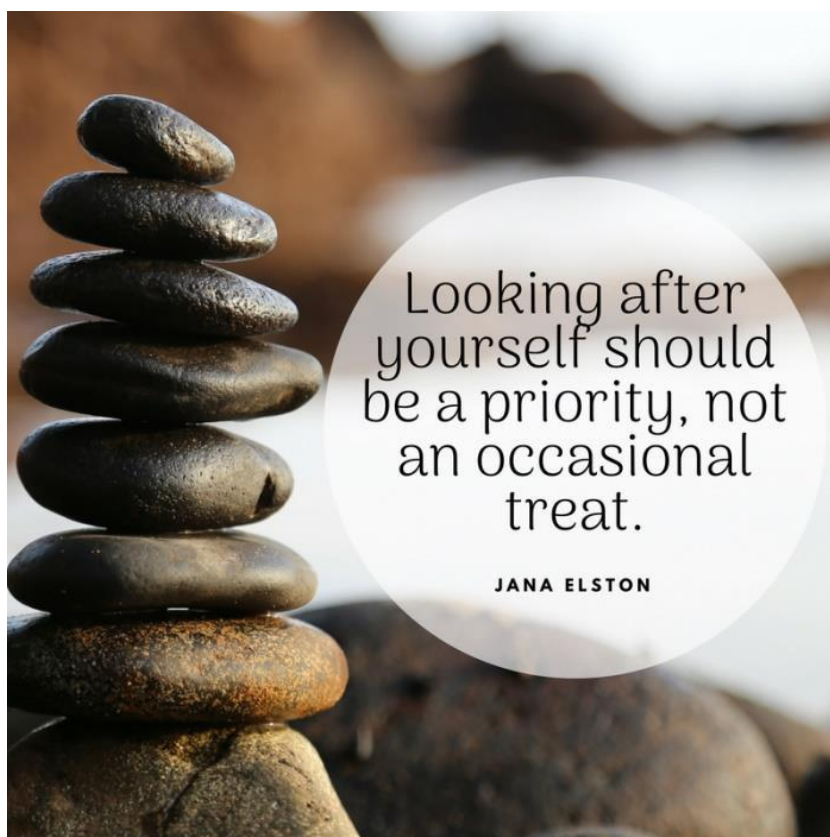


COVID-19 RESOURCE PACK

Emotional First Aid Kit



Overview

- This booklet details ways in which you can support your emotional wellbeing during this time.
- It has a list of local service's numbers and websites, which you can access for further support.
- It also has details of general mental health advice, helpful apps for your phone and ways to notice and manage some of the difficult thoughts you may be experiencing.



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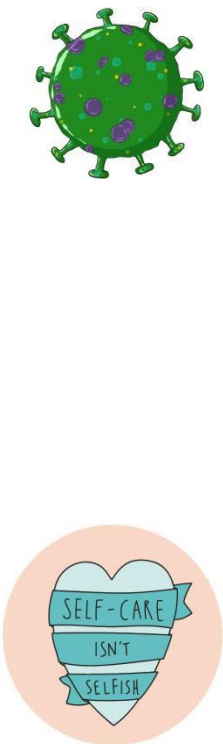
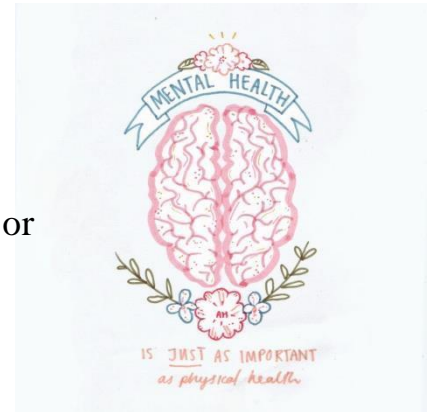
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Mental Health First Aid Kit

