

FINDING LIGHT IN THE PANDEMIC

A WELLBEING GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY



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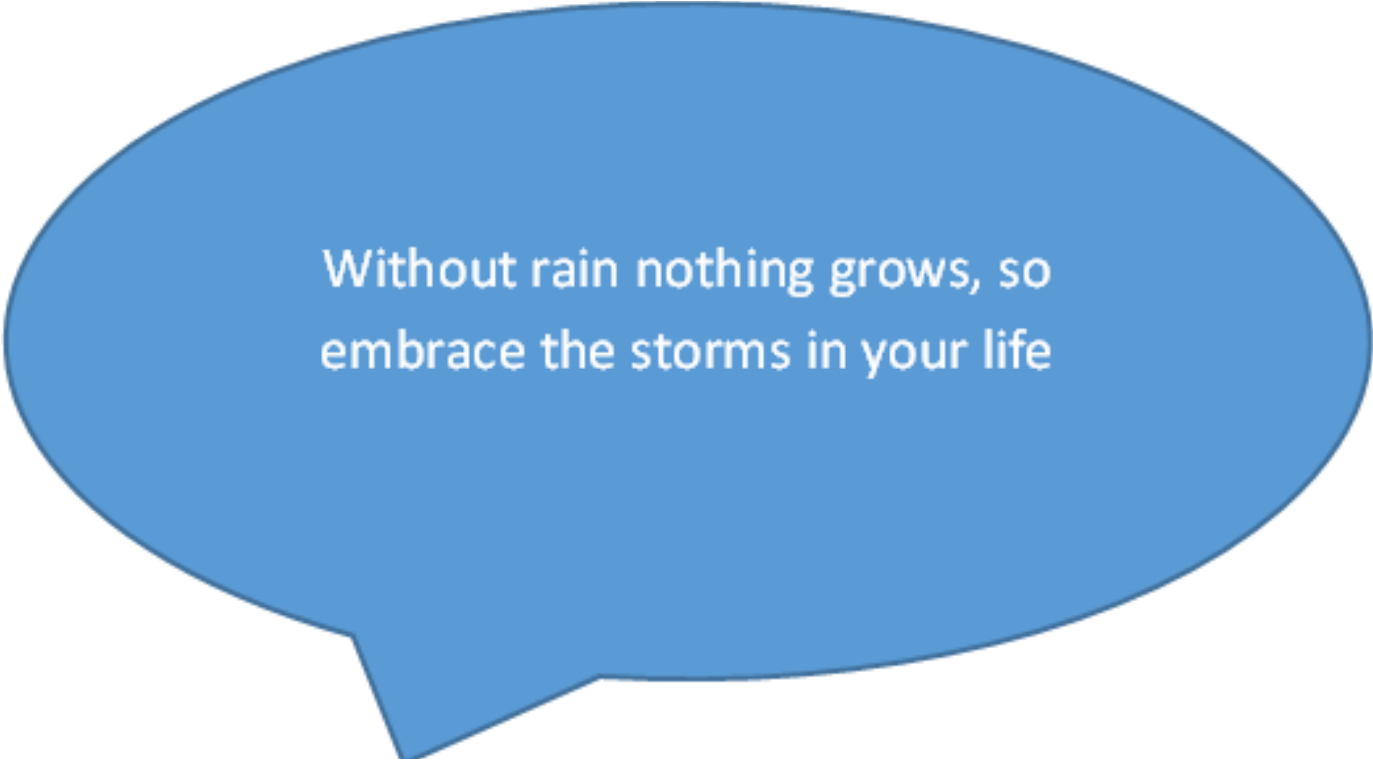
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1. INTRODUCTION



Without rain nothing grows, so
embrace the storms in your life

The pandemic has swept the global nation on a scale we could not have imagined, and understandably has brought with it a lot of concerns and worries.

We have put together a very simple and quick read guide on a few practical things you can do to help your wellbeing during this time.

We hope this is a chance to embrace the storm and make positive changes in places in our life that we would not normally reflect on.

2. FEARS AND ANXIETIES

- These are completely normal during this time
- But if it is affecting your functioning and wellbeing you might need to take a step back

Did you know negative thoughts, can make us feel negative emotions and lead to negative behaviours? Look at the example below...sounds familiar?



Negative thoughts can also leave us in the panic/fear zone but if we turn them into positive thoughts we can move into the stretch, learning and growth zone. Which zone are you in now?





