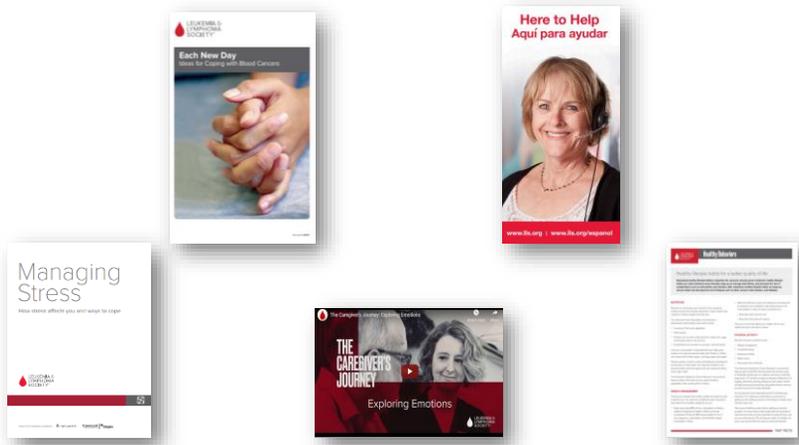


**LLS RESOURCES FOR PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS**  
[www.LLS.org/PatientSupport](http://www.LLS.org/PatientSupport)



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**CALMING ANXIETY AND FEAR: CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

Julie Larson, LCSW  
 Psychotherapist & Speaker-Educator

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## DISCLOSURE

*Calming Anxiety and Fear: Coronavirus (COVID-19)*

**Julie Larson, LCSW** has no disclosures.

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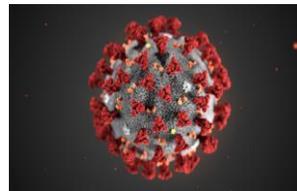
## FINDING CALM

**The coronavirus (Covid-19) crisis has millions of people feeling fear and uncertainty.**

**There are real concerns: health, financial stability, job fragility, mental health vulnerabilities and relationship stress.**

**However, some worry does live only in our mind.**

**Finding calm not only helps us feel better.  
Finding calm helps you act smarter.**



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**MANAGING THE MIND**

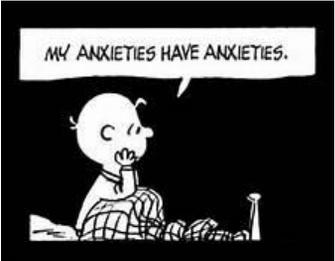
**Paying attention with purpose.**

**Develop a habit of checking in with yourself.**

- “Can I name the feeling I am having?”
- “Where am I feeling this stress in my body?”
- “What am I doing that is helpful?”
- “What am I doing that is not working well for me?”

**Going to the Mental Gym**

- Redirect focus to the present moment
- Let Go. Relax. Return.
- Gently start again.



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**CALMING ANXIETY AND FEAR**

**STRATEGY #1 – THE HERE & NOW**

**Ground yourself back to the here and now where you are safe.**

**Use your five senses:**

- 5 things you see
- 4 things you hear
- 3 things you feel
- 2 things you smell
- 1 thing you taste

**Break time into manageable chunks (e.g. wake until lunch, this hour, until the end of a task)**

**Sort thoughts into Past, Present and Future.**

**Give yourself permission to delegate future oriented thoughts to your future self.**

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## CALMING ANXIETY AND FEAR STRATEGY #2 – LET IT BE

Acknowledge the fear, worry and uncertainty may not completely go away.

Building tolerance for uncomfortable feelings gives us flexibility with our attention.

Practice redirecting attention despite the presence of hard feelings.

Noticing a feeling creates a little space where we can choose how we respond vs. react.

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## CALMING ANXIETY AND FEAR STRATEGY #3 – THEN WHAT?

Consider your biggest **“What if?”** and ask, **“then what?”**

Create a concrete plan for your “what if” fears.

Talking through fear and creating a strategy can help settle anxiety.

Flushing out a plan for your fears can also help illuminate the disparity between your worry and your present reality.

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## CALMING ANXIETY AND FEAR STRATEGY #4 – CONTROL. ALT. DELETE.

### Find an anchor outside of your worry.

- Get outside
- A creative project: cooking, building, writing,
- Physical activity
- Connecting with others
- Turn on music you enjoy
- Reading
- Humor

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## THROUGH A CANCER SURVIVOR LENS

**“As a cancer survivor, I feel very vulnerable and scared about getting the virus.”**

- Where do you have control?
- Gain knowledge. Talk with your oncology team.
- Practice consistent hygiene recommendations: hand washing, social distancing, not touching your face.
- Sharpen self-awareness around how and when anxiety is triggered for you.