- It is important for us to think about our mental health, as well as our physical health. This is often something that we can overlook.
- Right now, many of us are worried about COVID-19 or Coronavirus.
- You may feel uncertain about the future and unsure about what is best to do. In times like these our mental health can suffer.
- It may not be clear that it is happening, but you may find that you feel more on edge than usual, angry, sad or helpless.
- You may notice that you want to completely avoid any mention of what is happening in the world or become aware that you are more frustrated with others.
- You may find that your motivation to carry out daily tasks/activities is reduced or that being in self-isolation has made you feel lower in mood.
- It is important to note, that you are not alone during this time and there are services out there that will continue to support you, the best they can.
- Here are some suggestions for things you can do to take care of your mental wellbeing:



SELF-CARE CHALLENGE IDEAS				
Nawal Mustafa, M.A. @ thebraincoach				
Wash Your Hands 	Limit Mindless Scrolling Online 	Do Breathwork or Meditate 	Establish a new routine (i.e. create a schedule) 	Try out a new recipe
Get 8 Hours of Sleep 	Practice Social Distancing 	Read a Book or Listen to a Podcast 	Start a fun project 	Virtual Hangouts with Loved-Ones
Eat Nutritious Food 	Journal Your Feelings 	Exercise at Home or Outdoors 	Help the Vulnerable and Disadvantaged 	Catch Up on Chores

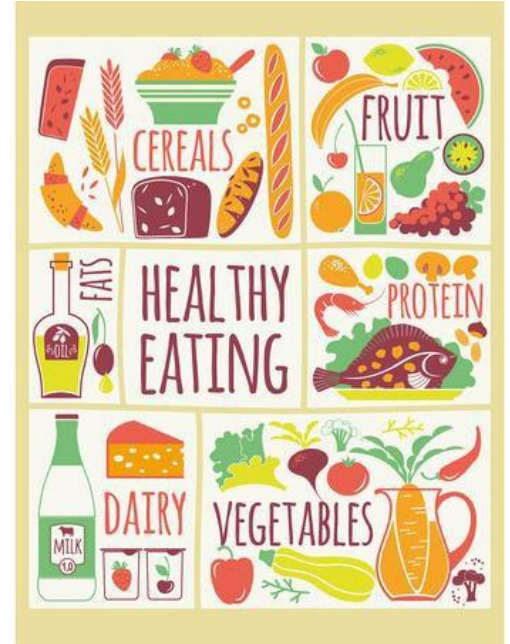


Daily Routine

Try to maintain a daily routine as much as possible. Try to wake up at a regular time, get washed and dressed and continue to eat meals at the appropriate times. This will help provide structure to your day.

Eat Well and Stay Hydrated

We understand that food shopping is hard at the moment, but try to eat a healthy and balanced diet. Your body needs adequate nutrients of all types, as well as hydration to maintain wellbeing.



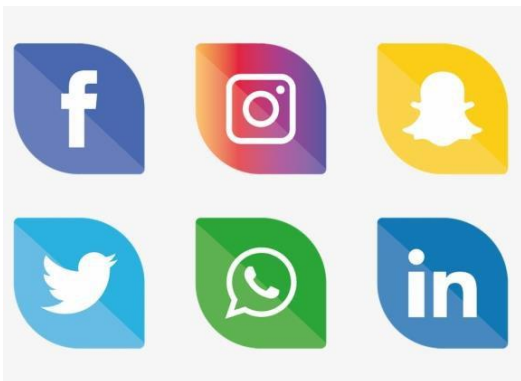
Exercise

Exercise is very good for wellbeing. Try to include one form of exercise per day. It could be a walk, bike ride, indoor yoga, football in the back garden, dancing in the kitchen, anything that gets you up and moving. There are also many helpful links on YouTube to workouts that can be completed from home. Doing what you can is better than doing nothing at all!

Sleep

Take a look at your sleep or rest pattern. Are you getting enough sleep? What is disrupting it? Some tips to help improve sleep include reducing caffeine and sugar in the evening, having a regular sleep pattern with wind-down time built in or reading a book before bed instead of being on gadgets. Although it may be a challenge, try not to clock watch and try to keep your bed for sleep only.



