfulness and meditation app.”

“It can be alarming to see someone you care about experience a panic attack. Experts at Anxiety UK stress the importance of staying calm. Help the person get to a quiet area and sit with them, and help them regulate their breathing using standard breathing techniques.”

## Mental health in the time of COVID-19: are we doing enough? COMMENTS

By [Matthew Holroyd](#) & [John Paul Ging](#) • last updated: 12/05/2020



Dave Smithson, Operations Director at [Anxiety UK](#), says the prospect of a second dramatic change to the "new normal" is difficult for many people whose mental health has already suffered:

"We had a survey of our members at the weekend ahead of the Prime Minister's announcement and 67% of them reported an increase in their anxiety levels at the prospect of the easing of the restrictions.

"Of those, the biggest fear was of contracting the virus: 57% cited that as their biggest concern.

"We need to give people time and space to get used to returning to normal after being inside after such a long time.

"It's obviously going to feel really strange and be challenging for people to return to their pre-pandemic routine. This is to be expected, especially for those with pre-existing anxiety disorders."

Smithson concludes that proper support for people disturbed by this next approaching upheaval is essential:

"As we release these restrictions and we let people return to normal, we must make additional support available for that group of people."

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# Lockdown anxiety and the rise of agoraphobia: 'It feels like the world is ending'

The condition has since become commonplace among numerous anxiety disorders that have been exacerbated by Covid-19



By [Jenn Selby](#)

May 22, 2020 7:00 am

Updated May 24, 2020 3:15 pm



"Since [the pandemic] started, its been a bit of a moving feast," Dave Smithson, operations director at Anxiety UK, says.

"Before the lockdown, most callers presented with health anxieties and OCD. During the lockdown, stress levels were increased by the lack of mental health services available to individuals, as face-to-face therapies were axed.

"Now, since restrictions have eased, almost 67 per cent callers we polled said that lifting lockdown would increase their fear of using transport, going to public places, going shopping, going to work and attending public events, as well as contracting the virus.

"There is a lot of fear about people returning to this new reality. For some people, it is the fear not having the same access to support. We are seeing a lot of people at crisis point – at the very end of their tethers – thinking there is nowhere to go."

DAILY DROP-IN: THURSDAY 14 MAY

# How to cope with anxiety as lockdowns ease

Surveys by charity Anxiety UK revealed that more than two-thirds of people questioned were feeling more anxious as a result of lockdown restrictions easing.

This rise was due to fear of contracting the virus, as well as using public transport, going out in public spaces, shopping, returning to work and attending social events.

If you share the same fears, Anxiety UK suggest a few things you can do to help you adjust to life post-lockdown:

- get back into a routine – start getting used to the sounds of the outside world again by taking short walks each day (if your country's rules currently allow for this)
- continue to practise social distancing
- ease your way in slowly – for example, if you're worried about returning to work, ask your manager if you can continue to work from home, or if you're worried about travelling on busy public transport, try to travel during quieter times

# Press Links

ITV News

[Are you feeling post lockdown Anxiety](#)

BBC News

[Coronavirus anxiety: How to cope with life after lockdown](#)

Glamour

[How to cope with panic attacks during lockdown](#)

Euro News

[Mental health in the time of COVID-19: are we doing enough?](#)

iNews

[Lockdown anxiety and the rise of agoraphobia](#)

Your MD

[How to cope with anxiety as lockdowns ease](#)

**23 Media Requests this quarter**





# Radio and T.V interviews

BBC Radio Warwickshire – 14.04.20 - Radio  
3 week extension to lockdown – Live call  
in

LBC Radio – 18.05.20 - Radio  
Mental Health hour – Live phone in

BBC Radio Scotland – 02.06.20 - Radio  
Post lockdown anxiety

BBC News – 20.04.20 - TV  
Anxiety and coronavirus

Euro News – 12.05.20 – TV  
Mental health in the time of COVID-19:  
are we doing enough?

ITV News – 28.05.20 – TV  
Are you feeling 'post lockdown anxiety'?