

Coping with Corona

Understandably, we are feeling overwhelmed and anxious in the light of the continually changing effects of COVID-19, making everything feel uncertain and out of our control.

In a fast changing world, finding our focus and trying to slow down can help us tune in to our personal responses to this situation. This can help us prioritise our personal needs including the health of ourselves, our loved ones, our neighbours and our community.

Below you will find my 'Wellness Wheel'. Finding balance in these areas of our lives can help us to look after ourselves both physically and mentally. At this unpredictable time, when we have been forced to jump off the treadmill and spend a lot more time in the house, consider how you could continue to prioritise these areas in order to maintain a positive mindset at this difficult time.



Dietary choices

Initially, we may feel like our hopes/ intentions for a healthy diet are taking a back seat in light of the current situation. Instead we are left with what is available to us when we are in the supermarket.

However, try being creative with what you can get your hands on. It's amazing what you can make from just tinned and dry produce. When possible, try to cook from scratch and use this extra time to create some new recipes, however don't be too hard on yourself if you don't manage to stick to this all of the time.

Prioritise fruit and vegetables when you can – they will support the healthy functioning of your immune system. Great in frozen or tinned form too.

Planning is key – look at what you have in the fridge/cupboard and plan from this. Think about what needs to be used first and make the most of the ingredients you have.

Movement

Try to make movement a priority and get into a routine with this. Take advantage of the spring weather and get outdoors, or try a workout app/ some online yoga. Use this time to try something new that you have wanted to try for a while.

Mix it up to keep it exciting. You could start the day with some indoor movement and then go for a walk to stretch your legs later in the day, this is especially important when working at home and not moving around as much as usual. Move mindfully and make it work for you.

Self Care

Whether you're self isolating or social distancing; the same rules apply, we deserve to rest. Don't feel bad for not being constantly productive. If you're working from home, give yourself regular breaks through the day to do something you enjoy. Make the most of those 'guilty pleasures' that you always want to do but never have time for. Read a book, bake a cake, call a friend, meditate. Take advantage of the extra time.

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Stress management

The current situation is stressful, it's overwhelming and unpredictable. Give yourself a break – don't be too hard on yourself if you're finding it difficult to manage.

Before you start worrying, think: is my worry in my control? If not, try to let it go.

Practise stress management tools when you feel overwhelmed in order to promote relaxation before things become too much. Examples of this could be; getting out into nature, meditation, talking to a loved one, gratitude.

Try to be consistent with routines and keep things as normal as possible, particularly in the morning. Starting the day in a positive way will promote an optimistic mindset for the rest of the day.

Tune into what you are finding stressful and take control of it if you can eg. muting overwhelming Whatsapp groups/ limiting screen time. Try your best to focus on the good.

Relationships

The people we live with are becoming our colleagues, our friends and our family. As well as feeling grateful for them, living in such close proximity can be tricky. We are bound to have difficult moments. Try to take yourself off to a different room if you are feeling annoyed or overwhelmed. Pick your battles and let things go. Make sure you are staying in contact with other friends and family.

Purpose

We may be struggling to find a sense of purpose when we have been forced to slow down and are spending a lot more time in the house.

Make a to do list and set an intention every day, work related or not. Make the most of the time you have and try to keep yourself busy. Don't rush - spread out those to dos and make them more enjoyable rather than a chore. Find the balance between staying productive and giving yourself the space and time to relax.

Social life

Stay in touch with loved ones. Get creative and make the most of technology eg. a group call for a catch up. If you're working from home, be strict with your switch off time – make a plan for your evening to help you get out of work mode.

Remember, the weekend is still the weekend and you deserve a break. Spend a little more time cooking a special meal or on the phone to a friend. Take advantage of the live gym classes and game apps etc. that you can enjoy from the comfort of your own home!

Sleep

It's easy to push the bedtime later when we feel we have nothing to get up for. We don't feel as bad scrolling on social media or watching that last episode on Netflix.

Self isolating or not, the same rules apply; blue light affects sleep quality. Staying up late and looking at our screens will not only affect how we sleep but also our motivation the next day. Remember, whatever it is that we are watching or looking at on our phone will still be there tomorrow. Quality sleep helps to fight/ battle infection whereas lack of sleep has a negative impact on our immune function. This is a perfect opportunity to get into a healthy sleeping routine – make the most of it!

Prioritising our health and wellness at times of uncertainty can help us to feel well equipped to deal with what's next. Remember, looking after yourself will help you to look after others. Follow the Government rules, take each day at a time and be grateful for the good.

