

Coronavirus & looking after your mental wellbeing

The easing of restrictions may bring mixed feelings. You may be happy about being able to resume the things you enjoy like playing sports, getting back to work, seeing friends and family (even at a social distance). But you may also be feeling worried about the lifting of restrictions or the possibility of another lockdown.

What you might be feeling about restrictions easing

You might feel relieved or excited now restrictions have been eased. But you might also find yourself feeling less positive about some of the changes. When you go back to something you used to do it may feel unusual or strange- you might feel fearful and anxious. Even everyday tasks like shopping may feel different as routines have changed like one-way systems and face masks.

You may move through a range of feelings and thoughts:

- Stressed and unprepared
- Anxious or afraid
- Angry or frustrated
- Conflicted or confused
- Protective of your routine



These feelings are reasonable and expected. You may have to learn to cope with new and changing situations. Be aware that it may take time to adjust to necessary changes – it is important to take things at your own pace and be kind to yourself.

Some days may feel fine and others not- remember it is important to look after your mental health during this time. Looking after our mental health helps us process and manage the feelings we are experiencing.

It is important to note that if you are really struggling with your mental health and it is disrupting your everyday life seek professional help, talk to your GP. You can also contact the local services and support organisations listed in the useful contacts.

If you or someone you know need urgent mental health support, you can contact the CNWL Crisis line on 0800 023 4650.

Mental wellbeing – top tips

- 1) Connect with others.** Maintaining healthy relationships with people we trust is important. Talking about how we are feeling can be really helpful. Stay connected via email, social media, video calling, telephone and social distanced walks. If you haven't got anyone to talk to or you are struggling, you can call emotional support lines like the [NHS volunteer service](#) who provide a 'check in and chat' service call 0808 196 3646 or one of the helplines listed under useful contacts section.
- 2) Be active.** Our physical health affects how we feel. It is important to eat healthily, drink enough water and exercise regularly. If you can build simple physical activity into your daily routine for example a home work out, a run, gardening, dancing to music, or seated exercise. Visit www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise for information and advice.
- 3) Take notice and focus on the present.** Engage with nature. Open the windows to get fresh air, watch the birds, tend to houseplants, listen to natural sounds apps. If you have a private garden spend time outside.
- 4) Stick to the facts and limit your news intake.** Do not stay glued to the news. A constant stream of news can cause anyone to feel anxious or distressed. You could set yourself a specific time to read updates or limit to checking a couple of times a day – use trustworthy sources such as GOV.UK or NHS.
- 5) Have a routine.** Wake up and go to bed at healthy times, get enough sleep. Include time to relax. Take note if new routines have helped you improve your mental wellbeing during lockdown. For tips on sleep visit the [Every Mind Matters Sleep page](#).
- 6) Do something you enjoy and keep your mind active.** Find something of value in your day and do something for yourself (watch a favourite programme, do crosswords, art and crafts, cooking, gardening, reading a book).
- 7) Talk to work.** If you are returning to work or continuing to work from home, it is important to communicate how you are feeling and have regular opportunities to talk to work colleagues.



Contacts and links to additional support



Local Services

MK Talk for Change

Offers access to talking therapies and mental health care, including a weekly webinar for those individuals who are experiencing difficulties with Covid-19 or associated with isolation

Tel: 01908 725099

support@talkforchange.org.uk

Mind BLMK

Existing services replaced with phone and/or email support on

Tel: 0300 330 0648 or [hq@mind-](mailto:hq@mind-blmk.org.uk)

blmk.org.uk

Kooth Online counselling for young people

www.kooth.com

Milton Keynes Age UK

Telephone befriending service

Tel: 01908 550700 (Monday-Friday 9am-4pm)

Mental Health Crisis

If you or someone you know needs urgent mental health support you can call the CNWL crisis line

Tel: 0800 0234650

Mind MK Crisis Café

Open 5-11pm, 7 days a week.

Tel:01525 722225

Official guidance

www.gov.uk/coronavirus

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

Useful links

Every Mind Matters

www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/

From early September Every Mind Matters will provide information to support children and young people

Heads Up – men's mental health campaign

www.thisisheads-up.uk

Five ways to wellbeing

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/5waysmk

Mind

www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/

Mental Health Foundation

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/coming-out-of-lockdown

Age UK

www.ageuk.org.uk

Tel:0800 678 1602 (8am-7pm)

Helplines

Samaritans www.samaritans.org

Tel: 116 123

Shout Crisis Text line

Text Shout to 85258

CALM www.thecalmzone.net

Tel:0800 58 58 58

Our Frontline – support for frontline workers.

Text: FRONTLINE to 85258 or call 116 123 for a conversation with a trained volunteer

www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/ourfrontline

National Debt Line

– free and independent advice

Tel: 0808 808 4000 9am-8pm Monday-Friday or visit www.nationaldebtline.org