



Top Tips to look after your Mental Health at times of Global uncertainty

Try to avoid speculation and look up reputable sources on the outbreak

Rumour and speculation can fuel anxiety. Having access to good quality information about the virus can help you feel more in control. It is important that you keep yourself informed from reliable resources however that you also limit your news intake if you notice that you are starting to feel overwhelmed from what you are hearing.

Try to stay connected

At times of stress, we work better in company and with support. Try and keep in touch with your friends, family and colleagues by telephone, email, Skype or social media. It is so important to talk about what is currently happening but also about normal and general things too.

Try to keep normality and routine

Indeed, it is likely that we are all going to experience some change and uncertainty in how we function and operate but it is important to still implement some routine and things that are familiar to us that we are safely still able to do. If you start working from home, try and keep a healthy work schedule which includes lunch breaks and a reasonable log-off time. Keeping parts of your normal routine can be helpful like eating breakfast and getting dressed into (comfortable) working clothes.

Try to stay in the here and now

At times of uncertainty we can all be guilty of experiencing thoughts such as “what if”. It is important to acknowledge our current resilience to managing change and uncertainty. If we can try to focus on the present moment rather than thinking ahead about things that are out of our control and potentially may not happen then we are more likely to remain calm. To enable us to do so, some simple mindfulness and meditation can be helpful, which you can access on self –help apps such as ‘Calm and headspace’ or you-tube.

Problem Solving

Stay focused on current worries and let go of some of the hypothetical worries. Hypothetical worries haven’t happened yet and might never happen. We can deal with them when and if they become

current and we have the ability to affect the outcome. Writing our worries down can help to get them out of our heads and seeing them can help us to process them. We can then think of potential solutions, determine if they are short, medium or long term and try to prioritise them. It is important that we don't spend all our time and energy worrying and to help us do this we can allocate some specific 'worry time'. Once our worry time is complete, it is important that we focus on something else to prevent us from feeling overwhelmed and using personal distraction techniques can help us to do so.

Do things that you enjoy

You may find yourself focusing and talking about the things that you enjoy that are potentially going to be difficult to continue over this period. It is ok to feel sad and disappointed about this, but it is important to focus on the things that you can do and plan over the next few weeks/months. There may be lots of opportunities for you to do things that you perhaps have been meaning or wanting to do but have never allowed yourself the time to do so and this may now be the perfect opportunity.

Keep fit and healthy

Look after yourself with a healthy balanced diet and think of ways to continue to do some level of exercise in your home or safely outdoors. There are many different fitness apps and workout videos available on you-tube that requires no specific equipment. If you have children and are worried about them not getting their usual physical activity 'Joe Wicks the body coach' is providing some P.E. sessions for children Monday to Fridays at 9am live on you-tube. If you have access to a garden it is important to get some fresh air and natural light and as we are approaching spring time this is a perfect opportunity to do so.

Accept

There are many things out of your control, and it is important to remember that you can only work with what you have got. This might involve getting used to this feeling of discomfort and letting go of some of those perfectionist ideals. Remember 'Good enough' may have to be good enough and to be kind to yourself and proud of what you are doing.