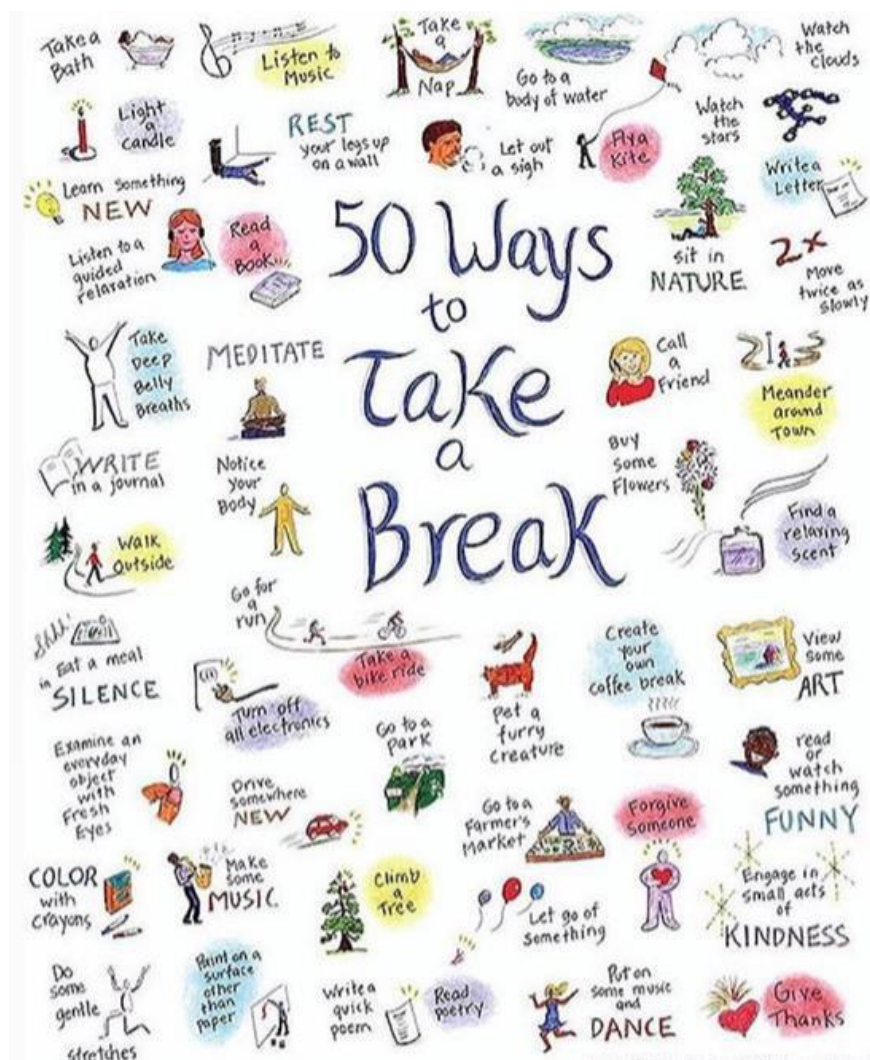


Keep In Contact With Friends

Social contact is very important for mental wellbeing. You may need to adapt how you normally contact friends, such as increasing the number of phone calls you make to them. There are also many apps available to help keep social contact going, such as Skype, WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter. Facetime is also a useful tool that is available on all iPhones and iPads.

Relax

Find time to relax and unwind. Listening to music, watching a good television series, taking a bath or meditating can all help us to relax. If working from home, it can be difficult to set boundaries around working hours, but try to be strict and allow yourself an unwind period.



Be Kind to Yourself

These times are bringing uncertainty, worry and fear for all of us. What kind of things would you say and do for a loved one in this situation? Apply those same kind words and deeds to yourself. Remember to not be too hard on yourself and that you are trying your best.



IF ALL YOU DID WAS PUT YOUR HAND ON YOUR HEART
AND WISH YOURSELF WELL, IT WOULD BE A MOMENT WELL SPENT.

