

## Video: Using social science to aid in the fight against COVID-19

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While medical scientists and clinicians work to combat the coronavirus pandemic and save lives in labs and hospitals around the world, Duke professor Dan Ariely shared an analysis of the pandemic from a social

science perspective during a live presentation on YouTube.

Speaking from Israel, where he's advising the government on its COVID-19 response, Ariely outlined several ways he and colleagues have turned their attention to research supporting the pandemic response, including:

- Helping create and communicate rules and restrictions in ways that make it easier for people to adhere to them.
- Studying the learning experiences of teachers and students during this period of isolation to identify the most successful educational practices.
- Developing technology to help reduce domestic violence.
- Understanding how to structure economic stimulus measures for maximum effectiveness.
- Understanding adjustments that will need to be made as people return to work, school and other normal activities.

Ariely also provided some practical advice for coping with the stress and uncertainty, noting it can be helpful for individuals to think about and focus on things they can do to exert control over their circumstances.

"We're all victims of this global thing, but to be healthy we have to take control even on small things," Ariely said.

Exercise, meditation, eating well, opening a rainy-day savings account and making a long-term plan for something to look forward to after the [pandemic](#) are all healthy and productive ways to exert a sense of control, he said.

A less helpful coping mechanism right now? Shopping therapy, Ariely cautioned, may make us feel a sense of control because we're acquiring tangible objects, but is probably not the most advisable way to exert

control at this time.

Provided by Duke University

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