

# COVID-19

## Mental well-being

### Introduction

**Whether you're still working onsite, working from home, or if you've been furloughed, COVID-19 is going to have an impact on your well-being, so it is important to take action to help get yourself through these uncertain times.**

It is vital that you look after your mental health during this pandemic when you are understandably more likely to experience anxiety and stress, or boredom and loneliness.

### Stick with routines

**Regular routines are foundations to our well-being – they create a sense of stability during uncertain times. It is highly likely that you will currently be experiencing some disruption to your normal routines.**

During this time, it can be beneficial to develop a new routine that works for you, try to include:

- Waking up and going to bed at the same time each day
- Eating regular meals at approximately the same time
- Maintaining your normal morning routine such as brushing your teeth, showering and getting dressed
- Create weekly routines for activities that you do not need to do daily, such as picking up essentials
- Try to add positive additions to your routines – perhaps schedule a time to phone someone for social interaction or a time for some light exercise

Having a routine that you stick to can help you feel more in control and can help you cope better with changes and disruptions. Developing a regular routine is also the easiest way to create new healthy habits that will contribute to your overall well-being.

Try the [Headspace](#) web post “*The secret benefit of routines*” for more benefits and tips on creating your own routines.

*continued...*

## Stay correctly informed

**There's a lot of misinformation online that can exacerbate feelings of anxiety and stress, and affect your mental health. Make sure you:**

- Always get your information from reliable sources such as the World Health Organisation, GOV.uk or the NHS website
- Be aware of misinformation, or 'fake news' – this is especially evident on social media platforms. Always check the source of the information before you take any heed of it
- Be mindful of other people when you share information – make sure you always check the facts of any information that you share as spreading misinformation has a ripple effect
- Limit your information intake as a constant barrage of updates is not going to do your mental health any good
- Create set times that you check the news. Being constantly plugged into a never-ending news stream is going to heighten any worries or anxiety you may have

## Promote positivity

**We are living in worrying times with a lot of negatives to overcome. However, there are also many positives to report. It is evident that this outbreak has brought out the best in many people, with a strong sense of solidarity and community.**

There are several ways that you can remain positive during COVID-19. Try looking for good news stories, ideally from people local to you so that it brings the positivity closer to home.

Do some research to see if there is anything locally that you would like to contribute your time or skills to if you are in the position to do so safely. Doing good makes you feel good! Knowing that you've helped somebody in these testing times is going to lift your mood and help your mental well-being.

## It really is OK to not be OK

**These are unprecedented, unnerving, and troubling times; everybody is going to react differently to the situation.**

Remember that you can have concerns, and here are some tips on how to deal with them:

- Do not be ashamed to reach out and talk to family or friends about how you're feeling – the chances are they have concerns of their own and you will be helping them as well as yourself by opening a conversation
- If you feel like you cannot talk to anybody you know about your concerns make use of the vast range of support services that are available (we have listed some in the *Resources* section of this document)
- Try a self-reflective practice such as meditation or journaling; by giving yourself some space in the day to reflect you give yourself a chance to assess the situation, your feelings, and how you might ease your concerns
- Accept any difficult feelings you may have – there are no rules on how to cope in the current situation. However you are reacting, do not resist or bottle it up – this will only make everything feel worse

*continued...*

## Be productive but give yourself a break

**If you have more time during the outbreak, or even where you don't, try to use your time constructively to get things done as this can boost your mental health.**

However, be aware that it is human nature to struggle with change. Upheaval to normal routines are emotionally draining in any circumstance, the situation that we are in is unprecedented and comes with additional fear, stress and anxiety.

Try setting goals for the day, even if they are small – having an aim can give you a purpose and have a significant positive effect on your mental well-being.

If you are still working, be mindful that even though it may feel like 'business as usual' you may not feel as productive as normal. Try to make sure that you are on top of your physical well-being to make sure you are giving yourself everything your body needs to function properly so that you only need to deal with the additional mental pressures of the outbreak.

If you are not working, try to keep busy. Now is a great time to do something you wouldn't normally have time for – from online courses to learning an instrument, the internet is a wealth of free knowledge. Remember, these are emotionally draining times – if you need to rest and relax, do so as it is important not to burn yourself out.

## Make use of the available resources

### Mates in Mind

Mates in Mind are continuing to support workforces with their mental wellbeing, especially those who are working remotely during this period. Their website is full of guidance, tips, factsheets and other helpful resources.

- Visit the website: [www.matesinmind.org/news/covid19-mentalhealth.html](http://www.matesinmind.org/news/covid19-mentalhealth.html)

### Lighthouse's Construction Industry Helpline

Lighthouse Club is an established industry charity that not only delivers emergency financial support to construction families but can also offer help and advice on a range of issues including "*Occupational health and wellbeing issues as an employee or an employer*" and "*Help to manage and reschedule debt*".

- Call: 0345 605 1956

### Samaritans

You can contact the Samaritans about anything, including relationship and family problems, bereavement, financial worries, job-related stress, loneliness and isolation, depression, dependency on alcohol or other drugs, thoughts of suicide it's a free service with various ways to contact them:

- Call: 116 123 – FREE, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
- Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)
- Write a letter: Freepost RSRB-KKBY-CYJK, Chris, PO Box 9090, STIRLING FK8 2SA
- Visit the website: [www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan](http://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan)

*continued...*

## Useful resources

### UK Government

[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

### World Health Organisation

[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

### Volunteer to help the NHS

[www.england.nhs.uk/2020/03/your-nhs-needs-you-nhs-call-for-volunteer-army/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/2020/03/your-nhs-needs-you-nhs-call-for-volunteer-army/)

### Lighthouse Club

[www.lighthouseclub.org/construction-industry-helpline/](http://www.lighthouseclub.org/construction-industry-helpline/)

### Mates In Mind

[www.matesinmind.org/need-help.html](http://www.matesinmind.org/need-help.html)

### Headspace

[www.headspace.com/blog/2016/08/22/the-secret-benefit-of-routines-it-wont-surprise-you/](http://www.headspace.com/blog/2016/08/22/the-secret-benefit-of-routines-it-wont-surprise-you/)

### Conditions of use

SIGNS are produced by the Scaffolding Association and are free to reproduce and use, subject to the following conditions: SIGNS are free to use for any purpose that is designed to maintain or improve safety. The material is © Scaffolding Association and any significant use should acknowledge the Scaffolding Association as the source. Any material changes in content (as opposed to extracts from) are not authorized by the Scaffolding Association and as such must not be attributed to the Scaffolding Association. Any queries about the possible use of SIGNS should be referred by email to: [info@scaffolding-association.org](mailto:info@scaffolding-association.org) SIGNS will be reviewed by the Scaffolding Association from time to time, to ensure that the general messages and other information continues to be suitable for purpose. Whilst every effort has been made to provide reliable and accurate information, we would welcome any corrections or comments on SIGNS, and for this reason we cannot accept responsibility for any misinformation posted. Please send any suggestions for changes or amendments to: [info@scaffolding-association.org](mailto:info@scaffolding-association.org)