



GUIDE TO MAINTAINING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AMID COVID-19

CCRS 

We understand that this situation may be stressful to you and make you feel unsettled, thus affecting your mental health. Therefore, we have put together a few tips that will help you get through this stressful and uncertain time and this will hopefully help you get through.

Websites and Resources

There is a whole range of resources available if you feel you are struggling with your mental health or anxiety. Here are some useful links for you to read:

Mind.org.uk – Mind are a mental health charity who provide help and support for anyone experiencing mental health problems. They have created an information hub with lots of help and advice: [Mind Coronavirus Information Hub](#)

NHS – [Guidance about Coronavirus and staying at home](#)

NHS - [NHS guidance about what to do if you, or someone you live with, has symptoms of coronavirus and you need to self-isolate](#) -This guidance is stricter than the general guidance about staying at home.

Gov.uk – [Coronavirus Guidance for Employees](#)

Taking Care of your Mental Health and Wellbeing

Connect with people. Keep in regular contact with friends and family via phone, text or instant message. Arrange video chat calls with people who would usually meet in person.

Have a routine. Try and follow your ordinary routine as much as possible. Plan how you will spend your time and possibly write it down. If you aren't happy with your usual routine, this might be a chance to do things differently. For example, you could go to bed earlier, spend more time cooking or do other things you don't usually have time for. If you live with other people you may want to agree on a household routine. Try to respect each other's privacy and give each other space.

Try and stay active. Try and build a physical activity in your daily routine including things like housework, exercises or DIYs

Find ways to relax and be creative. Try activities that help you relax. These could be activities such as yoga and meditation, finding a good show to watch or art and crafts.

Get some Fresh Air – open the windows, sit in the garden or take the opportunity to go for a walk or run outside.

If you are Feeling Anxious – If you have panic attacks or flash backs it might help to plan a 'safe space' in your home that you'll go to. You can also find ways to comfort yourself if you're feeling anxious. For example, there are [games and puzzles you can use to distract yourself](#), and [breathing exercises](#) which may help. The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) has more information on how to cope if you're feeling anxious about coronavirus.

Take Care with News and Information – Stay connected with current events, but be careful where you get news and health information from. If news stories make you feel anxious or confused, think about switching off or limiting what you look at for a while. Social media could help you stay in touch with people, but might also make you feel anxious. Consider taking a break or limiting how you use social media.

Checklist for Staying at Home

While you're self-isolating from home, you need to make sure that you have the essentials that will help you carry on and maintain your health. Here is a handy stay at home checklist that you can use as a guide:

1. **Food:** do you have a way to get food delivered if you need to self-isolate?
2. **Cleaning:** do you have cleaning supplies?
3. **Work:** can you carry on working, including working from home? If not, can you find out your rights to payment or benefits?
4. **Medication:** do you have enough medication, or a way to get more?
5. **Health:** can you reorganise any planned therapy or treatments?
6. **Connectivity:** have you got ways to keep in contact with people you see regularly, like their phone numbers, email addresses? Do you need help setting up digital communication, like a video calling app?
7. **Routine:** can you create a routine or timetable for yourself? And if you live with other people, should you create a household schedule? Do you need to agree how the household will run with everyone at home all day?
8. **Exercise:** is there any physical activity you can do inside your home, like going up and down the stairs, using bean tins as weights, or exercises you can do in your chair?
9. **Nature:** have you thought about how you can bring nature into your home? Can you get some seeds and planting equipment delivered, or put up photos of green spaces?

10. **Entertainment:** have you thought about things to do, books to read or TV shows to watch?
11. **Relax:** have you got materials so you can do something creative, such as pencils and paper?

Resilience and Working Remotely

During this time, it is also important for us to be resilient. Resilience is our capability to rise to a potentially stressful event and overcoming it without experiencing the negative aspects of stress (strain and distress). If we experience strain and distress, we tend to lose mental control, feel terrible and can't do very much because our memory is shot, and we want to hibernate.

We need to be resilient to deal with new events or situations we haven't confronted before, or we have confronted before and couldn't deal with effectively. Remote working, and from home, might be entirely new to many.

You can find some handy tips on how to be resilient while working remotely [here](#).

Also, please have a look at the [CCRS Employee Guide to Working from Home](#) which has some handy tips for getting the most out of remote working.

General Coronavirus Guidance

Even as you stay at home, remember to:

- Avoid direct hand contact with your eyes, nose and mouth
- maintain good hand hygiene - wash hands with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser before eating and drinking, and after coughing, sneezing and going to the toilet
- avoid direct contact with people that have a respiratory illness and avoiding using their personal items such as their mobile phone
- cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing with disposable tissues and disposing of them in the nearest waste bin after use