

Looking after your mental wellbeing if you have to self-isolate

Some ideas and suggestions based on the '[Five Ways to Wellbeing](#)'

Why not...

Connect

- ...Call and message friends and family regularly
- ...Reach out to someone you've not seen in a while
- ...Set up video calls with friends over tea, a meal or even an online game
- ...Tell people if you're struggling* - we're social beings & it's normal to find this hard

Take Notice

- ...Pay attention to the present & to the small things
- ...Try mindfulness - test out different [apps](#) or podcasts to find one you like
- ...Get creative - draw/paint/sew/make/write
- ...Take lots of breaks from screens

Be active

- ...Head outside (e.g. private garden/balcony), if you can without being near anyone
- ...Walk around at home, listening to something you enjoy
- ...Dance like no-one's watching!
- ...Try simple exercises (e.g. using the [NHS Fitness Studio](#)) or yoga or pilates using YouTube

Keep learning

- ...Start (or re-start) learning a language - give an app like [Duolingo](#) a try or use a book or online course
- ...Try a free online course (e.g. on EdX, Coursera or OpenLearn)
- ...Work on a personal project you've been putting off or can never find the time for

Give

- ...Talk to a charity with a voluntary befriending service about talking to someone who's feeling lonely by phone
- ...Check in with others who are affected
- ...Spend some time campaigning for a good cause (e.g. emailing/writing to your MP)

@leazgerathwaite

Anyone who's been asked to self-isolate by a medical professional should be sure to follow the latest [NHS guidance](#), which includes practical advice and some tips on managing work and other responsibilities. This document isn't meant to be prescriptive or a one-size-fits-all or exhaustive list, just some ideas & suggestions to help people cope whilst self-isolating during the COVID-19 outbreak. If you're not having to self-isolate, think about how you could help others in your community: is there an older person whose shopping you could help with if they have to self-isolate for example, or other ways you could support people? Ideas to add? [Comment or send a message](#).

* As well as reaching out to friends and family, if you're struggling you can contact your GP, NHS 111 or your local crisis mental health team (more details from MIND on crisis services [here](#)). MIND has a list of UK helplines [here](#), and some local areas, employers and universities have their own counselling and support services. If you're having trouble sleeping, check out [this advice](#) from NHS Every Mind Matters, and if you're having relationship difficulties related to being in self-isolation check out Relate's [self-help guides and support](#).