

## Mental Wellbeing Matters



We are living in challenging times. Every one of us is facing new situations at work and home that can leave us feeling at best unsettled and at worst anxious and upset. It is ok to have these feelings and often they will pass off quickly but it is important to have some resources to hand that you can turn to if they start to feel overwhelming.

### Simple Things Matter

Looking after ourselves physically can have a positive impact on our mental wellbeing.

- Make sure you take time to eat regularly and try to make nutritious choices – a healthy gut helps support a healthy immune system.
- Try to take some exercise outside each day, there is lots of evidence that spending time in nature is very beneficial for our mental health.
- Aim for 6-8 hours sleep a night as a minimum, too little sleep raises our stress hormones and can worsen feelings of anxiety.
- Connect with other people. You are not the only one feeling like this, sharing concerns with people around you - be they colleagues, friends or loved ones can help keep things in perspective and the old saying 'a problem shared is a problem halved' often proves correct!
- Spend time doing something you enjoy each day, even better take up a new hobby – whether it is meditation, painting or learning mandarin, developing a new skill can focus the mind and provide welcome distraction from worrying thoughts.
- Focus on the positive: Sometimes the 'big picture' feels too much to cope with but try and find something each day that was positive,

perhaps you were able to pick up some shopping for a neighbour, maybe you were able to call an elderly relative for a chat – focusing on what we can do that has a positive impact for someone else can improve both their wellbeing and our own.

- Consider using technology to keep in touch with others – zoom meetings could be used for coffee mornings, book groups etc. Lots of exercise instructors are offering live online classes to do at home, people are even doing online cookery classes. Whatever your interests there is likely to be an option that allows you to take part despite social distancing!

CALM app –available through the app store this resource offers short guided meditations as well as sleep and relaxation aids

HEADSPACE app –similar content to the above

NHS Stress and Anxiety Companion – free to download and helpful for mild to moderate stress and anxiety through cognitive behavioural techniques including breathing exercises, relaxing music and games. It helps you identify triggers for anxiety and transform negative thoughts into positive ones.

Have a look at the NHS Five ways to Wellbeing <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/> or NHS Top Tips to improve your mental wellbeing <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/top-tips-to-improve-your-mental-wellbeing/> for more ideas on how to look after your mental health during this time