

Managing your Mental Health

during the COVID-19 pandemic

ROUTINE

Your normal routine might be disrupted and that can be stressful. Take some time to write down how you want to spend your day. Creating and sticking to a new routine will give you a sense of order and normality. Decide on your new routine and make sure you put in time to do things you enjoy. Make sure you get changed in the morning from what you've slept in, try to stick to a similar routine you would have if you were going to school.

BE PRODUCTIVE

Make a list of the things you have been wanting to do but never get round to. It could be sorting out your wardrobe, doing some gardening, rearranging your bedroom. These tasks can make you feel productive and give you a sense of accomplishment. It can also make you feel calmer and more positive.

EXERCISE

Go for a walk (while keeping your distance!), try yoga or do a workout - exercise is one of the best things for your mental health, and your immune system. You can find lots of free workouts online that you can do at home. The Body Coach Joe Wicks will be doing daily online workouts at <https://www.thebodycoach.com>

STAYING CALM

Mindfulness
There are many great free apps you can use to guide you through breathing techniques and meditation that can help ease your anxiety and clear your mind of anxious thoughts. Try www.headspace.com

TAKE A BREAK FROM THE NEWS

It can be tempting to constantly check the news at the minute, but if this is having a negative impact on your mental health try limiting how often you check the news. Perhaps, allow a set time each day to do this. For example, watch the 6pm news each day for half an hour.

STAYING CONNECTED

Phone calls are a great way to stay connected. But seeing someone's face can make a huge difference. It can lift your mood and make you feel less lonely. There are lots of free video calling services you can use, and if you can connect to wifi this will help if you're worried about your data running out! Your loved ones will really appreciate seeing you, you could really brighten someone's day. And try not to talk about coronavirus, use this chat to take your mind off things!

REACH OUT

You may be feeling worried, bored or frustrated but you are not alone. This is a good time for a catch up, so reach out to someone you haven't heard from in a while. They will probably be very grateful to hear from you. Send them a message and let them know you care.

CLEAN UP YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA

You might be spending more time than usual scrolling on social media. But what you read may negatively impact your mental health. Try unfollowing accounts that make you feel anxious, upset or angry. Find positive accounts that boost your mood and share your interests.

LEARN A NEW SKILL

With all that free time, why not try learning a new skill? There may be something you've always wanted to learn, but never had the time. Drawing, playing the guitar, baking are just a few examples of things you could try during this time.