**Supporting your wellbeing when working from home**

As many people move to online working, connecting with others, being proactive about our mental

health and wellbeing and seeking further support if needed are more important than ever.

This short guide lists some ways to support our mental health and wellbeing, reduce feelings of

isolation, and feel connected with colleagues while working remotely.

**Looking after your wellbeing during Covid-19**

During periods of uncertainty, it is normal to worry about the outcome. There is uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus outbreak, particularly considering that the situation is constantly developing.

The relentless news stories, worry about the unknown, or concerns about the physical

health of loved ones or ourselves are things we may be experiencing right now. These kinds of

worries, whilst unpleasant, are normal.

**What are the types of emotions and feelings I might have during this time?**

You may experience heightened anxiety, like over thinking or worrying about yourself or others.

You may have an inability to sleep, or want to sleep too much. Sometimes you may have an urge

to eat excessively, or your appetite might be suppressed. You may feel like you want to hide away and stop talking to, or contacting people.

A laissez-faire attitude to the concerns around contracting the virus can be a normal reaction to

feelings of uncertainty and overwhelm. You may also begin to experience negative thought patterns

and may feel as though the world is a dangerous place right now, and this may cause feelings

of fear or worry. Anger and irritability are common signs when feeling uncertain. Due to

guidelines around isolation, symptoms of loneliness may develop.

**What should I do if I’m feeling anxious about the virus and everything that**

**comes with it?**

There are ways to protect mental health and wellbeing.

Remember the five ways to wellbeing: Be Active, Take Notice, Connect, Give and Keep Learning.

Mind suggest recognising and acknowledging your emotions rather than avoiding, and Anxiety UK

suggest The APPLE Technique:

**A**: **Acknowledge**. Try to take notice of the feelings of uncertainty, and any emotions that this may cause for you.

**P:** **Pause**. Take a breath.

**P**: **Pull** **back**. Try to challenge any unhelpful thoughts.

**L**: **Let go**. The thoughts or feelings will pass, try to imagine them floating away from you.

**E**: **Explore**. Explore the present moment. Pay attention to sights, sounds, touch, taste. Focus on

your breathing, and the weight of your feet on the ground.

**Top tips when working from home**

**Keep a regular routine**

• Keep a regular routine - even if different or adapted compared to before, maybe create a

household schedule.

•Wake up at the same time each morning, get showered and dressed, eat a healthy breakfast

and set up your work area.

• Think about sleep - try to maintain a regular pattern of sleep even if you're not getting up for

usual activities. Aim for 7-9 hours each night.

• Keep your house clean and tidy.

**•** Use the time to do the things we don’t get time to do; clear out your wardrobe and donate to

charity, paint that room that needs painting, read the book you’ve been meaning to read.

**•** Equally, don’t beat yourself up about being unproductive – relax and enjoy some you time.

• Journal – take some time to write about your day, and about your thoughts and feelings. Writing

things down can help us to make sense of negative thoughts or emotions, and allows us to

process them.

**Connect with others**

• Stay connected. Replace face-to-face meetings with telephone calls, text messages, emails

and video calls. Check the contact details of the people you see regularly, like their phone

numbers or email addresses. It’s so important to talk.

• Stay in regular contact with people - but manage this so it doesn't become overwhelming.

• In work stay in touch with your colleagues through phone calls, regular catch ups, video calls,

Microsoft teams, Skype, yammer groups.

• Organise virtual social sessions - a quiz, a catch up over a coffee, an exercise session, introduce

your home pet to others.

• Phone a friend or relative everyday to stay in touch.

• Volunteer your support

**Keep active and eat well**

**•** Eat well and stay hydrated – plan your shops, think about online delivery. Your appetite might

change if your routine changes, or you’re less active than usual. Eating regularly and staying

hydrated helps to maintain mood and energy levels.

• Take care with caffeine. An over reliance on caffeine can impact restful sleep and in some

cases cause headaches.

• Take exercise every day. Follow current government guidance but be active every day. Run,

cycle, walk, use online home exercise platforms through social media or youtube videos. Dance

around the living room to your favourite music.

• Do not sit for longer than 20-30 minutes at a time. Get up and move. Stretch, walk around the

house or in the garden, make a drink.

**Take care with news and information**

• Manage your social media involvement - do what seems right keep in touch but be careful not

to get sucked into constantly scrolling through social media platforms as this could cause anxiety

and stress.

• Check reliable news sources for information such as government websites, public health wales

and WHO

• Watch news twice a day at most if possible

**`Find ways to relax and be creative**

• Stay entertained. Have you thought about things to do, books to read or TV shows to watch?

• Use the time to relax and practice some self-care.

**•** Mindfulness and meditation are an excellent way to spend time, especially if we’re feeling

worried (See the staff intranet, NHS website, Headspace, YouTube).

**•** Do some online exercise classes, many trainers are offering classes via online platforms. You

can use tins or water bottles as weights.

**•** Use the time to learn that skill you’ve always wanted to learn- an instrument, a language,

learn to knit…anything!

• Listen to music - avoid constant news but enjoy some of your favourite music via radio, playlists.

Dance, sing and lost in the music.

• Read for pleasure, play crosswords, puzzles, draw, paint.

• Join a fun yammer group at work

***Information sourced from Mind, Mental Health Foundation, Samaritans, Anxiety UK,***

***ABUHB and WHO.***

Additional resources which may be helpful:

• Mental Health Foundation staying at home https://mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/

staying-at-home?bblinkid=211101862&bbemailid=19989179&bbejrid=1415753363

• Every mind matters staying at home tips https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/

coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/

• Mental Health Foundation talking to children https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/

coronavirus/talking-to-children