

# Is COVID-19 DRIVING YOU CRAZY?

It's a year like no other we've known, so it is no surprise that some of us are feeling 'COVID-19 anxiety' says **Amanda Jayne**, Let's Talk's west Norfolk-based psychotherapist and counsellor.

**I'VE BEEN TALKING** to my clients via Skype and Facetime and just recently via Walking Talking Therapy these past few weeks as we all adjust to the 'new normal' in the wake of COVID-19.

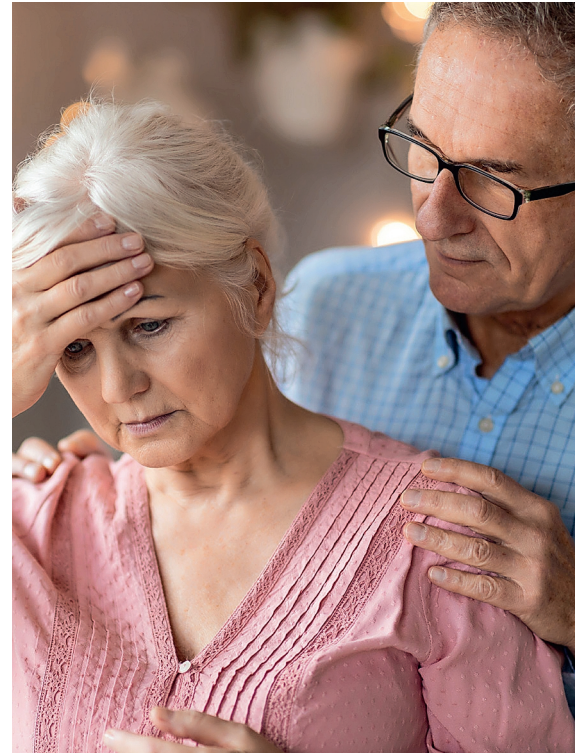
As we all try to adjust to the restrictions and fear surrounding this pandemic, it is hard to work out what is anxiety and if our reactions are normal.

Lots of questions have been put to me:

- Is it normal to obsessively watch the news and social media to see the updates on the pandemic?
- Why am I scared to drink out of a cup when I visit my parents when I know it's safe?
- I'm too scared to go to the supermarket or out of the house still, even though restrictions have been lifted.
- Is it normal to become obsessed with cleaning everything, even though I know it is okay?
- Why am I obsessively worrying about going back to work?
- My husband/wife is going out to work and it is giving me huge anxiety about them bringing the disease back home.
- I can't sleep.
- I'm worried about what I am eating in case it is infected.
- Why is my husband/wife perfectly okay while I am frantic?
- Am I going mad? Is this because I am an anxious person?
- Should I be calmer about this whole thing?
- Should I be enjoying being at home?
- Should I be enjoying being at work?
- My family is driving me mad.
- I cannot do home schooling, I am finding it too much of a strain?
- Should I be enjoying my family while I can?
- Is it normal to obsess about someone I love dying of COVID-19?
- Is it normal to feel so alone and isolated?

All of the above is perfectly normal under these strange circumstances. None of us knows the outcome. None of us knows when we will ever get back to how things were before.

If you find that you are worrying about



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So many people are suffering anxieties and extra worries because of the current situation.

seemingly unimportant things or things that nobody near to you has a concern over, then accept that for you, it is how it feels. There is no right way to get through this, and every worry and concern is understandable.

We all react to different challenges in different ways as we are all unique. The level of anxiety may vary from family member to family member/friend/peer.

Nothing is normal. My advice to clients is: Restrict your exposure to news.

Don't beat yourself up for being anxious about the situation, accept that you are and look after yourself in it.

There is no right or wrong way to get through this.

If you want to cry, then cry. Once you have done, then do something nice for yourself.

Don't 'feed the monster'. Ruminating over what ifs will only distress you.

Finally, this will pass. As all things do. Stay safe and look after your emotions, whatever they may be. ■



## Ask Amanda Jayne

I would love to hear from you and will reply to letters which, if we print them, will remain anonymous. For information on Walking Talking Therapy, email me at [harleysttherapy@gmail.com](mailto:harleysttherapy@gmail.com) or ring me on 07760 669246. [harleystpsychotherapy.com](http://harleystpsychotherapy.com)