

Managing to cope with isolation

When we have very busy lives, we often think how wonderful it would be to sit and do nothing.

However, boredom has been shown to be as stressful as being too busy. Here are some ideas on how to make living in isolation as easy as it can be...

Emotionally you may feel like you are on a bit of a rollercoaster, with ups and downs. So, it's ok to have 'wobbles'. There may also be some parts of the day that are harder than others. At these points it might be useful to plan a task (phone a friend/listen to a song/do a meditation/have a dance about) to help you get through that moment.

Think about other ways to connect with your loved ones. How about face time, a phone call, writing a letter to them, sending a text, sharing photos or silly memes, listen to a song together over Skype or the telephone, watch a movie together remotely, gaming online with pals.

So often social media can be a stressful thing but try using it for good and make it work for you by connecting in a positive way with others.

TOP TIPS

Routine: Plan a routine, write it down and stick to it. Divide your time into working / schoolwork, exercise, meals, tidying up and hobby/leisure time.

Privacy: Have private / quiet time in your routine. Everyone needs a bit of space. So perhaps have a rota so that everyone can have the front room for a few hours to themselves to watch their favourite programme, listen to their music or just sit alone. If you have a garden or outside space perhaps just sit for a while and listen to the birds.



Meals: Make meals as nutritious as you can. Food can also give you a boost - something to look forward to. It could also become a new activity you try out.

You could spend time trying recipes you have always wanted to use but never had time to learn. Take the time to teach others in the family who perhaps don't usually cook 😊



Exercise: Get some exercise, (in line with the isolation rules you are living within and your physical ability). Spend time in your garden, kick a ball about, do a bit of weeding, do some armchair exercises, even cleaning will raise your activity levels. Log onto one of the many free exercise classes online.

Cleaning: Keeping your space clean and tidy could be part of your routine and provide some exercise. Make the space you are spending the most time in the best it can be. Having an organised space will help you feel less chaotic and provide a sense of calm.

Connections: Keep your social connections with family and friends through whatever means you can for example telephone calls, Skype, FaceTime, Snapchat, etc. Why not have a family 'get together' where you link up virtually and have lunch or a cuppa together?



If you use Google Chrome you can download the extension [Netflix Party](#) and watch a movie with your friends or family together. Take a look at the online group task you could join like the [Sofa Singers](#) or a [Virtual Choir](#). Allowing the children to link up with their friends for online gaming will also allow them social time with their friends.

Don't spend too much time watching the news/scouring social media. This may increase your anxiety and make you feel worse. Limit your exposure to the continual flow of news stories.

Perhaps check in a couple of times a day, (morning and evening), so you know what is happening around the world, but don't feel overwhelmed by the volume of news.

RESOURCES

- [Sport England](#) has a wide selection of online exercise platforms including working out with the kids, exercises for older adults and those with long term health conditions
- [Joe Wicks](#) (The Body Coach) is posting a P.E lesson on his YouTube channel at 9am everyday
- [A Yoga and Pilates studio “Tribe Yoga”](#) is streaming its classes and putting the workouts on Vimeo
- Learn a new skill with a free online course from [FutureLearn](#) or [OpenLearn](#)
- [MindMate](#) is for young people and their families to help you explore emotional wellbeing and mental health issues
- [Mindwell](#) provides information for adults on looking after your mental health and support

SUPPORT

- **Samaritans:** Telephone 116 123 for free anytime
- **Crisis Text Line:** Text SHOUT to 85258
- **Silverline:** Aimed at people over 55. Their helpline is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Telephone: 0800 4 70 80 90
- **CALM (for men):** Telephone 0800 58 58 58, 5pm- Midnight every day
- **The Mix:** Aimed at people under 25. Telephone 0808 808 4994, 4pm-11pm every day of the year. They also run a crisis text service, text THEMIX to 85258.

