

Self care whilst self isolating

It's important at such a worrying time that we look after our mental health & wellbeing as much as we can. Here are some tips to help with this, ease household tensions and to try and keep the boredom at bay.

EXERCISE - it's hugely important for your body and mind to keep active. Jogging on the spot, star jumps, sit-ups. There's a vast array of yoga, HIIT, Pilates and other videos on YouTube & Joe Wicks, The Body Coach, will be offering free workouts each morning at 9am from Monday 23.3.2020 on YouTube. Get the kids to join in too! Children aged 5-18 need at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day.

LIMIT YOUR TIME ONLINE - particularly watching/reading items about Coronavirus. If you're already anxious this will heighten your anxieties. If you aren't naturally anxious, you could become anxious through constant stimulation about the situation. Photos of empty shelves in supermarkets are not helping anyone.

DON'T GET DRAWN INTO CONFLICT - either online, with the children or other people in the house. This will raise anxiety & levels of the stress hormone, Cortisol. It won't help the atmosphere at home either. Take a deep breath, count to 10, walk away.

KEEP IN TOUCH - make sure you stay close to family & friends via telephone or video calling. Create a family WhatsApp group - share funny memes and videos. Keep conversations as fun and light as possible.

READ THAT BOOK YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO - if you have no books at home Kindle online have a huge amount or free books for adults and kids. SCRIBD is an online library who are offering their service free to anyone worldwide currently. Read to the children, get the children to read to you. Reading is to your mind what exercise is to your body. Don't like reading? SCRIBD offer audio books too.

HAVE A BATH - chuck in some bubble bath or scented oils if you have some. Relaxing for mind and body. Toddlers usually love a bubble bath - and they might even nap afterwards!

TRY ADULT COLOURING - there are many free colouring pages online and if you don't have a printer or any pens you can always download a free colouring app. Pixel Art, Colouring Pages for Adults or Colorfly are good ones.

LISTEN TO SOME MUSIC - put on your favourite CD or playlist and dance - alone or with the kids. Hoovering, sweeping and dusting is more fun when you do it dancing.

TRY NEW RECIPES- look after your diet as well as you can. Feeding yourself is one of the ultimate forms of self-care. Look up different recipes with ingredients you have already - BBCgoodfood.com, allrecipes.co.uk or cookingonabootstrap.com are all great places to start. If you've got the ingredients already then bake a cake or biscuits. Something kids love to join in with too.

DE-CLUTTER THAT CUPBOARD - you know the one! The one you've been meaning to do for months! It's amazing how much better you feel once your cupboards and drawers are tidy. Make up some bags for charity for when things are back to normal.

WATCH SOMETHING UPBEAT - an old film you've always loved, music video channels, reruns of Friends, Big Bang Theory, Only Fools & Horses - who doesn't love Del Boy!

SPEND TIME WITH PETS - they will love having you home more. Teach your dog a new trick. If you can still get out of the house occasionally, take your dog for a walk but remember to maintain social distancing. You'll both benefit from fresh air.

TRY TO KEEP SOME ROUTINE - Routine is good for mental health and easing any anxiety. Try to keep meal times the same, bed times the same etc. Why not try planning activities, especially if children are at home with you. one day things will all go back to normal and your alarm will be going off at 6am again!



Useful numbers & websites

CALM - Campaign Against Living Miserably - Freephone or webchat (5pm until midnight) everyday - for those who are anxious, worried, unhappy or lonely - 0800 585858

Right Lines - online support if you or someone you know is self-harming - www.rightlines.co.uk

Young Minds - for young people wanting advice & information about mental health & wellbeing. Parents/Carers helpline 0808 802 5544

Wellbeing & Mental Health Helpline - if you're feeling low, need support and want to talk. 0800 915 4640 or www.lancs-mentalhealthhelpline.nhs.uk

BEAT - the UK's eating disorder charity. For anyone affected by an eating disorder or anyone supporting them - www.beatingdisorder.org.uk

FRANK - drugs helpline - 0300 123 6600, www.talktofrank.com or text 82111

