

Getting Out of Quarantine - When and How?

Below is a guide that can help you in your decision-making process. Having a plan and envisioning it can be a productive way to move forward. This process is distinct from worrying or ruminating - which tends to go in circles, be repetitive, and can consume your mind and your day. An hour of planning, ideally in collaboration with those it impacts, is usually time well spent.

Here are some ideas to help you get started.

Step 1. Make a list of factors to consider, such as mental health, physical health, finances, the necessity of childcare, values, etc.

Step 2. For each factor, list what's on your mind about it. For example...

Mental Health:

- Quarantine is enhancing my/my loved ones mental health, I'm finding it restful, fun, or productive, I'm not in a rush to get out.
- Quarantine is difficult, but me/my loved ones are coping well, getting out would be fine as well.
- The thought of getting out of quarantine makes me so anxious, I don't know how I would cope.
- I'm not sure about my mental health, I need to speak to a loved one or therapist to discuss my concerns, so I can make a decision.
- Other:

Physical Health:

- Based on my/my family's physical health, I would be ok to get out of quarantine. The impact in relation to grandparents would be alright.
- Based on my/family's physical health, we could get out of quarantine, but would be sad for certain implications such as needing to continue physical distancing from grandparents.
- Based on my/my family's physical health, we are uncertain about the exact risk, e.g., we have pre-existing conditions such as asthma.
- I'm not sure about my physical safety or that of my loved ones. I will speak to loved ones or a physician so that I can make an informed decision.
- Other:

Financial situation:

- Based on my/my family's financial situation, I/we need to get back to work as soon as possible.
- Based on my/my family's financial situation, we can stay home longer.
- I'm not sure about my financial situation, I will speak to loved ones, my employer, an accountant, or another relevant person so that I can make an informed decision.
- Other:

Necessity of school or childcare:

- We rely on school/daycare, and returning would be helpful.
- Returning is not necessary or desirable right away, we can wait.
- I have concerns about safety or eligibility, I will contact the daycare, school, or possible babysitters so that I can make an informed decision.
- Other:

Values relevant to my decision:

- My gut feeling is that I will continue quarantining as much as possible because.....
- My gut feeling is that I will end quarantine once the government allows me to, because.....
- I'm not sure... My mind says one thing and my heart says another... It's hard to balance both.
- Other:

Other factor: _____

- Choice 1: _____
- Choice 2: _____

Step 3. Based on the above factors and choices made, what option are you leaning towards?

- Returning to work/ school/ daycare once allowed
- Staying home longer if permitted, and taking things day by day
- I'm still not sure what to do

Step 4. Plan... Based on the above choice in step 3, what do you need to do, or get more information about, in order to move forward?

- _____
- _____
- _____

Making choices in the face of uncertainty is never easy. All you can do, is to weigh the pros and cons of your choices and make a choice to the best of your ability in good faith. If it turns out that you are not happy with your decision, you can always try to revisit it later, and to make a new decision based on new factors.