

# Working Well: The end of our beginning and co-existing with COVID-19

## Author:

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Dr. Bonnie Henry says British Columbia has reached "the end of our beginning" phase of the pandemic; we are transitioning into the next phase, shifting focus to recovery and restoration. We can reflect back to March and ask ourselves how did we choose to cope with the 'beginning of the beginning'?

Experiencing uncertainty can activate both physiological and psychological stress reactions and can feel uncomfortable. As we have adapted to the "new normal", we are preparing for change again. Yet, this is an opportune time to reflect inwards while we uphold our values and principles; not just for the next week, but over the coming months. No matter how flexible you are with adapting to change, it is important to understand what you need and allow yourself time to adjust during this process.

There are many questions about what our new normal will look like in the workplace. You can choose to trust what you know now, based on the credible information you have at hand. You can also choose to understand that at all levels of the organization your leaders are engaged in thoughtful planning to ensure a safe and healthy workplace. Take a few moments to do an inventory of your thoughts, and the realities of what is in your control and what you will learn from others. Listen to the experts at Anxiety Canada by accessing [live and taped webinars](#) focussing on how we can choose to cope with anxiety and uncertainty.

Choosing to practice [gratitude](#) can also help us remain agile and enhance our resilience while living with uncertainty. There is usually a lesson we can learn from our circumstances if we allow ourselves the openness to bend in the direction of that learning.

Transition and change bring opportunity. Now may be a good time to ask ourselves:

- What positive choices may be worth holding on to?
- What changes have occurred that align with our personal values that we may want to continue?

[Gratitude](#) fosters adaptive coping mechanisms, enhances emotional resilience, and builds inner strength to protect us from negative responses to stress.

We can start [cultivating gratitude](#) today by:

- Giving ourselves a compliment.
- Reflecting on our current challenges and what we are learning from them.
- Thinking about who we are grateful for today.
- Acknowledging the important "assets" that are presently in our life.

"Bamboo is flexible, bending with the wind but never breaking, capable of adapting to any circumstance. It suggests resilience, meaning that we have the ability to bounce back even from the most difficult times. ...your ability to thrive depends, in the end, on your attitude to your life circumstances. Take everything in stride with grace, putting forth energy when it is needed, yet always staying calm inwardly." - Ping Fu

### **Looking for information and resources to support you during COVID-19?**

- Visit PHSA's [Supporting Our Workforce page](#) for articles, resources, and tools that provide psychosocial support during COVID-19.
- See [PHSA's Health Promotion page](#) for health and wellness resources and current initiatives.
- Access the [COVID-19 Pandemic Toolkit for Staff](#) from Homewood Health, PHSA's Employee and Family Assistance Provider.
- Don't hesitate to call Homewood Health, PHSA's [Employee & Family Assistance Program](#) (EFAP) provider, to speak with a clinical counsellor at 1-800-663-1142 or [www.homeweb.ca](http://www.homeweb.ca). Homewood Health offers free and confidential coaching and counselling services for staff through video, phone, private online chat, or private messaging.