

Local Lockdown Anxiety

As of the third week of June 2020 49% of the population had felt anxious or worried about the end of Lockdown. Many felt their support would be cut off, in terms of free food parcels, help and support from their communities, friends and families. There were mixed feelings for many and in particular, those who had been deemed as particularly vulnerable and who had to continue to self-isolate until August 2020.

Almost a year on the country are again waiting for news of the final easing of lockdown due to take place on June 21st 2021. This last lockdown which has been in place since December 2020 has been the longest and for many, the toughest of all.

There has been a sharp rise in the onset of Mental Illness and those already living with a Mental Illness have seen their symptoms exacerbated. All change brings with it feelings of uncertainty, anxiety and the feeling of having no control. Like the beginning of the very first lockdown which began in March 2020 where things happened quickly and all aspects of the life we had and knew, changed. Since then many of us have experienced a roller-coaster of feelings and emotions as we have travelled on the “strangest” journey we have made in our lifetime.

We have experienced many things and are about to again with the easing of the rules and lockdown restrictions due to take place on June 21st. However, we are now being told about the prevalence of the “Indian variant” which is causing a rise in reported cases of Coronavirus again across the UK. For many, this is feeling “different” and there is now much uncertainty about what will happen and even if lockdown will ease at all or, as in some parts of the UK where there has already been a delay to the easing of the restrictions.

Right now, we just don't know what will happen on June 21st or afterwards. This can lead to people feeling worried, anxious and uncertain. The fear for many is the possibility of local lockdowns being enforced in areas which are most affected.

Eight parts of the country have been given different advice from the rest of England and have been given stay local advice, prompting local lockdown fears.

The advice states: "***The new Covid-19 variant spreads more easily from person to person. To help stop the spread, you should take particular caution when meeting anyone outside your household or support bubble***"

For many, the thought of local lockdowns is actually more anxiety provoking than full lockdowns where people know exactly what is expected of them.

Lockdown has been difficult for many of us, for lots of different reasons. In full lockdown things might have felt more certain or predictable, as the rules were clearer and everyone was required to do the same thing. But now that lockdown restrictions are easing things might feel less clear, and there may be new challenges.

In terms of managing these anxieties, think of all the skills you had before March 2020, the skills you have both acquired and developed since then and where you are now in terms of thoughts and feelings.

The concept of potential Local lockdowns will perhaps be a source of frustration, particularly as we appeared to be so close to an ending of what has been a challenging year for so many.

Consider the following; what it means to you, and how you can deal with these possible feelings. Remember that these are all normal reactions to change and uncertainty. It is about identifying them and knowing where to go for help, support and information -

- Anxious, afraid or panicked
- Low, hopeless or tired
- Angry or frustrated
- Conflicted or confused
- Stressed or unprepared
- A sense of grief or loss
- Reluctant or unmotivated
- Lonely or isolated
- Uneasy about relationships
- Distrustful
- Powerless
- A sense of injustice
- Under pressure
- Unsupported or disregarded

How can Care first help?

If you feel you may need some emotional or practical support, you can contact Care first on the Freephone number. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. Whilst our BACP accredited Counsellors are available 24/7 to provide support with emotional issues, our expertly trained Information Specialists are available 8am-8pm Monday-Friday to provide advice on any practical issues that may be causing you a stress or worry and help you feel more in control of a situation.

All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support. Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.

If you would like to view the Webinar on Local Lockdown Anxiety this is being delivered live on **Tuesday 8th June at 12pm**, please use the below link to register for this session –

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4045130082110566414>

If you are unable to join the webinar live, a recording of the session can be accessed using the same link above after the webinar has taken place.

*Please refer to .gov for the latest COVID-19 guidance in your region.