

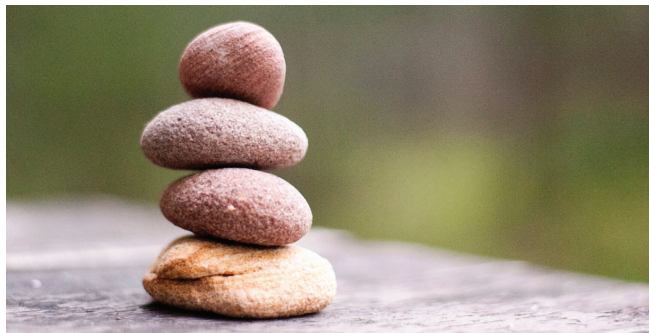
# Looking after your mental health and wellbeing during self-isolation



*Brilliant care through brilliant people*



A long period of self-isolation may be necessary to protect the public from the spread of coronavirus, leading to the COVID-19 illness. This booklet contains some useful tips to help keep your mental health in check during this difficult time.



### **Do keep a healthy diet**

When you're at home it is easy to eat unhealthy meals and snacks as a way to pass the time. It is vital you eat a balanced healthy diet as this is an important part of maintaining good health and wellbeing, giving yourself the energy to fight infection.

If you haven't got anyone who can drop off supplies to you, see if you can sign up to home deliveries from your local supermarket or maybe your local shop might be able to help. Find out if there are any community support groups in your local area which could also provide support with shopping. With stocks running low, some shops are opening early - check your local store. Can any of your support networks help with your shopping?



### **Engage with nature**

Try and get exposure to the outside world and exercise as much as possible within the guidelines. Try using any outdoor private space you have, such as a garden or balcony. Physical health and mental health are closely linked so it is vitally-important to keep to a routine that includes some physical exercise. If you don't have any outdoor space then you could try some yoga or exercise classes on YouTube.

Embracing nature can help our wellbeing. Try looking out of the window, observing the birds and other animals you might see, or tend to houseplants to keep your mind stimulated. It is also good to open the window regularly and let fresh air into your room.



### **Maintain a sense of routine**

Keep to a good routine and add structure to your day, not spending most of the time in your nightwear, forgetting to clean your teeth because you knew you wouldn't be seeing anyone. Although in the short term it can feel good to laze around, in

the long term it isn't going to be good for your health and mental wellbeing. While trying to maintain as much of a routine as you can, remember to wake up and go to bed at appropriate times to ensure you get enough rest and sleep.

Find some time to add value to your day; life is not just about eating and sleeping. Engage in some fun activities for yourself. It is natural for people who are self-isolating to lose their positivity for the future; they use this time for reflection and pull apart everything that is wrong with their life including their job, relationship or friendships. When overwhelmed by a lack of activity in our life, it can quickly impact on what we enjoy; so we must make time to have fun within our daily routine.



### **Vary your activities**

Sitting in front of a TV, phone screen or computer all day is not the best way to spend long periods of time.

Below are some productive activity ideas to help fill your time...

1. Download and listen to podcasts
2. Do some arts and crafts, the results of which you could share with your friends on Facebook
3. Try knitting or crochet. The hospitals need small baby hats
4. Try learning meditation techniques to help you stay focused

5. Bake cakes or try new recipes
6. Learn a new hobby like origami
7. Skype friends and family and make video calls to stay in touch
8. Try creative writing, scrap booking or making a self-soothe box
9. Read a book. Choose a title you and your friends can all read (you could all order from Amazon) and set up a video call book club so you can discuss it and share your thoughts
10. Engage in some DIY or gardening
11. Pamper yourself with a face mask or foot spa.

### **Do stay connected to people**

Just because you're self-isolating, it doesn't mean you have to cut yourself off from the world completely. If you feel you're beginning to struggle, take some time to call a friend or family member and let them know how you're feeling. If your friends or family are not available, you can call emotional support lines, such as the Samaritans or Mental Health Matters.

During periods of self-isolation, try your best to maintain personal daily routines or create new positive routines. If health authorities have recommended limiting your physical social contact, you can stay connected via email, social media, video conferencing and telephone. Remember, you don't have to be alone!



## Limit your news intake

If you are finding the constant 24/7 coverage of coronavirus on the TV and social media is impacting your mental health then give yourself a break. The World Health Organisation says: "A near-constant stream of news reports about an outbreak can cause anyone to feel anxious or distressed".

Only seek information, updates and practical guidance at specific times during the day from health professionals, gov.uk and the WHO website. It is also important to try and avoid listening to or following rumours that make you feel uncomfortable.

