

Groundswell

Out of homelessness



COVID-19

Managing your wellbeing

We know that being in insecure or having no accommodation or during COVID-19 is difficult. There are lots of changes meaning you cannot live 'normally' at times. This short guide has some ideas of how to take care of your wellbeing.

Acknowledge your feelings

This is a difficult time; **it is completely normal to feel worried or anxious:**

- Allow yourself time to adjust and get used to the new environment
- Remember everyone deals with stress differently, there is no right or wrong way
- If you feel anxious or depressed don't ignore those feelings, try to **talk to someone** about them. If you want to talk to someone in private, you can **call Samaritans for free on 116 123.**

Version 4: The information in this document is correct as of the **22/02/2020**. We will update as frequently as possible.

How helping your body can benefit your mind

Sleep

- A regular sleeping pattern is key to physical and mental wellbeing.
- It can be difficult but try to sleep during the night and be awake during the day to keep a routine.

Regular meals and keep hydrated

- Our overall mental and physical wellbeing is linked to our diet, it is important to keep hydrated and well-nourished because hunger and dehydration can cause us to feel anxious and agitated.
- If you are struggling to get food, ask a key worker or outreach worker for support.

Avoid too much alcohol and/or drugs

- Alcohol and drugs may help you relax but it will also affect your physical and mental health
- We understand that being in active addiction or recovery may be difficult at this time. There are places to help: **Smart Recovery** - www.smartrecovery.org.uk, **Recovery** - **0203 5530 324**, **AA** - **0207 4070 770** or **NA** – **0300 9991 212.**

Relaxing your mind

Meditation and breathing exercises:

- When we are anxious our breathing becomes shallow which causes more anxiety - focusing on your breathing can help you relax
- Try breathing out for 4 seconds, breathing in for 4 seconds, pausing for 7 seconds and breathing out again for 8 seconds. Repeat this for a few minutes.
- You can download the free app 'Headspace' for meditation, or listen to some relaxing music or practice breathing in silence with no background noises.

Avoid too much news and social media

- It is important to keep up to date with the news, but it can leave us feeling overwhelmed so try to limit your time looking at the news and social media.
- There is also a lot of misinformation about COVID-19 that can make us more anxious. Go to Fact Check website for trusted info <https://fullfact.org/health/coronavirus/>.
- If you are feeling unsure about whether some information is accurate speak to a member of staff

Managing your wellbeing during COVID-19



Create a routine

A routine can help you to feel calm and in control, **plan your day** around mealtimes and your sleeping pattern. Try to do at least one activity from each of the following four categories everyday:

1) Relax

- Do something you find relaxing - read a book, listen to a podcast, try a jigsaw puzzle, watch TV or try drawing or writing. Could you do a book swap with someone?
- If you are supported accommodation, why not talk to the staff and offer suggestions of things you would like to do to?
- If you have internet access:
 - Fancy the theatre? The National Theatre are screening plays for free online: <https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/nt-at-home>
 - Want to feel like you're in the front row at a gig? Listen to live music: <https://www.livingroom-live.com/>
 - Football fans can watch classic games for free: <https://www.uefa.com/uefachampionsleague/news/025b-0f0149b814c5-12150b4f548e-1000--uefa-tv-watch-classic-games/>

2) Keep an active mind

- Is there a newspaper or magazine where you try a puzzle or a crossword?
- Perhaps you can learn a new language? 'DuoLingo' has an offline mode but you will need data or WIFI to download it initially <https://www.duolingo.com/>

3) Keep an active body

- Spend some time outside. **Remember to 'stay local' and adhere to the COVID-19 restrictions in your area** – you can find out what they are here: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- Being in nature is very calming and looking at flowers, birds and trees gives us a sense of normality
- There are some free online exercise classes including yoga and Pilates, search for them on YouTube. Or try joining Joe Wicks for a home body workout <https://www.youtube.com/user/thebodycoach1>

4) Connect

- Try to connect with others. **As above, restrictions will determine who you are able to socialise with and where.**
- You can call or text friends and family, if you don't have access to a phone mention this to a key worker or staff member, they may be able to help you.
- 'Video calls' are a great way to connect although this is dependent on your phone and access to the internet.

Writing things out help us to feel in control - fold a piece of paper into four parts and write the following four categories (relax, active mind, active body and connect) in each box and fill them in with ideas that are relevant to you and your current living situation.

Be considerate to staff and others around you:

- The way services and staff has changed and they continue to adapt in line with new restrictions and challenges, so it may be a little bit 'chaotic' - try to remember that.
- During this time there will be staff working may be just as anxious and confused as you.
- Try to keep calm and understand that nothing is working as it normally should and everyone is trying to assist people as best as they can – things will get better.