

# Looking after your mental health during Coronavirus

As we have to stay at home it is important to take care of our mind as well as our body.

It is common to feel worried, scared or helpless about the current situation. It is **OK** to feel this way, share your concerns with others you trust or you could try a charity helpline or webchat. Take a look at [www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines) for more.

Here are some tips and advice on how we can keep on top of our mental wellbeing and cope during times of uncertainty. Share these with friends and family to look after yourself and those you care about.

## Top tips for your mental wellbeing:

1. **Connect with others** - Maintaining healthy relationships with people we trust is important. Stay connected via email, social media, facetime and telephone. Adjust your social media intake if it is making you anxious. If you haven't got anyone to talk to you can call emotional support lines like SANEline and the Samaritans
2. **Be active** - Our physical health affects how we feel. It is important to eat healthily, drink enough water and exercise regularly. Build physical activity into your daily routine for example cleaning your home, dancing to music, seated exercise, and online workouts. Take a look at [www.nhs.uk/live-well](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well) for ideas.
3. **Take notice & focus on the present** - Engage with nature. Open the windows to get fresh air, watch the birds, make the most of any private outdoor space, tend to houseplants, listen to natural sounds apps. If you have a private garden spend time outside.
4. **Stick to the facts & limit your news intake** - Do not stay glued to the news. A constant stream of news can cause anyone to feel anxious or distressed. You could set yourself a specific time to read updates or limit to checking a couple of times a day – use trustworthy sources such as the gov.uk or NHS websites.
5. **Have a routine** - Maintain a sense of routine and try to follow your ordinary routine as much as possible. Wake up and go to bed at healthy times, get enough sleep. Include time to relax.

## Local Contacts



### Bedfordshire Wellbeing Service

A range of confidential talking therapies and specialist support:  
<https://bedfordshirewellbeingservice.nhs.uk>

Tel: 01234 880400  
[elt-tr.bedfordiapt@nhs.net](mailto:elt-tr.bedfordiapt@nhs.net)

### Kooth

Online counselling for young people: [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

### Mind BLMK

Phone and email support  
Tel: 0300 330 0648 or  
[hq@mind-blmk.org.uk](mailto:hq@mind-blmk.org.uk)

### Mind Crisis Café

Phone support  
Tuesday to Friday, 5-11pm  
on 01582 722225

### Crisis Support 24/7

Luton & South Beds  
01582 538631

Bedford & North Beds  
01234 315691

[www.elft.nhs.uk/Contact-Us/Need-help-now](http://www.elft.nhs.uk/Contact-Us/Need-help-now)

### Official Guidance

[www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)  
[www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)

6. **Keep your mind active** - Do something you enjoy. Find something of value in your day and do something for yourself (download a podcast, watch a box set, art and crafts, cooking, gardening, reading a book, DIY). Take a free online course through some like the Open University: [www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses](http://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses)
7. **Offer support and help others** - Helping others makes you feel good. If you are able to- try and think of things you can do to help those around you safely and in line with official guidance. Find out how you can help at [www.goodsamapp.org/NHS](http://www.goodsamapp.org/NHS). Check in with friends, neighbours or colleagues who may be self-isolating or vulnerable.
8. **Keep your children informed** - Explain the facts but try and avoid scare stories and over-exposure to the news. Be as truthful as possible. Take a look at [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/talking-to-your-children-scary-world-news](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/talking-to-your-children-scary-world-news)
9. **Take care of your immediate environment** - As you are spending a lot of time at home, you may find it helpful to keep things clean and tidy. If you live with other people, it could help to decide together how you'll use different spaces for example spaces for work.
10. **Working from home** - Working from home can be challenging and isolating. Try to keep a structured day, with a routine for work and to keep both formal and social connections flowing with colleagues. Find tips for working at home here: <https://mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak/while-working>



# Useful links

## Every Mind Matters

[www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters)

## Mind

[www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing](http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing)

## Mental Health Foundation

<https://mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus>

## Heads Up

[www.thisisheads-up.uk](http://www.thisisheads-up.uk)

## Helplines

### SANEline

[www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk)  
Tel: 0300 304 7000  
4.30pm-10.30pm daily

### Samaritans

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)  
Tel: 116 123

### Shout Crisis Text line

Text Shout to 85258

### CALM

[www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)  
Calm is for men in the UK who need to talk or find information and support. They open 5pm- midnight, 365 days a year  
0800 58 58 58

### Young Minds

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)  
Parents Helpline:  
0808 802 5544



Working together to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities