Mental-health advice

Social distancing and self-isolation can be really hard to deal with. It's normal to feel anxious, frustrated or bored, and if you're worried about the effect it will have on your mental health, you are not alone. Here are our tips for looking after your wellbeing during quarantine.

Staying connected

Video calls
Phone calls are amazing, and are a great way to stay connected. But seeing someone's face really can make a huge difference on a phone call. It can lift your mood and make you feel less lonely. There are lots of free video calling services you can use, and if you can connect to wifi this will help if you're worried about your data allowance. Don't be shy about going on camera – your loved ones will really appreciate seeing you, even if you're in your pyjamas! You could really brighten someone's day.

Gaming is a great way to have fun and connect with others from your own home. about how gaming helped his mental health because of the supportive friends he

Reach out
You're probably not the only person feeling worried, bored or frustrated. It's a good time for a catch up, so don't be afraid to make the first move and reach out to someone you haven't heard from in a while. They'll probably be very grateful to hear from you. Send them a message and let them know you care.

Staying calm

Mindfulness
There are lots of great free apps you can use to guide you through breathing techniques and meditation that can help ease your [anxiety](#) and clear your mind of anxious thoughts. We like to use [Headspace](#).

Why not also try some yoga as a way to relax and also get some gentle excerise which can boost your mood? There are lots of YouTube videos you can use to suit your ability and level of mobility.

Clean up your social media
You might be spending more time than usual scrolling on social media. But have you ever thought about how this could be affecting your mental health? Try unfollowing or muting accounts that make you feel anxious, upset or angry. Find positive accounts like [@youngmindsuk](#) that boost your mood and share your interests. For more tips on having a positive time online, visit our page on [social media and mental health](#).

Take a break from the news
It can be tempting to constantly check the news during times like this, but if you notice this is having a negative impact on your mental health. Try limiting how often you check the news.

Read a book
Getting away from screens and reading a book can help you escape for a bit. Why not re-read one of your favourites, or get your friend to recommend one? It might be difficult to get a new book.

Plan your days
Your normal routine might be disrupted and that can be stressful. Take some time to write down how you want to spend your day. Creating and sticking to a new routine will give you a sense of order and normality. Decide on your new routine and make sure you build in time to do things you enjoy. If you live with other people, you could ask them to help you.

Feel productive
Make a list of all those things you said you would do but never get round to. It could be sorting out your wardrobe, doing some gardening, fixing things around your living space etc. These tasks can make you feel productive and give you a sense of accomplishment. Tidying your living space can also make you feel calmer and more positive.

If you want to take the time off to rest and not be productive, that's also fine too. Listen to your body.

Online games you can play with friends
Board games can be a great way to spend time with friends or family while giving you something to focus on. You can play a lot of these games online, like Monopoly or Chess, or via apps like Words With Friends 2.

Walk away from tense situations if you can
Being cooped up with other people will naturally be frustrating and might create tension between you and those you live with. You can defuse difficult situations by walking away from arguments until everyone starts to feel calmer. If you and those you live with do not have any coronavirus symptoms, you could go outside for a walk.

Create a rota
If you're in a situation where lots of people are fighting over who gets to decide what you watch on TV, who cooks and cleans, or anything else, you might find it helpful to create a rota. This can help you agree a fair system and help avoid arguments.