

Managing your mental wellbeing

Anxieties over your own health and that of loved ones can often feel all-consuming at the moment. The need for social distancing can make us hyper vigilant when outside. We now spend most of our time cooped up at home either alone or with family.

Lack of personal space, freedom and control can make life feel stressful, frustrating and intense. To help you stay mentally strong and boost positivity amongst so much uncertainty we've listed some hints, tips and advice to help you through these challenging times.

Need urgent mental health support?

Call NHS24 or speak to your GP.

NHS24

[111](#)

If you feel you're in crisis and require immediate assistance call

[999](#)

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Wellbeing tips for everyone

Avoid speculation

Rumour and speculation can fuel anxiety so having access to good quality information about coronavirus can help you feel more in control. Trusted sources include:

- [NHS Inform](#)
- [UK Government - coronavirus guidance](#)
- [UK Government Foreign and Commonwealth Office – Foreign travel advice](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)

If you are feeling stressed or anxious, consider how you feel when you have constant exposure to media coverage and graphic news stories. Although it is important to stay informed, consider taking a break if you feel things are getting on top of you.

Look after yourself

Remember to [eat and drink regularly and healthily](#), allow time for sleep, rest and respite every day and consider setting a time to get up and a time to go to bed.

You may not be able to visit friends and family just now but you can still stay connected to them using technology – build in time to make that happen because it's important to stay in touch.

Most of all, be kind to yourself. None of us have been in this situation before so it's important not to beat yourself up if things don't go quite to plan. If you feel you are struggling don't be afraid to [ask for support](#).

Relax

[Exercising](#), relaxing and getting enough rest is a must to maintain good mental health. Taking good care of yourself may require a little extra time and effort, but it's worth it. While there are no specific guidelines on how much relaxation a person should incorporate into their lifestyle, making time to unwind and enjoy life is an important part of maintaining good health.

When practiced regularly deep relaxation, like meditation, relieves stress and anxiety and improves mood and may potentially decrease blood pressure, relieve pain and improve your immune and cardiovascular systems

Regular relaxation, preferably on a daily basis, is essential to maintain our wellbeing. Do you make time to recharge your batteries on a daily basis? No? Why not? Reassess your priorities and make time for this. Anything you enjoy doing can count as relaxation – it doesn't have to be lying in a darkened room but you can do that is you want to!

Consider:

- Using aromatherapy oil in the bath – a long, hot soak is good for mind and body.
- Read a magazine or a book in a comfy chair with a cuppa
- Use the one time you are allowed to exercise a day to enjoy a leisurely stroll near your home.
- [Try a new form of exercise at home](#).

Get relaxation inspiration from Mind, the mental health charity

Meditate

The goal of meditation is to focus and understand your mind, eventually reaching a higher level of awareness and inner calm. Regular meditation can help you to control your emotions, enhance your concentration, decrease stress and even become more connected to those around you. With practice, you'll be able to achieve a sense of tranquility and peace.

Remember, there are many ways to meditate so try a few different types to see what works best for you. [Headspace – Meditation for beginners](#) is a good place to start.

Other useful links for mindfulness

- [Mindfulness](#)
- [Anxiety Control Training and Unhelpful Thinking](#)
- [Japanese Method to Relax in 5 minutes](#)

Going home checklist

Created by the NHS, the checklist is a great way to reflect and be mindful at the end of each working day.

- Take a moment to think about today.
- Acknowledge three things that were difficult. Let them go.
- Consider three things that went well.
- Choose an action that signals the end of your shift/working day.
- Now switch your attention to home.
- How will you rest and recharge?

Library at home

Reading is a great distraction and one of the best ways to de-stress – and fill the time in lockdown. Here are some resources you might want to try:

- [Falkirk Libraries app](#) offers free access to magazines, books and audiobooks, if you have a library card. Not a member? [Temporarily join online](#).
- [BorrowBox](#) is a great resource all local school children can tap into – and there's nothing more relaxing than snuggling up with your children and reading a book together.
- [Audible](#) has made 100s of its audio titles available for free during the coronavirus pandemic. No log-ins, credit card or passwords required.
- [Theory Test Pro](#) use your time to study for the theory test when plans to sit your driving test have stalled.

Other resources

- [Health Scotland's Steps to deal with stress](#)
- [Try a free beginners meditation on Headspace](#)
- [Useful information and links](#)

Support for mental wellbeing

We will all experience mental health issues from time-to-time. Talking about how we're feeling is what we do every day, but there are times when we may need more than just someone to talk to.

Recognising when we need additional support is a good way of developing an understanding of how we feel, what affects our mood, and importantly helps us to take action to keep ourselves well.

If you feel you aren't coping, have noticed little things such as changes to your mood or that things are starting to get on top of you, speak to your manager. If you aren't comfortable speaking to someone at work, here are a list of organisation that can help.

- [Breathing Space](#)
- [Choose Life](#)
- [Falkirk District Association for Mental Health](#)
- [NHS Inform – Your mental wellbeing](#)
- [Mind](#)
- [SAMH, Scotland's national mental health charity](#)
- [Samaritans](#)
- [Scottish Recovery Network](#)
- [See Me](#)

What do you do If you suspect that someone may be struggling or feeling isolated

Keep in touch and stay connected with the person, even a simple daily check-in via email, WhatsApp or text can lift someone's spirits or pick up the phone/organise a virtual catch up and really focus on what they are saying.

If you're worried about someone let your manager know as quickly as possible, they should be the calm voice of reason and reassurance. They can also set up weekly one-to-ones and small team chats over the phone or virtually creating a safe place for people to be open about how they are feeling.

The more effort you put into communicating with others at this time the more chance you have of helping them understand their feelings and what help they may need before they become overwhelmed.

Keeping connected is especially important for colleagues who live alone and who might be feeling more isolated than those who have friends or family.

Workplace Chaplaincy

We have received an offer from Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland (WPCS) to support our employees. If appropriate you may wish to give out the contact details of WPCS which are detailed below. The offer from WPCS includes:

- Talking with a Chaplain about various wellbeing concerns and life issues from bereavement to trauma to stress and depression, whether you are a person of faith or not, as means of comfort and support
- providing virtual Chaplaincy support to anyone in the workplace at this time - either by phone, email or video link (Zoom).

