

**This is for my anxious human beans... whatever you are feeling right now is completely understandable and you are not alone.**

In one way or another, myself, family, friends, clients, colleagues, strangers I talk to, a lot of us, are feeling it.

And that is the first thing to remember: ALL of us, together, are feeling, we are united, even if it is in our worry. On one hand it is beautiful because it means we care so deeply, but on the other hand, it can feel completely overwhelming.

Second thing to remember, is that it is ok to feel worried right now, because that is a completely healthy response to uncertain times.

But, as much as worrying is healthy, living in a more permanent panic or fear state can make life really challenging, and as we don't know how long this is going to last, I am going to try and break this down; effectively turning this giant mountain, into much more manageable hills.

A lot of my anxiety comes from not having control, and right now, there is A LOT I cannot control, so I wrote myself the below table. I hope it inspires you to think about your own mountain and how you could come up with your own version of more manageable hills:

<b>WHAT YOU CANNOT CONTROL:</b>	<b>WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL:</b>
You cannot control this pandemic.	You CAN control that you follow guidelines about social distancing.
You cannot control who will get ill.	You CAN control how much you keep in touch with loved ones via phone/text/facetime and email and make sure they are following the recommended guidelines.
You cannot control the economic situation.	You CAN control educating yourself, reading the government guidelines on support, find out who you need to talk to, what you're entitled to, ask your family/friends/online community for information/support.
You cannot control the media or other people's reaction to the pandemic.	You CAN control your interaction with the media, you can choose 1 or 2 specific times to watch the news, you can limit social media if it makes you feel more panicky and instead write down how you are feeling, express it in another form, or reach out for support from someone who feels able to talk things out with you. Do

	not assume everyone wants to talk about this. You can ask people to not talk about it to you, take yourself out of the conversation, or practice deep breathing to calm yourself.
You cannot control that some people will panic buy.	You CAN control asking for help from friends/family/neighbours/ your online community if there is something you need. You can offer to help vulnerable members of your community.
You cannot control how long you or others may end up being at home.	You CAN control making a conscious effort to stick to a routine, still get up, shower, eat breakfast, put make up on, etc. Do exercise and eat as healthily as possible while not beating yourself up if you do put weight on. If you are with the kids, do not feel pressure to entertain them every day. It is ok to have a 'boring' day, they will be fine. You can keep in touch with others through call/text/facetime and email. If able, you can get involved with community projects if you are well enough, you can check in with people regularly, you can offer support to your friends/family/neighbours/community projects/online community.
You cannot control that some people will joke about this.	You CAN control introducing boundaries around conversations that upset you or make you feel worse.
You cannot control that you or others may lose their job.	You CAN control contacting citizens advice if it happens to you, signing petitions for others, asking for advice from unions/family/friends/your online community, consider a lower wage for a temporary period, know you are not alone, ask for help.
You cannot control that some people will die.	You CAN control educating yourself with the facts and know that many more people will survive. You can make sure anyone you are worried about is following the guidelines. You are allowed to be worried about this, but that worry does not have to control you. It is only fair that

	whatever time you spend thinking someone may die, you spend the same amount of time thinking what if they live.
You cannot control that this will be unfair.	You CAN control reminding yourself that it is unfair for everybody involved, you're allowed to be angry that the super-rich can pay for private testing and disappear to their secluded getaways. But you also have to remind yourself that they are the few and you are part of the many, and there is pride in making a stand together against this, to be part of the side of humanity who cares not only about themselves but about others. When you can't sleep at night, it is because you care, not because you don't have a conscious.
You cannot control that this could hurt.	You CAN control, that if someone you love dies, you are allowed to be angry and devastated, you are allowed to have all the emotions and you will allow yourself time to grief.
You cannot control how long this will take.	You CAN control how you talk to yourself and others, you can control how you treat yourself and others. Self-care, kindness, compassion for yourself and others, will get us through this.

The problem with this is that what you cannot control requires no action, it is much easier to think about as it only requires a thought.

What you CAN control requires not only a thought, but a change in behaviour and an action to counteract the uncontrollable.

A lot of us wait for someone else to make us feel better, I promise, you already have that capacity inside you, you may have just forgotten how to look after you as you've spent so much time worrying about others, or you've forgotten that your needs matter too.

Dealing with anxiety takes some time, and work, and it is not easy. But remember your anxiety is not an evil, it believes it is keeping you safe, but it's just way too overprotective. I have hopefully shown, there are still things that are in your control.

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**Work out what you CAN do today, to make your day feel just a little bit better.**