

"How worried should we be?"

According to a psychologist I was interviewing recently, that's the wrong question, and you should never ask it.

It's fine to ask about what you should do to prepare, or what you should realistically expect. But worry? That's not helping. And it can be a mind trap.

Instead, according to mental health experts, here are some proactive things you can do instead of worrying:

1. Have a foot bath. This sounds old fashioned but putting your feet into a big bowl or bucket of water for a few minutes can really help ground you and take your energy out of your head and settle your mind.
2. Preferably, do something that is 100% unrelated to anything on the news. Read a book, or go for a walk, or listen to an audiobook, or put on a movie on Netflix. Anything that will distract you.
3. When you've calmed down a bit, sit down with a notebook and a cup of tea. Write down just what you know (not predict) about the situation. For once, silence those doomsday predictions that are always in the back of your head about everything, and only put down the FACTS.
4. Finally, write down where you are at that moment. What is around you. The colour of your walls. The time on the clock. How you are feeling at that moment. Don't get emotional. Just describe things as they actually exist. It sounds weird, but focusing on the *here* and *now* can really help. Another way to do this: identify five things you can see, four things you can hear, three things you can touch, two things you can smell and one thing you can taste.

Once you've done this, you should feel somewhat (hopefully a lot) calmer.