



LOOKING AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

What to do if you are anxious about coronavirus and how to look after your mental health if you have been asked to self-isolate.

TOP TIPS FOR STAYING WELL

KEEP CONNECTED

Keep talking to friends and family or even use a helpline. Telling someone if you are struggling can help to lighten the load and might help someone else in the process.

LIMIT MEDIA INTAKE

Wanting to stay informed is important, but too much can be overwhelming. Factor in breaks from social media and use reputable sources for your news.

PLAN YOUR DAYS

Boredom, anxiety, depression can all set in if we neglect our routines. Plan for fun, learning, exercise and for relaxation, all of which are equally important.

KNOW WHAT HELPS

Find ways to help yourself, whether that is starting a new hobby, taking a breath or finding what helps you to keep calm and carry on.

'Hope is a renewable option: If you run out of it at the end of the day, you get to start over in the morning'.

Barbara Kingsolver

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) AND YOUR WELLBEING

by M Jolly - The Jubilee Academy School Counsellor

With all this media attention and uncertainty surrounding coronavirus, it is hardly surprising that we might be worried, anxious or even scared about what the future holds. This can be particularly triggering for those who are already dealing with a mental health issue.

It could be that you are anxious about your own health or that of a loved one. It may be that you have been asked to self-isolate or even know someone who has contracted the virus. Whatever your experience right now, it seems that no one can fully escape the news, making it all the more important that we take good care of ourselves and each other during this unprecedented time.

The good news is that there are lots of things we can do to proactively help how we are feeling and stay well, both mentally and physically. I hope you find some of the ideas here useful and seek further help if you need it. We are truly in this together.

TIME TO RELAX OR TRY SOMETHING NEW

Exploring relaxation can help you look after yourself when you are feeling stressed or worried. Have a think about how relaxation can fit into your daily routine, not just if you hit crisis point. Do not worry if some ideas don't work for you - just enjoy the ones that do.

Taking a break can be hard sometimes, but avoiding this can cause burnout. What do you love doing? Go for a walk in the garden, stroke the dog, read, eat healthy snacks, power nap! How will you connect with others? A daily *Google Hangout* with friends? Personally, I will use this time to have a good clear out. Perhaps you can get creative, there are lots of ideas online on trying something new, starting a new hobby or, of course, catching up on that series that everyone is talking about.

Keeping busy can be useful, but finding a way to relax is just as important.

TAKING A BREATH

- *Let your breath flow as deep down into your belly as is comfortable*
- *Try breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth*
- *Breathe in gently and regularly*
- *Some people find it helpful to count steadily from 1 to 5 as you breathe in*
- *Then, without pausing or holding your breath, let it flow out gently, counting from 1 to 5*
- *Keep doing this for 1 to 5 minutes.*

Some people find focussing on the breath quite hard at first.

Try an app to support you e.g. Headspace, Smiling Mind, Calm etc.

DO
TRY
THIS
AT
HOME



BACK TO BASICS

During long periods at home, we can often let our routine slip and get into unhelpful habits. Maintain your routine as much as possible by getting up in the morning and going to bed at the same time each evening. Eating regular meals and staying hydrated will also help, as well as taking breaks throughout the day to talk to someone or do something that you enjoy. If it is possible, try activities in your home that get you moving, like yoga or dancing. Try not to get obsessive about washing hands and hygiene.

At this time of stress and worry, going back to basics can be really helpful. Being kind to yourself and others. Offer yourself the same compassion that you would to a good friend. Know that help is out there if you need it. Look forward to a time when we can all get back to normal, whatever that is!

SERVICES AVAILABLE

YoungMinds Crisis Messenger

Provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK if you are experiencing a mental health crisis. Text YM to 85258

Childline

Comforts, advises and protects children 24 hours a day and offers free confidential counselling. Phone 0800 1111 (24 hours)

The Mix

Information, support and listening for people under 25. Phone 0808 808 4994 (24 hours)

Samaritans

24 hour confidential listening and support for anyone who needs it. (Adults included.)
jo@samaritans.org / Phone 116 123 (24 hours)

OTHER USEFUL WEBSITES

WWW.NHS.UK

WWW.MIND.ORG.UK

WWW.WHO.INT

WWW.GOV.UK

WWW.YOUTHMINDS.ORG.UK