3. WHAT'S DRIVING THE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS?

- Educate yourself enough that you are kept up to date with information that will keep you safe
- But are you sure looking up the daily death count is helpful?
- Or reading all those Whats-App forwards
- Or listening to that friend who has a conspiracy theory for everything
- You are in control of what you listen to and how much (turn off apps, politely tell friends you don't find their texts helpful)
- Try these top 10 tips and see what works for you

10 TIPS TO REDUCE COVID-19 ANXIETY



 <p>Focus on things you can control, such as your thoughts and behaviors.</p>	 <p>Control how often you check the latest news.</p>
 <p>Keep the big picture in mind. Humankind will survive this.</p>	 <p>Model peaceful behavior for those around you.</p>
 <p>Remember that the size of news coverage may not equal the size of a threat.</p>	 <p>Evaluate your own health behaviors and be a model for others, including children.</p>
 <p>Let wisdom and logic guide you.</p>	 <p>Feeling too isolated? Maintain digital connections with people.</p>
 <p>Turn to reputable sources for your news.</p>	 <p>Don't let fear influence your decisions, such as hoarding supplies.</p>

4. PERSPECTIVES

- Perspective is key to providing a balanced view and not overly feeding into your negative thoughts and feelings
- Can you turn a negative into a more positive way of thinking?
- Such as there are more survive COVID-19 than not and there are more COVID-19 tests that are negative than positive
- There are always positive stories if you are open to finding them- look at the headlines below for some examples

Satellite images show emissions drops over European cities amid coronavirus lockdown

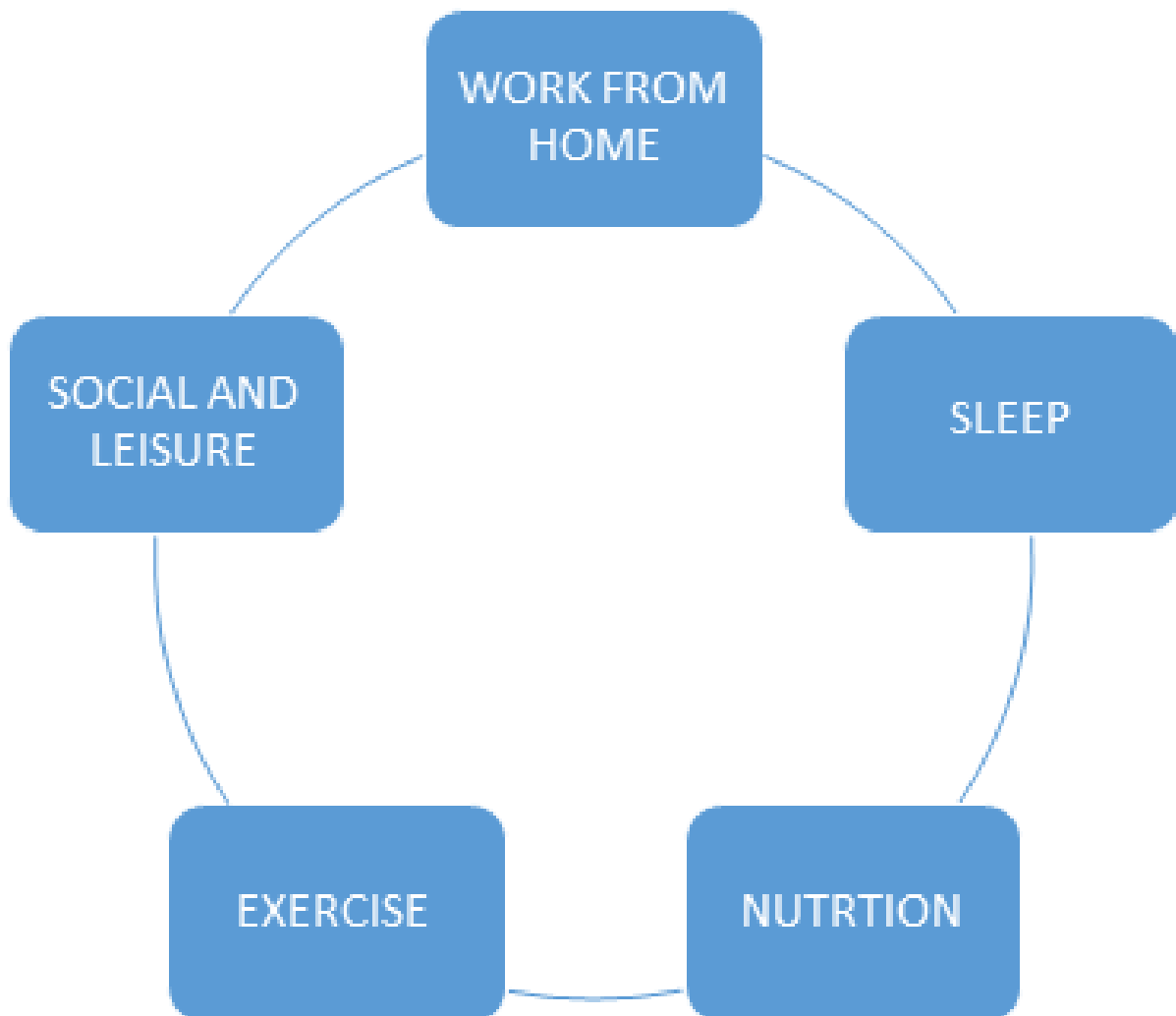
Air pollutant nitrogen dioxide, which comes from vehicles and power plants, is less concentrated this month in parts of Europe

NHS volunteer responders: 250,000 target smashed with three quarters of a million committing to volunteer

