In times of a pandemic and the anxiety it creates in us, it is natural for us to futurise and catastrophise, both of which take a lot out of us mentally, emotionally and physically. It becomes a vicious cycle because the more we worry, the more we try to control our worry with something tangible such as information. But being stuck to our screens for the latest update can have the opposite effect as it becomes a source of more futurizing and catastophising. A daily update makes sense but bingeing on up-to-the-minute news is not good for us and leads to more anxiety and us feeling sick.

We need to come to the realisation that we could think about COVID-19 all day every day, about the uncertainty of what might happen, of what we have lost right now, of the consequences we are facing, of the anxiety it is causing, or we can feel this fear at times as it comes up for us, but also be present in our life right now. We can direct our attention to any positive in our life and give our minds a bit of a break from the topic so that we can be more resilient when it does come back into our thoughts.

We can do something that gives us a break, that directs our attention elsewhere. We could watch Netflix or play with our kids or take a shower and sing a song in between those moment of understandable fear.

The COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, is on most of our minds daily, but we don't want the anxiety to consume us so changing our mindset around what is happening in the aim.

Keep things in perspective

In such a situation it is natural to have many 'what if' questions in our mind. In the absence of information, our anxious mind will often fill in the blanks with worst case scenarios, which can leave us feeling overwhelmed, helpless or vulnerable. Here are some questions you can ask yourself to shift your thinking from catastophising to a more helpful mindset:

- *What are the things within my control?*
- *Am I overestimating the likelihood of the worst-case scenario?*

- *What strategies have helped me cope with challenging situations in the past that will serve me well during this time?*

- *What is a small helpful or positive action that I can take now?*

Mindset Shift During a Pandemic

I'm stuck at home	I get to be SAFE in my home and spend time with my family
I will get sick	I will self-isolate and wash my hands, this will significantly DECREASE my chances of getting sick
I will run out of items at home during self-isolation	I have prepared for this and I will use my items wisely. I have everything I NEED for now
Everything is shutting down, I'm panicking	The most IMPORTANT places, such as medical centers, pharmacies and grocery stores, remain open
There is too much uncertainty right now	While I can't control the situation around me, I CAN control my actions. Doing breathwork, calling loved ones, getting enough sleep and proper nutrition, prayer, and doing activities I love at home will all help during this time