ELISHA GOLDSTEIN

© 2020

Try to limit time spent watching the news



All the information available on Coronavirus can be overwhelming. Limit worry and agitation by lessening the time you and your family spend watching or listening to the news or scrolling through social media.

Try To Focus On What Is Within Your Control

It is completely natural to get lost in our worries, but it can be unhelpful. Instead try to focus on what's in your control. Mindfulness can help us to do this. At the bottom of this document, there are a number of mindfulness exercises that can help us to focus on the here and now.



Take time
for
yourself

Take Time for Yourself

Think about what is important to you. Think about what makes you happy. Choose one of those things and make it your priority. It may be to do some gardening, reading a new book or having a pampering session.

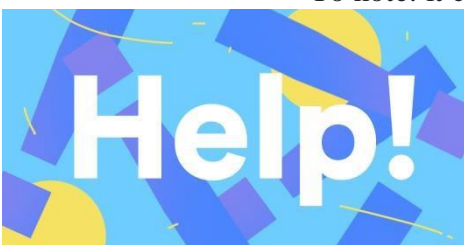


Ask For Help

Don't be afraid to ask for help. You don't have to be alone with your worry and it can be comforting to share what you are experiencing with those trained to help.

There are many support services out there. A few are listed below:

- ✓ **Shropshire MIND:** 01743 368647 or email manager.shropshiremind@gmail.com. Wide range of support services for people and their families affected by mental health and emotional distress.
- ✓ **Samaritans:** 116 123 or www.samaritans.org.uk. Confidential listening and a safe place to talk about anything. Can provide support if you are feeling distressed or are concerned about someone else. **Shrewsbury and Telford Samaritans:** 0300 094 5717
- ✓ **Crisis helpline:** 0300 124 0365. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis call this number. They provide specialist support to those with a significant mental health problem who are in crisis.
- ✓ **Shout! Crisis text line:** Text 85258. A free 24/7 text service for anyone worried about their mental health. Available at any time, place and if you need immediate help.
- ✓ **Young Minds Parents Hotline:** 0808 8025544. Free, confidential online and telephone support, information and advice to any adult worried about the emotional wellbeing, behaviour or mental health of a child or young person up to the age of 25.
- ✓ **Shropshire Adult Social care:** 0345 678 9044. Provide help, support and advice about social care.
- ✓ **Anxiety UK:** 03444 775 774 (Monday to Friday, 9:30am – 5:30pm) www.anxietyuk.org.uk. Help to relieve and support those living with anxiety and anxiety-based depression by providing information, support and understanding via an extensive range of services.
- ✓ **ChildLine** (for children and teenagers) (9am-Midnight): 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk. ChildLine offers a telephone support line to anyone under 19 in the UK. You can use it to discuss anything- be it big or small.
- ✓ **CALM:** 0800 58 58 58 (daily, 5pm to midnight). Targeted at young men aged 15-35 who are at risk of falling prey to suicide. Offers help, information and advice via a phone and web service. To note: anyone, regardless of age, gender or geographic location can call the line.
- ✓ **Shropshire Council Community Reassurance Team:** 0345 678 9028 (8am-6pm weekdays, 9am- 1pm Saturday). A new dedicated helpline, created by Shropshire Council, to those who are vulnerable and in need during the coronavirus pandemic. To note: it cannot provide health related advice.



Helpful websites, apps and links

There are many apps you could try which could be helpful but these are some suggestions to try or you may find your own that you like better.



Headspace helps people to learn the skills of mindfulness and meditation. It can be used for a few minutes daily to help clear your mind. There is access to meditations on everything from stress and anxiety to sleep and focus.



Calm provides people experiencing stress and anxiety with guided meditations, sleep stories, breathing programs, and relaxing music.



ACT Companion: The Happiness Trap helps people to be present, open up and do what matters using simple, interactive exercises and tools. It contains goal-setting tools, self-compassion exercises and acceptance techniques. During COVID-19 the app is free of charge- use code TOGETHER.



Mind Shift Mind Shift is a mental health app designed specifically for teens and young adults with anxiety. Mind Shift stresses the importance of changing how you think about anxiety rather than avoiding those difficult thoughts.