UK opens first coronavirus field hospital after just 9 days of construction

5. ROUTINE

- There is a reason why for centuries doctors still give the advice to eat well, exercise and sleep enough...it really does work!
- We will focus on the areas below which have been particularly problematic during this time



I. WORK FROM HOME

- This is new territory for a lot of us
- It will need trial and error to set a routine that works for you, and to also to learn new good habits
- Try as much as you can to stick to your usual routine
- This means, wake up at the same time, eat breakfast, exercise, dress smartly (no pyjamas), ensure your hair is brushed etc
- Try to work outside of your bedroom, or at least do not work on your bed
- Have your meals and breaks away from the desk
- Keep away from text marathons with friends during work, focus as you would as if your manager and colleagues were with you
- Ensure you have a proper start and finish time, as it can be easy to let your whole day blur into a work/home mess

II. SLEEP

- Your bed is only for two things; sleep and intimate relationships
- Do not associate anything else with it otherwise it will be hard to switch off when you need to
- This also means not bringing devices into bed; remember, laptops in bed is not a work station
- Switch off devices one hour before bedtime. A good tip is to put your phone on Aeroplane mode to stop you sneaking a peek in middle of the night
- Melatonin (a sleep hormone) builds up over the day, so every time devices are switched on, melatonin drops down and tricks the body into thinking it is daylight and not bedtime

III. NUTRITION

- Healthy weight is important for a good immune system and general good physical and mental health
- With reduced movements you might need to reduce your intake, increase portions of fruit, vegetables and good fibres
- Careful of mindless boredom snacking
- Eat your meals away from the desk, at the dinner table with family if possible
- If you are by yourself, consider organising an online dinner date with a friend/family
- Without panic stocking, you probably have realised you have enough food to last you for awhile and only need to buy essentials as top ups- choose this time to change eating habits for the better
- Be grateful for the small things-even if you cannot always buy things from the shops, they were probably luxuries rather than absolute staples
- Remember we have enough food supply chain- you will not starve, but taking lots of food off the shelves takes it away from the elderly/vulnerable who can't go out as much as you

IV. EXERCISE

- There are lots of free exercise classes on YouTube, and even PE classes for children which you can join in
- Make it social by doing live online classes
- Daily exercise is a must
- Incorporate different types different days e.g. stretching to ensure muscles don't stiffen and shorten, especially if you are at your desk all day
- Take breaks whilst working from home and get up and move from your desk and laptop
- Vitamin D is important and is linked to a good immune system, so within social distancing reasons, try to walk outside even if it is your garden

V. SOCIAL AND LEISURE

- Stick to routine (the good parts) using innovative ways to ‘meet up’ and incorporate new good habits
- There are lots of free online social groups; look it up on Eventbrite, Meetup. There are lots of things such as virtual quiz night, bingo, exercise club
- You can make your own social group within your family and friendship circle
- Text marathons are not an ideal way to truly stay connected, so aim to do regular video/phone calls for your close ones
- Turn off social media at times so you are not over relying on it for human contact
- Talk about normal things, not just COVID-19
- We want to all try to come out of this a better person; build into your week at least one activity/ learning opportunity you always wanted to do but never had the time. There is no need to be over ambitious such as learning a new language, even cooking a healthy meal may be something
- Give back... volunteering and helping others boosts happy hormones. Giving zakat, charity, telephone befriending for elderly... anyway you think might help
- Spirituality and faith can be a very healing time now. Don't be afraid of isolation, contemplation and a time to get closer to God in a way that is comfortable for you

6. FINANCES

- The government has responded in a number of ways to try to help people in different categories; statutory sick pay if isolating, applying for universal credit, self employed, loss of job, furlough- read up and know your rights [see resources at end for more information]
- Check up on mortgage holidays and ensure you discuss with landlords early
- Check with your banks on rules on overdrafts, using savings and fees being waived
- Budget planner- what are your ingoings and outgoings, write it down and revisit this regularly
- Avoid browsing online out of boredom as you might find yourself buying things which are not needed
- Charity is not always financial, so if you want to increase your deeds, remember even a smile is charity

7. MORE SELF HELP RESOURCES

- <https://www.rethink.org/news-and-stories/blogs/2020/03/managing-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/>
- <https://www.mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org/en/tools/budget-planner/>
- https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/your-mind-plan-quiz/WT.tsrc=Search&WT.mc_id=Brand&gclid=EAlaIQobChMIgb3V4ceu6AIVSrDtCh3aBAocEAAYASAAEgluu_D_BwE
- <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2020/03/uk-coronavirus-help-and-your-rights/>
- <https://www.goodsamapp.org/NHS>
- https://www.goodsamapp.org/NHSreferraldm_i=1TXQ,6TI1O,RMBIBE,RB8C2
- <https://www.openiftar.co.uk/my>
- <https://www.futurelearn.com/>
- <https://www.headspace.com/>
- <https://www.calm.com/>
- Beamingconnections@gmail.com

If you are finding your mental health is deteriorating, please see your GP.

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