

Returning to Work After COVID-19: Keep a handle on your ANXIETY



Much of America is in some state of “**returning to work**” full time in company offices. States are testing statewide reopening strategies to varying degrees of success. Here are some tips to help get you back to work:

Avoid all or nothing thinking The prospect of going back to work probably raises concerns you might have about being exposed to COVID-19 and, and getting very sick. Yes, these the risks that everyone will have to face every day. However, focusing solely on the worst-case scenario isn’t the best way to prepare yourself for returning to a public work life. All or nothing thoughts don’t help you move forward.

It helps to remember that you have control over your own behaviors to keep yourself safe, like wearing a mask, washing your hands and practicing social distancing.

Be prepared Be prepared so you can adjust your expectations and behavior when returning to the workplace. For example, how can you prepare yourself to stay safe in public? Think about how you’ll manage your commute; what protective gear and cleaning supplies to keep on your person; how you’ll manage eating and drinking while at the workplace; and how you’ll interact with colleagues or clients.

Be intentional with how you get your news Gathering too much information about the coronavirus, or getting it from the wrong place, can make you more anxious. Be intentional with how much time you spend reading the news and where you get it from. Stick with listening to a news radio show for 30 minutes on your morning and evening commute. Defer to official sources, such as the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and the [World Health Organization](#), for general updates on the state of the pandemic and how to keep yourself safe.

Schedule in joy Schedule in time to relax and enjoy yourself, which can alleviate anxiety and stress. Remember the new routines you’ve established in the past few months and keep the parts of your day that bring you joy as you return to work. Maybe you’ve come to enjoy ending your day by taking a walk around your neighborhood.

As you transition back to the workplace, you might instead get off the bus a few stops early on your commute home and walk the rest of the way while enjoying the fresh air and exercise.

If you’re feeling anxious about returning to work, call a Best Care EAP counselor. **All sessions with a Best Care EAP counselor are FREE and CONFIDENTIAL. The COVID counseling help line is available 24/7, call (800) 801-4182.**