



Times are strange, but uncertainty is nothing new: managing COVID-19 when you or a loved one has OCD

If Someone You Care About Has OCD



Don't minimize their fears, but also don't feed into the anxiety or exacerbate it. Validate their emotions and acknowledge that their emotions are very real and painful. For example, "I'm sorry this is so scary and hard for you right now. I see this is affecting you a great deal, and I'd like to help in the ways that I can."



Ask your loved ones or friends if there are specific ways you can help. If you live with them, help them engage in positive distractions such as playing a board game or helping with projects around the house. If you don't live with them, help decrease isolation by reaching out to them via texting, phone calls, video calls or social media.



Model effective and adaptive behavior. Don't go on and on about the news or all the terrible things that are happening. Just as important, don't repeatedly reassure them (constant reassurance just reinforces fears).



Don't accommodate rituals like excessive cleaning or decontaminating. Help them stick within reasonable guidelines, like those recommended by the CDC.