**“This is reminding me of when I was really sick and stuck at home. Those feelings are hard to experience again.”**

- Work to identify what is DIFFERENT about today.
- Maybe you feel stronger. Perhaps it easier knowing everyone is at home today and not just you. etc.

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## THROUGH A CANCER SURVIVOR LENS

**“I’m really nervous about entering the hospital system despite wanting to continue treatment.”**

- Remind yourself cancer centers, hospital systems and experts across the oncology field are working hard to assess the risk vs. benefit of treatment and follow up care for all cancer survivors.
- New efforts in telehealth are rapidly being utilized to maintain connection even if your visit is rescheduled.
- Hospitals and out-patient clinics are implementing new procedures and policies designed to keep you safe during in-person medical appointments.

**“I feel frustrated when others are not taking coronavirus (Covid-19) precautions seriously.”**

- Notice the frustration. Acknowledge where you have control. Set boundaries. Be clear with others about your needs.

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## SURVIVOR NARRATIVE

**What personal strengths helped you through your cancer experience?**

- Gathering information
- Connecting with others
- Humor
- Flexibility
- Asking for help

**What has helped you feel grounded or prepared in the past when you felt worried or overwhelmed?**

- Talking through worry with a trusted loved one
- Going for a walk. Listening to music. Journaling. Moving my body.

**What would a close, encouraging and supportive loved one say about what has helped you find your way in hardship?**

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## SELF CARE TAKES EFFORT

To feel tired is understandable. There is energy involved in mentally monitoring yourself. Be gentle with yourself.

Observe and note how much time you need to recharge or feel different. You may be surprised!

Give thought to how you end each day.

- Reflection
- Escape
- Gratitude
- Connection
- Comfort

Impermanence can be your best friend. Each hard moment changes.

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## Q&A SESSION

*Calming Anxiety and Fear: Coronavirus (COVID-19)*

- **Ask a question by web:**
  - Click “Ask a question”
  - Type your question
  - Click “Submit”

Due to time constraints, we can only take one question per person.

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**LLS EDUCATION & SUPPORT RESOURCES**

- **Information Specialists**  
Master's level oncology professionals, available to help cancer survivors navigate the best route from diagnosis through treatment, clinical trials and survivorship.
  - EMAIL: [infocenter@LLS.org](mailto:infocenter@LLS.org)
  - TOLL-FREE PHONE: 1-800-955-4572
- **Caregiver support:** [www.LLS.org/caregiver](http://www.LLS.org/caregiver)
- **Free education booklets:** [www.LLS.org/booklets](http://www.LLS.org/booklets)
- **Free telephone/web programs:** [www.LLS.org/programs](http://www.LLS.org/programs)
- **Live, weekly online chats:** [www.LLS.org/chat](http://www.LLS.org/chat)
- **LLS Community:** [www.LLS.org/community](http://www.LLS.org/community)
- **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources:** [www.LLS.org/coronavirus](http://www.LLS.org/coronavirus)

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**LLS EDUCATION & SUPPORT RESOURCES**

- **LLS Patient Podcast, *The Bloodline with LLS***  
Listen in as experts and patients guide listeners in understanding diagnosis, treatment, and resources available to blood cancer patients: [www.thebloodline.org](http://www.thebloodline.org)
- **Education Videos**  
Free education videos about survivorship, treatment, disease updates, and other topics: [www.LLS.org/educationvideos](http://www.LLS.org/educationvideos)
- **Patti Robinson Kaufmann First Connection Program**  
Peer-to-peer program that matches newly diagnosed patients and their families: [www.LLS.org/firstconnection](http://www.LLS.org/firstconnection)





## LLS EDUCATION & SUPPORT RESOURCES



- **Free Nutrition Consults**

Telephone and e-mail consultations with a registered dietitian:  
[www.LLS.org/nutrition](http://www.LLS.org/nutrition)

- **What to Ask**

Questions to ask your treatment team:  
[www.LLS.org/whattoask](http://www.LLS.org/whattoask)



- **Other Support Resources**

LLS community, blogs, support groups, financial assistance, and more: [www.LLS.org/patientsupport](http://www.LLS.org/patientsupport)

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# THANK YOU

We have one goal: A world without blood cancers

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