

Looking After Your Well-Being during the Corona Virus Outbreak

Thank you for taking some time out of your day to have a read through this self-help guide.

First of all – **how are you?**

Maybe this is the perfect time to stop for a moment...

Now could be a good opportunity to check if you're holding any tension in your body...

Try letting your shoulders drop...

Unclench your jaw and hands...

Take a few calming deep breaths...

For many of us these are confusing and worrying times

Perhaps you are feeling big or small changes to your life at the moment

- Perhaps it means you're not having face to face contact with your usual health care professional
- Perhaps you're having less social time with your family and friends
- Maybe you're in self-isolation at the moment

Whatever your situation, concerns about coronavirus can have an impact on our mental health and well-being. These feelings are **COMPLETELY NORMAL** and it is important to acknowledge them!

It might feel very stressful and overwhelming at the moment but there are **LOTS** of things you can do to try and help your mental and physical well-being.



It's important to be up to date but it's also just as important to have some down time from the news and current events

If following the news or listening to stories is making you feel anxious

- Consider limiting the time you spend reading or listening to the news
- Decide on a specific time to check in with the news
- Consider taking a break from social media

Rumour and speculation can fuel our anxiety further, make sure you stay connected with **reliable information**:

NHS coronavirus webpage

gov.uk coronavirus webpage



At times of stress it's vital to maintain healthy relationships with important people in our lives

It can be helpful to share your worries and concerns with others, in doing so you might be helping them too...

Staying in touch digitally:

- Plan regular phone-calls
- Use instant messaging services
- Could you video chat using apps like FaceTime or Skype?

Make sure you have up to date phone numbers and email addresses for friends and family

REMEMBER: It's okay to opt out of conversations with others if you're finding they are not helpful for your mental well-being



Sticking to daily routines can help give us a sense of normality and bring some structure to our days

- Aim to go to sleep and wake up at similar times each day
- Eat healthy balanced meals at regular times
- If you're working from home stick to your usual working hours

If we are feeling worried or anxious we may end up stopping doing the things that ordinarily would give us pleasure and joy.

It may be particularly important to schedule in time for such activities. This might be things like:

- Watching a favourite TV program
- Reading a book

It may be helpful to write this down and place somewhere visible

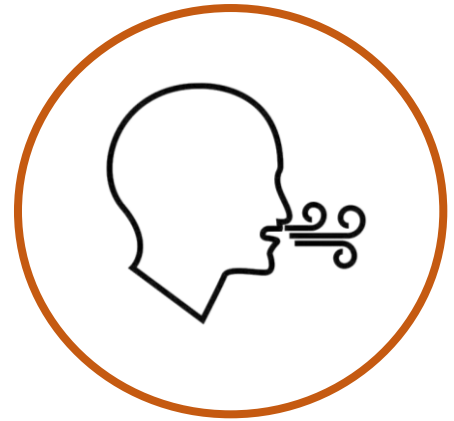


It's **OKAY** to feel anxious and overwhelmed at the moment!
To help you manage these difficult thoughts and feelings it may be important to prioritise relaxation or activities you find enjoyable

How about:

- Practising deep breathing (see useful links & resources)
- Mindfulness or meditation (see useful links & resources)
- Getting creative with arts & crafts
- Listening to music or playing musical instruments
- Writing or journaling

Focusing on activities like these may help focus your attention on the present moment



Our physical health and keeping physically active can have a big impact on our mood levels

Exercising doesn't have to mean going to the gym or playing sports – are there certain things you can do around the house?

- Walking or running up and down the stairs
- Cleaning your home
- Online exercise videos
- Regular and gentle stretching
- Being mindful of how long you are sitting for – stand up, move around and change position regularly (setting a timer can be a helpful reminder)

Research suggests that what we eat doesn't just affect our physical health but our mental health also

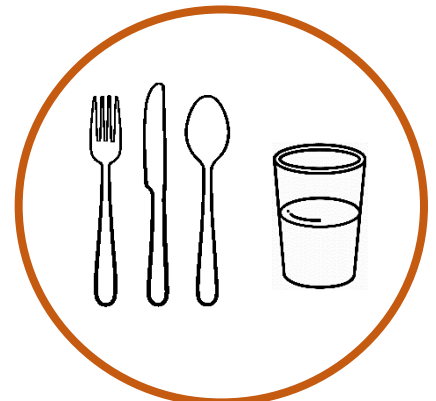
If you are self-isolating:

- Could you find out about supermarket food delivery?
- Could ask a family member/friend/neighbour to bring you some essentials?

Eating regularly and having nutritionally balanced meals helps keep blood sugar levels stable which is important for our energy levels and our mood

Remember to keep hydrated and drink water regularly throughout the day.

It may be easy to fall into unhealthy patterns of drinking or smoking too much but **REMEMBER** these behaviours may negatively impact our mental well-being in the long run



Some useful links and resources

If you're struggling with your mental health and need some support

- **Samaritans – Call: 116 123 or Email: jo@samaritans.org 24/7 support**
Provides confidential, non-judgemental emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those that could lead to suicide
- **Mindline (Somerset) – Call: 01823 276 892 Mon-Fri: 9am-11pm, Sat-Sun 8pm-11pm**
Confidential listening service providing a support place to talk if you are in distress
- **Shout - Text: “shout” to 85258, support available 24/7** – text crisis line
- **Elefriends - <http://elefriends.org.uk/>** - Supportive online community

Well-being resources

- **Headspace App:** offers a free collection of meditation and mindfulness exercises.
Download from: The App store or Google Play
- **Stop Breathe Think:** YouTube channel: guided videos of beep breathing and mindfulness exercises: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UckB9zEEqnP9kMif5VChd99Q/about>
- **Exercise:** Try some 10 minute home workouts
<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body/move-more/home-workout-videos/>
- **Exercise:** Yoga exercises (for a range of abilities)
<https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>

Government and NHS advice

- **NHS:** <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- **Government:** <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Financial Concerns

- **Government:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-support-for-employees-benefit-claimants-and-businesses>
- **Citizens Advice:** <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

In Somerset

- **Corona Helpers - <https://www.corona-helpers.co.uk/help-wanted>**
Help out or request help from your local community. Help may include: grocery shopping, collecting medication, walking the dogs, helping with loneliness