

Advice for Coping with Self Isolation if everyone is well

1) **Make a routine for yourself and/ or your children:** include Physical Exercise, particularly outside if you can OR in a room with a window open if you can't; Do something creative such as craft, painting, colouring or gardening, baking or cooking etc.; Reading or playing board games; doing jigsaw puzzles or puzzles like Sudoku, crosswords etc.

Write Your Story: Maybe you have an idea for the next great British novel, or perhaps you've been looking to start writing your autobiography. Creative writing classes are typically easy to find online and are a great way to meet new people while indulging in a creative outlet.

Take Up an Instrument - Learning a new instrument isn't just a great way to stimulate your brain — it can also be fun! Now is your chance to share your talent. Online videos can be found on youtube.

2) Keep to the routine of getting up and going to bed at the same time, as this will help you stay in the mindset of life going as 'normal'. This is especially important for your children. Sleep hygiene is even more vital when everything else is muddled/ out of routine.

3) Looking after your wellbeing while staying at home

We know that staying at home for a prolonged period can be difficult, frustrating and lonely for some people and that you or other household members may feel low. It can be particularly challenging if you don't have much space or access to a garden.

It's important to remember to take care of your mind as well as your body and to get support if you need it. **Stay in touch with family and friends over the phone or on social media.** Use one/ some or all of the websites above to gain advice about staying healthy.

Think about things you can do during your time at home. People who have not minded staying at home for a week have kept themselves busy with activities such as cooking, reading, online learning and watching films. If you feel well enough you can take part in light exercise within your home or garden.

Many people find it helpful to remind themselves why what they are doing is so important. Hopefully, none of your family will suffer more than flu-like symptoms. But some people are badly affected by coronavirus, and particularly the elderly and those with certain medical conditions. By staying home, you are protecting the lives of others, as well as making sure the NHS does not get overwhelmed.

4) **Do not keep accessing the news:** if it is affecting you/ your mood, only access the news once a day or twice if you feel you need to for your wellbeing. Listening/ watching too much can have a negative effect and send you into panic mode, so limit it as necessary.

5) **Talking** about something different! Try and limit the topic of coronavirus to once a day or maybe three/ five times for 15 minutes only. This latter is especially important if your child has Autism and/ or Anxiety.

6) **Singing:** <https://www.thesofasingers.net/> Sign up and join in!! An online choir run by James Sills. OR Sing your favourite songs on your own!! And Dance like no-one is watching!!

7) Dr Lucy Atcheson, a counselling psychologist, says that one of the main problems with self-isolation is that we start to miss **"micro-lifts"** that we normally have peppered throughout our day without even necessarily realising. E.g. "You're on your way to work, you might pop into your

favourite coffee shop or say hi to someone in the street, there are small little things throughout our day that help to lift us often without us even realising.

“When you’re alone at home that doesn’t happen – and the cumulative effect of that is massive, especially around the two-week mark. So instead we need to create micro-lifts, it has to be something that generates a sense of achievement. That might be a new exercise, learning a little bit of a language, talking to someone on FaceTime or joining a book group online.”

Here is a list of [guidelines](#) for talking to kids about coronavirus. They include:

- Remain calm and reassuring.
- Make yourself available to listen and to talk.
- Remember that viruses can make anyone sick, regardless of a person’s race or ethnicity.
- Pay attention to what children see or hear on television, radio or online.
- Consider reducing the amount of screen time focused on COVID-19 and provide information that is honest and accurate.
- Give children information that is truthful and appropriate for the age and developmental level of the child.
- Talk to children about how some stories on COVID-19 on the internet and social media may be based on rumours and inaccurate information.
- Teach children everyday actions to reduce the spread of germs.

Also access the following website for further support around anxiety:

<https://www.specialneedsjungle.com>