

# I hate the virus

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The virus has hit us all and we all hate it.



I am Phil Groves - a local vicar and I have prepared this so you can talk about your feelings with your parents.

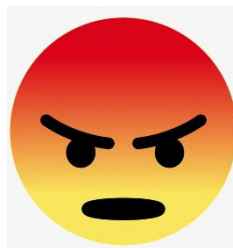
**Talking about feelings helps.**

You hate the virus and what it has done.

Back in March when everything shutdown we had these kinds of feelings:



Scared



Angry



Bored

It was really **scary**. We were frightened that someone we knew would catch it and die. Our parents were scared we would catch it, we were scared they might get ill.

We then got really **angry**. We couldn't do the things we liked doing. We couldn't play with friends, go swimming and it looked like all holidays were cancelled.

We couldn't go to school and everything got really **boring**. We wanted everything to be normal and not have to do home school.

You may have noticed that your parents and the other adults weren't having a great time either. They were not be very happy. They like watching football, going out, and meeting their friends and all kinds of other things just like you do.

Some were really busy with work and trying to do that while looking after you.

Others couldn't go to work and that is really difficult.

# Talking helps

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You need to talk to your parents so you can understand.

They need you to talk to them so they are not so worried.



It can be really hard to talk about things, but your parents, but not talking is worse. If you let a worry turn around and around in your mind it can grow bigger and bigger.

Talking about it with someone who is ready to listen can help you find out what is really bothering you.

You can find out what you can do about it and can help you understand there are good things as well

Your parents and carers won't know all the answers, but talking to them will really help you. They will be honest with you and take care of you.

Talking with them will help you so much. You will realise how much you are loved and that this is the most important thing.

We get through things together and talking about what is worrying us is very important.

I am a vicar and that means I read the Bible. In the Bible it says that when we are anxious, we need to talk about our problems with God. When we talk about what we are worried about we can get peace.

The Bible says that we need to focus our minds on things that are good, things that are excellent: happy things. We can do that if we are helped by those who love us.

We are going now to look at the steps that will help us.

## High Alert

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Before we talk about what is worrying us, you need to know about how we all respond when we think there is danger. We are all a bit frightened at the moment.

When we are afraid, our brains go on **high alert!**

We are just like all other animals. Remember when you saw some rabbits in a field. They bob around eating grass and playing, but their ears and noses are always twitching, listening for danger.

If they spot you, they will immediately head for cover: diving down into their burrow at the slightest sign of danger.

**We are living like that now. We are on alert for danger.**

When you are on high alert our body gets ready to run or hide. Our eyes go wide open, our ears listen and noises sound louder than usual.

We might find it hard to go to sleep because our brain is telling us to be alert all the time.

That's alright for rabbits. They need to be ready to run. A dog may come out of nowhere, or a buzzard fly overhead. They are built to be on high alert all the time they are outside.

But for us it is hard work being alert all the time. Our brains are working too hard opening our eyes to danger. It can be very tiring. When we think there is danger our hearing gets sharper and our body gets ready to run or fight.

We can't go on like that for long, but it has been like that for months.

Even rabbits need to rest. They find their safe place in their burrows where they can curl up and sleep. We need to find our safe space and we need to be able to relax.

The virus is a real danger. We need to be alert, but in the right way and at the right time. We also need to help our body relax - we can't run away from the virus and we can't fight it - and so we need to know we are doing the right things to keep us safe and that those around us are keeping safe too.

We're now going to look at how we can get some rest.

## Keeping Safe

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The first thing we need in order to relax is to know we are safe.

The first thing that keeps us safe is information. You need to know what you are on the alert for, and how you can keep safe.

**Do you know what a virus is?**

You can find out more [here](#)

There is lots of information on the internet, but some of it is wrong and some of it is scary - make sure you ask an adult to help you when you look things up. They will keep you safe.

A virus is so small you can't see it even in a microscope. When they get inside you, they make you feel ill until your body fights back and kicks the virus out. You have had lots of viruses. Every cold you have had was a virus. Do you remember when lots of people were sick at school and had to stay at home - that was a virus.

Most viruses are old ones and our bodies know how to get rid of them. The Coronavirus is a new virus and not everyone can fight back.

The good news is that children's bodies are great at fighting back the Coronavirus. Children sometimes don't even get ill and those who do seem to get better really quickly. You are not likely to be in danger.

As people get older their bodies are not so good at fighting back. Very old people are in special danger.

Your body is in high alert because you care about other people - and that is a good thing.

By now you know how to keep safe:

- **Hands** - We ensure we are keeping our hands clean.
- **Space** - We need to keep apart so we don't breathe air from someone with the virus.
- **Face** - Adults will wear facemasks so they don't pass on the virus even. The virus gets into our bodies through our mouth, nose, and eyes.

If you are worried that someone you love is in danger, give them a ring and ask them about how they are keeping safe. They can tell you what they are doing so they don't catch it. If you know they are doing their best you can relax.

### **So how are you going to be like a rabbit?**

There are times when we need to be like a rabbit on high alert - keeping safe and keeping others safe. When you are at home you need to be like a rabbit in a burrow - knowing you are safe.

When it comes to bed time you need to relax and not be afraid. A simple prayer as you are going to bed can help you relax and have a great night's sleep.