Self Help for Anxiety Management allows users to create a 24-hour anxiety toolkit that allows you to track anxious thoughts and behaviour over time, and learn 25 different self-help techniques. You can also use SAM's "Social Cloud" feature to confidentially connect with other users in an online community for additional support.



Happify has a psychologist-approved mood-training program, which includes engaging games, activity suggestions, gratitude prompts and more to help support you with difficult negative thoughts.



Smiling Mind is a way to practice daily meditation and mindfulness exercises during time of stress. It is a unique tool developed by Psychologists and educators to help bring balance to your life.

Other NHS approved apps can be discovered here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mental-health/>

When in self-isolation or affected by coronavirus

A range of helpful guidance, providing ideas on what you can be doing to keep mentally healthy during the pandemic and whilst staying at home. The links contain ideas about how to stay connected; how to stay active and tips to manage your wellbeing.



Mental Health
Foundation

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak>

<https://www.rethink.org/news-and-stories/blogs/2020/03/managing-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>



World Health
Organization

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2

<https://psychcentral.com/blog/coronavirus-anxiety-4-ways-to-cope-with-fear/>

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/news/news-from-bacp/2020/28-february-coronavirus-anxiety-how-to-cope-if-you-re-feeling-anxious-about-the-outbreak/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>



General self-help about managing your own mental health and sleep

These links are for websites that provide general mental health advice and tips to support you:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/mental-health-problems-introduction/self-care/>

<https://www.samh.org.uk/about-mental-health/self-help-and-wellbeing>

<http://mentalhealthsupport.co.uk/ns/>

<https://www.sleepio.com/>

<https://littf.com>

<https://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk>



MOODJUICE

Audio guides for wellbeing

From the NHS website, a series of mental wellbeing audio guides to help boost your mood:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/moodzone-mental-wellbeing-audio-guides/>



Support for money worries

Financial pressures can have a significant negative impact on our mental health and can be amplified even more when there is economic uncertainty. The following resources provide some useful information for further advice and keeping yourself financially safe.



• Citizens advice:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you/>

- Offers latest guidance and advice on paying bills, scams and going to work
- Advice on what to do if off work sick or told to stay at home because of Coronavirus (employed, self-employed or claiming benefits)
- Advice if you can't pay your rent



• The Money Advice Service:

<https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you>

- Information on your rights to sick pay, benefits (including what you can claim if you're self-employed, or not entitled to statutory sick pay)

• Step Change:

<https://www.stepchange.org/debt-info/coronavirus-affecting-finance.aspx>



- Advice on what to do if you are worried about how coronavirus could affect your finances
- Advice if you are worried about school closures affecting your finances.

- **England Illegal Money Lending Team- Stop Loan Sharks:**

0300 555 2222 or website at www.stoploansharks.co.uk

- Ensuring that illegal money lenders do not take advantage and profit from other people's hardship
- Contact if you are being harassed or threatened by an illegal money lenders



- **Be mindful, that some individuals may be looking to benefit from times like these. The National Fraud Intelligence Bureau has reported a new trend in fraud related to COVID-19. Some of the tactics being used include:**

- Fraudsters purporting to be from a research group that mimic the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organisation (WHO). They claim to provide the victim with a list of active infections in their area but to access this information the victim needs to click on a link /make a donation.
- Fraudsters purporting to be from HMRC offering a tax refund and directing victims to a fake website to harvest their personal and financial details.
- Sending articles about the virus outbreak with a link to a fake company website where victims are encouraged to click to subscribe to a daily newsletter for further updates. Sending investment scheme and trading advice encouraging people to take advantage of the downturn.



Thought Traps

We are all in the habit of thinking in certain ways. These thinking patterns are not always helpful to our wellbeing. See if you can pick out any unhelpful thoughts you experience, from the examples listed below. There are many more, but these are likely the most common related to Coronavirus.