## Handy checklist from MIND

- Food:** Do you have a way to get food delivered?
- Cleaning:** Are your cleaning supplies stocked up?
- Money:** Can you budget for any higher bills or expenses? Will you save money from lower transport costs that you could spend elsewhere?
- Work:** Can you work from home or not? If not, what are your rights to payment or benefits?
- Medication:** Do you have enough medication, or a way to get more?
- Health:** Can you reorganise any planned therapy or treatments?
- Commitments:** Can someone else help you care for any dependents, walk your dog or take care of any other commitments?
- Connectivity:** Have you checked the contact details of the people you see regularly, like their phone numbers or email addresses?
- Routine:** Can you create a routine or timetable for yourself? And if you live with other people, should you create a household schedule? Do you need to agree how the household will run with everyone at home all day?
- Exercise:** Is there any physical activity you can do inside your home, such as going up and down the stairs, using bean tins as weights or exercises you can do in your chair?
- Nature:** Have you thought how you could access nature? Can you get some seeds and planting equipment, houseplants or living herbs?
- Entertainment:** Have you thought about things to do, books to read or TV shows to watch?
- Relax:** Have you got materials so you can do something creative, such as paper and colouring pencils?

Reference: [www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/#AreYouReadyToStayAtHomeForTwoWeeks](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/#AreYouReadyToStayAtHomeForTwoWeeks)

**Information correct at the time of publishing.  
Please check with the organisations direct for up-to-date details.**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Services</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Connect Well East Kent</b>	Hub team is operational as normal and telephone services are still active. Open Mon, Weds and Fri 8:30am – 6pm. Tues and Thurs 9am – 5pm.	0300 302 0178
<b>Carers Support East Kent</b>	The hub team is operational as normal and still offering emotional support. Open Mon, Weds and Fri 8:30am – 6pm. Tues and Thurs 9am – 5pm.	0300 302 0178
<b>Silverline Telephone Befriending Service</b>	24-hour befriending service. It's a helpline and friendship service for people aged 55 and over. Free, confidential service to share worries and fears. A good sign posting service.	0800 470 80 90
<b>Age UK Thanet</b>	Day services are operational as per government guidance. Hot meal delivery available for £7.	01843 223881
<b>Ageless Thanet</b>	Offering a free telephone befriending Service for people over the age of 50 between the hours of 9am and 5pm. You can contact them via phone, email or on social media (Facebook and Twitter). Ageless Thanet will issuing a guide on how to use FaceTime to stay connected with friends and family during this time. You can find this on all social media platforms.	01843 21005 info@ agelessthanet.org. uk
<b>Cliftonville Community Centre</b>	Open as usual Mon, Tues, Weds and Fri.	Elaine or Paul 01843 221913
<b>St Paul's Food Bank (Margate)</b>	Open as usual – Thurs mornings 10:30am – 12:30pm.	01843 221913
<b>Thanet Community Transport Association</b>	Offering a personal shopping service and wiling to help anyone who is self-isolating and who cannot get out and about.	01843 602030
<b>Westgate Town Council</b>	The town council is offering a service of volunteers to visit homes within the town to help isolated people to do shopping, walk the dogs, friendly phone calls, picking up prescriptions and general needs.  If you know someone who needs this please contact the Town Clerk on the number/email to the right.	01843 836182  townclerk@ westgateonse. gov.uk

Organisation	Services	Contact
<p><b>Changing Minds - The Lifeboat project</b></p>	<p>To establish a phone line for those seeking a friendly chat / video chat if possible. To set up a social media hub for individuals to access for tips on combating loneliness while in isolation. To grow and adapt the project alongside the ever-changing situation to provide support for as many affected individuals as we can possibly reach.</p> <p>They will provide mental health support, advice, anxiety management, food and essentials for the local community throughout the coronavirus pandemic. This will consist of weekly podcasts, videos discussing all things wellbeing, exercise, nutrition and more.</p> <p>To offer free delivery of care packages for those in isolation within the local community, including food, toiletries and entertainment like crosswords, card games, colouring books.</p>	<p>Colin Rouse – colin.rouse@changingmindskent.co.uk</p>
<p><b>Best One Westgate</b></p>	<p>Offering free home delivery services for supplies.</p>	<p>01843 831664</p>
<p><b>Krusty Kobb bakeries</b></p>	<p>Offering free home delivery for food to the homes of people who are self-isolating and are unable to get out.</p>	<p>01843 835447</p>
<p><b>Prentis Greengrocers</b></p>	<p>Offering free home delivery to self isolated people (fruit and veg etc).</p>	<p>01843 834934</p>
<p><b>Posillipos restaurant Broadstairs</b></p>	<p>Is offering to do people's shopping and deliver it to their home for self-isolated people.</p>	<p>01843 601133</p>
<p><b>The Kitchen CT9 in Cliftonville</b></p>	<p>Will deliver any surplus stock they have to people's homes who are self-isolating.</p>	<p>01843 293376</p>
<p><b>Birchington Support group</b></p>	<p>Are offering a free service, which includes shopping locally, walking dogs and collecting prescriptions.</p>	<p>Dave Adams - 07540 813028 or Jan Adams – 07540 812564</p>
<p><b>Age Concern Deal</b></p>	<p>Day services are still operational as per government guidelines. Hot meals are £7.</p> <p>Offering food delivery services and hot meal deliveries. (Both are paid for services and will be invoiced at a later date).</p>	<p>01304 372608 – Deal</p>