### **This is what you can do:**

With your Mum or Dad remember all the things you did to keep safe today and then tell God what you did in simple words.

You can then pray for all the people you know - and those you don't - who are keeping themselves safe in their homes. Think about them safe and sound.

To help you relax you can think about all the parts of your body and how they are safe in bed.

You might think about your breathing - feeling the lovely air going in and out of your body.

Then pray - 'Thank you God that I am safe in my bed now. Amen.'

# Who is helping?

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The next thing we can do to keep safe is to know who is helping us.

Do you remember how on Thursday evenings we all came onto the street to clap and bang pans to show our support for doctors and nurses and all the other people who help us.

Do you still have your rainbow you put up in your window? That was to show you cared about those who care for us.

We don't clap any more, but they are all still busy helping us. They have not stopped.

There are cleaners, delivery people, scientists, people giving out food, people who work in pharmacies, police officers, rubbish collectors, shop workers, teachers, people keeping the internet working, bus drivers, farmers and so many others who are working to keep us safe.

They are sometimes scared too, so when we clapped and cheered, they knew we cared and it still makes them feel strong.

They are still looking at the rainbows we put out and it cheers them up.

These people keep you safe. When you are scared you can think about them.

You can think about them by saying a prayer for them.

It can be something like this:

Dear Father, thank you for all the people who keep me safe.

I especially want to remember the doctors, nurses and cleaners who work in hospitals'

and I want to remember ..... [you put in a list of who else is keeping you safe]

Please keep them safe as well. Amen

# Take care of yourself

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When people are frightened, they can forget what it is that actually makes them happy.

People think that watching a TV or playing video games while eating a lot of chocolate will make them happy. These things give us a buzz, that is just for a moment they make us feel good, but it does not last. They don't make us happy if it is all we do.

To be happy you need to:

- Eat well
- Do something active
- Enjoy the world around you

Eating healthy food is a great way to begin to feel happy. You learn about the mix of food that is good for you at school and I bet you can tell your parents that you need fresh fruit and vegetables as well as fibre and protein such as meat and fish.

Eating the right amount of good food makes you happy.

I used to live in Africa. The people in the place where I lived were all very poor. They lived in mud huts and had to walk miles for water and did not have any electricity. They ate beans and a funny kind of thick porridge every day with fresh vegetables. What surprised me was how fit they were and how much they laughed. They were very happy.

They also loved to play. They didn't have many toys and their games were all about running and dancing. You need to do something active every day. Running around and riding a bike are great ways to happiness.

You can also enjoy craft projects. Junk modelling is great fun. Building Lego models or a sewing project is also fantastic in getting you happy. Try cooking your own food. It is great fun and you get to eat something healthy as well.

Enjoying the world around you is easy. Lots of people are saying that there are more birds singing this year. The truth is that it is no more than usual, but because they are stopping to listen and when there were fewer cars on the roads, we are hearing them.

All these things will make you happy.

### **Stop and pray**

Some of the greatest songs ever written have been about people suddenly seeing the beauty of the world around them. Many are prayers.

When you see something wonderful, just take a breath and say thank you.

Eating well, doing something active and enjoying the world around you is all about taking care of yourself. You will feel happier if you do those things - oh and then you can enjoy a bit of chocolate and some TV time.

## **Change the World**

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We have been learning that children can change the world.

When bad things happen some people just hide away, but others decide to do something. Those who do something gain strength and join with others.

**The world is changed by lots of ordinary people doing good things.**

I want you to remember three people who have inspired many people to do good things: Greta Thunberg, Malala Yousafzai and Captain Tom. Inspired means they gave other people hope so they want to do something good as well.

Last year Greta Thunberg inspired millions of people to do something about climate change. She was a school girl who decided not to sit back. She has something very powerful - hope. She believes the world can change.

You need to have hope - it may be a long time for us to get over this virus, but we will get past it.

A few years back a 12-year-old girl called Malala Yousafzai began to write for the BBC about how important it is for girls to have education. She was in part of Pakistan where men controlled the lives of women and they did not like what she said so they shot her.

She did not die and is living in Oxford doing a degree. She has hope that things will change and she gives hope to others.

It's not just children Captain Tom - do you remember him - just walked around his garden to raise money for the NHS.

Doing things for others is a sign that you hope the world will be better and it makes that hope true.

Being kind is a great way to start. You can be kind to those around you, but you can also send a card to someone you are thinking about.

You can also do something like Captain Tom to raise money for people who are in need. You could do something to support a charity - there are always lots of ideas online.

Having hope makes people feel passionate about things that should happen. Greta Thunberg got people wanting to save the environment, Malala about children's education. If you feel passionate about something that should happen you can write to your MP. Your MP is the person elected by people round here to speak on their behalf to the government. They make the decisions in parliament. You can write to him and tell them what you think.

They often respond to emails best - so get your Mum or Dad to help you.

Doing something to make the world a better place will give you purpose and enable you to not feel so anxious. Things can change.

In the Bible - the book God gave us to help us understand him - hope and love are two things that keep us from fear. They keep us going.

## We still hate the virus

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The virus is horrible, but if we

- talk about our feelings
- understand why we are so alert
- keep ourselves safe
- trust in those who are helping us
- take care of ourselves,
- and do something to change the world around us,

**We will get through this.**

In the end

**love is greater than hate**

**and hope is stronger than fear.**