

Managing Isolation in Lockdown: A 10-Step Plan

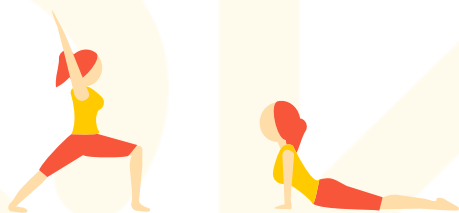
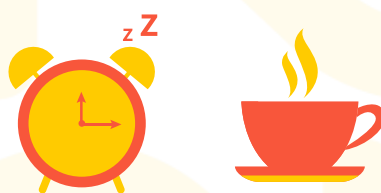
Being in lockdown alone can be tough... Once we've exhausted Netflix and driven ourselves a little crazy with social media and news coverage, it becomes important to **focus on how we manage day to day**, particularly if we're not working or working from home is new to us.

We may struggle with emotions that are new to us or we've not felt in a long time - loneliness, anxiety, depression, fear, sadness. We may feel overwhelmed or trapped in our confined space and our coping strategies will be pushed to the max during this period. If you feel an overwhelming sense of anxiety, we have created a guide to help you. **You can access this and more resources at our [website](#).**

If you need some ideas for how to self-support – this document is for you. The following steps are a guide to being alone in isolation for those of us not with family at home:

1 Create a structure for your day

Even if it's just getting up, getting breakfast - create structure around meal-times.



2 Replicate rituals so you have some routine

Having rituals and routines helps us retain a sense of 'normal'. This helps calm, body and mind, decrease stress and increase energy needed to manage change.

3 Incorporate exercise into your day

Experts say 20 mins daily exercise can decrease depression and lighten mood.



4 Have a nutritious diet

Now's the time to be well hydrated, eat regular meals, a mixed and balanced diet – putting sand in your fuel tank won't make the engine run well – make good choices.



5 Stay emotionally connected, despite physical distance

Experts tell us humans need contact for survival – connect with colleagues, friends, family every 40 minutes – by text, call, a wave, a smile, Zoom, WhatsApp etc.



6 Keep your brain active

Art, colouring, word games, brainteasers, jigsaws, journaling, reading, studying – keep your brain occupied. Help distract it from negative messaging in news etc.

7 Include self-care in your plan

What makes you feel nourished, nurtured? Make a list of the things that nurture you (hot baths, nature walks, a good book etc) – make time for something every day.



8 Try new things (or those things you always planned to do...)

Learning something new stimulates the brain and tunes out anxious thoughts. Being curious about new learning helps increase dopamine and improves mood.

9 Start practicing appreciation/gratitude

Recognition is critical for self-worth and self-love. It builds confidence and motivation. Appreciate what you have in your life. Become more attuned to positive rather than negative data – it's great for good mental health.



10 Be kind to yourself

Do you have a critical inner voice? Would you speak like that to someone you love? Negative messaging adversely impacts our mental health. Be kind to you!