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Services</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Age UK Folkestone</b>	Day services are still operational as per government guidelines.  Offering food delivery services and hot meal deliveries. Hot meals are costed at £7.  (Both are paid for services and will be invoiced at a later date).	01303 279031 - Folkestone
<b>Age UK Herne Bay</b>	Day services are still operational as are all other service which are normally offered.  Befriending service is now a telephone befriending service between working hours.	01227 749570
<b>Whitstable Food Bank</b>	Whitstable Umbrella Centre will be providing food parcels during isolation periods and are happy for neighbours/ friends to collect food parcels on behalf of people who are isolating.	01227 274880
<b>Deal Food Banks</b>	St Richard's Church – Tues 12 – 2pm.  Weds Victoria Road 4.30 – 6pm.  Fri Trinity Church Union Road 10am -12pm.  Foodbank centres open, but no tea or coffee.	01304 728428
<b>Sandwich Food Banks</b>	Thurs Phoenix Centre Jubilee Road – 3pm.  Foodbank centres open, but no tea or coffee.	01304 728428
<b>Ashford Age UK</b>	Meals on Wheels (3 meals delivered – to include lunch, tea and breakfast for the following day), shopping, prescription collection, keeping in touch calls, telephone befriending, dog walking.	01233 668765
<b>Aylesham Food Banks</b>	St Finbarr's Church Market Square  Fri 12.30 – 2.30pm.  Food bank centres open, but no tea or coffee.	01304 728428
<b>Ashford Vineyard Church</b>	Mon, Tues, Thurs 9 – 12am and last Sat of every month.  If in need, please contact the food bank.	01233 331919
<b>Ashford Community Care</b>	Food shopping delivery services Ashford.	Martin Kemp 07732 977417 / 01233 612224

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Home help choice	Food shopping delivery services Ashford.	Richard Spinx 07807 177656
Faversham Food Bank	The Gospel Mission Church, Tanners Street.  Weds 1.30 – 4pm.  Fri 1.30 – 4pm.	07938720604
Folkestone Methodist Church	Sandgate Road, Folkestone.  Tues and Fri 2pm – 3.30pm.  Please check the website <a href="http://www.shepway.foodbank.org.uk">www.shepway.foodbank.org.uk</a> as regular updates will be posted here.	07913573403
New Romney Christian Centre	North Street.  Tues 5.30 – 7pm.  Please check the website <a href="http://www.shepway.foodbank.org.uk">www.shepway.foodbank.org.uk</a> as regular updates will be posted here.	07913573403
Lydd	Hardy Hall, Skinner Road.  Fri 6.30 – 7.30pm.  Please check the website <a href="http://www.shepway.foodbank.org.uk">www.shepway.foodbank.org.uk</a> as regular updates will be posted here.	07913573403
Savages Fruit and Veg Lydd	Offering fruit baskets and other vegetables within the Lydd area. Also offering a delivery service.	01797 363280
Kerry's Kitchen Lydd	A local café, which is making food deliveries within the Lydd area.	01797 321052
Sport England	How to stay active during the COVID-19 period while self isolating.	<a href="http://www.sportengland.org/news/how-stay-active-while-youre-home">www.sportengland.org/news/how-stay-active-while-youre-home</a>

Thank you to the particularly brilliant Justine Norris our Occupational therapist at the North East Kent Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team for producing this.



Please call **01622 724131** if you would like this leaflet in a different language or format.  
**Visit us at [www.kmpt.nhs.uk](http://www.kmpt.nhs.uk)**

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