Psych Central.com



- **All or nothing** – Thinking in absolutes such as “always”, “never” or “every” e.g. “if I can’t work then I am failure”
- **Over-generalisation** – Making sweeping negative generalisations e.g. “this will go on forever”



- **Minimising** – Minimising the importance of events e.g. “My own health is not important” “I can’t worry about my own thoughts right now”
- **Magnifying** – Exaggerating the importance of events e.g. “I won’t be able to cope”
- **Catastrophising** – Your thoughts on a situation run out of control and you feel that the very worst outcome is going to happen.



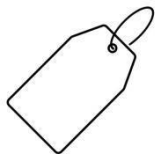
- **Mind reading** – You may think you know what someone else is thinking, but do you really know? E.g. “If I go for a run other people might think I’m not taking this seriously.” Is there an alternative that you have not considered?

- **Fortune telling** – Thinking you know what will happen in the future and that it will be bad e.g. “I’ll be stuck in the house in 6 months time”



- **Emotional reasoning** – You think something is true because you *feel* it to be true and may discount evidence to the contrary e.g. – “I feel terrified so something bad must be about to happen”

- **Labelling** – Having a negative belief about yourself and thinking it applies to everything you do e.g. “I am *silly* for worrying so much” “I am *weak* for being scared”



- **Tunnel Vision** – It can mean that you only see negatives and can filter out the positives. You may struggle to recognise your daily achievements or put them down to luck e.g. “I only managed that because someone else helped me”

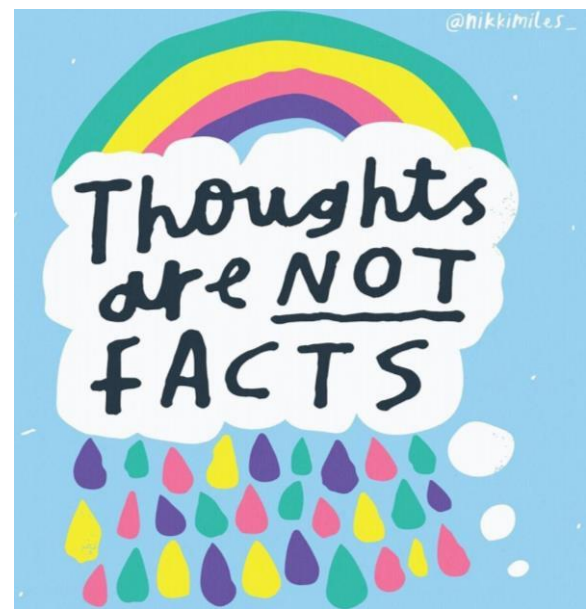
- **Should, musts and oughts** – Believing things to be a certain way e.g. “I should be able to cope” “I ought to be doing more to help” “I must not let others know I am upset”

- **Self-blaming** – Blaming yourself for anything that goes wrong around you, even if you had nothing to do with it e.g. “This is all my fault”



It is important to remember that your thoughts:

- Are not a command
- Are not a rule that you need to follow
- Are not a threat to you
- Are not happening in the physical world
- May or may not be important – you choose how much attention you pay to them
- May or may not be true



Challenge yourself by seeing if you can come up with alternatives to these thoughts- it can help to write them down. Try to notice when you are having these thoughts and consider how they made you feel, was it helpful? What type of thinking trap was it?



THOUGHTS are **NOT** FACTS PRACTICE

When you put some space between you and your reaction, it changes your relationship to your thoughts—you can watch them come and go instead of treating them as facts.

If you're stuck on a negative thought, ask yourself:

1 **Is it true?**

Often the answer is, "Well, yes." This is the brain initially reacting—the autopilot you live with and believe is you.

2 **Is it *absolutely* true?**

Is this thought 100% accurate? Can you see the thought in a different way?

3 **How does this thought make me feel?**

Notice any storylines you're holding onto, and name your feelings: *sad, angry, jealous, hurt*.

4 **What would things be like if I didn't hold this belief?**

Imagine possible benefits to your relationships, energy levels, and motivation.

Excerpt from *Uncovering Happiness* by Elisha Goldstein, Ph.D., adapted from *Loving What Is* by Byron Katie.