

Five ways to Wellbeing from Home

We've all been affected by the coronavirus in one way or another. Even if we've not experienced the virus first hand, weeks of lockdown and uncertainty have taken a toll on our mental health. You might have found yourself sleeping irregularly, feeling frustrated or bored, or more tired than usual. Or you might be feeling on edge with stress and anxiety about the future.

During this time, we're being told that it's more important than ever to take care of our own wellbeing, so that we can cope with the challenges that the coronavirus crisis brings. But what is wellbeing exactly, why is it important, and what can you do to improve it if you're isolated at home? This guide has the answers.

What is wellbeing?

Wellbeing can be understood as how we feel and how we function, both on a personal and a social level, and how we evaluate our lives as a whole.

Wellbeing is defined as [the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy](#). However, it is important to realise that wellbeing is a much broader concept than moment-to-moment happiness. While it does involve happiness, it also includes other things, such as our sense of purpose, how in control we feel, the ability to work productively and the opportunity to interact positively with others.

Our mental wellbeing is dynamic. It can change from moment to moment, day to day, month to month or year to year.

Unfortunately, during this current pandemic it's difficult to judge life positively and feel good about our circumstances. Additionally, it's not easy to maintain our wellbeing when we are forced to cope with the daily stresses of present life without being able to rely on our normal stress relievers such as playing sport, taking holidays/breaks or socialising with friends and family.

Still, there are many things we can do to support ourselves, even when stuck at home.

The “5 ways to wellbeing”

The [5 ways to wellbeing](#) are a set of evidence-based steps you can take to improve your wellbeing. Here’s a look at each of the steps and how you can achieve them at home:

Connect

Each of us has a fundamental need to connect with people socially and feel close to others. Unfortunately, it’s hard to do this when everyone has to stay at home – particularly if you live alone. Here are some ideas on what you can do:

- **Join a befriending service.** You can organise a weekly call with someone to talk about whatever you want. Some services also run group calls. [Find out more about befriending services here.](#)
- **Find people to chat to online.** You might want to join a [chat room](#) or [discussion forum](#) based on your interests.
- **Find a pen pal.** Some people prefer to make social contact through writing. But if you’d rather avoid the post office, consider joining an [email-based pen pal service](#).
- **Play a game with someone online.** Challenge a friend to an online game of [scrabble](#), [chess](#), [poker](#), or take part in a [virtual quiz](#).

Be active

Study after study shows that physical exercise can tackle low-level depression and anxiety, and it’s one of the first thing a GP will recommend if you show signs of depression. Here are some tips on staying active while at home:

- **Try out some gentle exercises.** If you don’t have much mobility or you can’t exercise rigorously because of a health condition, [there are lots of chair-based or low-impact exercises to try.](#)
- **Have a go at yoga or pilates.** [These exercises](#) are great for your mobility and strength and can be practised at different levels of intensity.
- **Want to stay active with just 10 minutes of exercise?** Try out the NHS’s [10-minute home workout](#).
- **Gardening is another way to be active!** If you’re not a confident gardener or you want ideas on gardening projects, [take a look at our gardening page.](#)

Give

When we do something for others, we often feel better ourselves. It's important to feel like a valuable part of someone else's life, but it can be hard to know what you can do for others when you can't see them in person. Here are some ideas:

- **Join a telephone befriending service as a volunteer.** There are [a number of national befriending services](#) for different age groups. These services involve making a regular call to someone who's living alone and feeling isolated during this time.
- **Call a family member or long-lost friend.** Now is a brilliant time to get in touch with someone you've lost contact with and have a good catch up!
- **Volunteer with your local COVID-19 group.** These groups are continuing to provide food and other supplies to the most vulnerable, as well as offering to do odd jobs, such as gardening, from a safe distance.
- **Help someone out online.** There are a wide range of peer support forums with people looking for reassurance from someone who's been in a similar position to them. You can make a huge difference with just a few supportive words.
- **Donate to a charity supporting others during this time.** There are thousands of organisations across the country that would benefit from your support.

Take notice

It's very easy to be focused on the future right now. We're all second-guessing what's going to happen with our jobs, the economy, and when things might return to normal. This can easily lead to us to having feelings of stress and anxiety. A proven way to tackle this stress is to focus on the present moment and on your surroundings. Here's how you can do this from home:

- **Try to get outside for a walk each day.** Concentrate on the sights, sounds and smells you encounter on your walk. Taking photos on your journey is a good way to pay extra attention to how things look.
- **Take up gardening** – It's not just a good way to stay active – great way to immerse yourself in your surroundings while staying safe. [Here's the link to our gardening page](#) for ideas on projects you can do in your garden.
- **Have a go at drawing something in your house and garden.** You can use our drawing and painting guide to find some free resources on practising your drawing technique.

- **Try out mindfulness.** Mindfulness is the practice of being aware of the present and is a skill that you can get better at over time. For an accessible introduction what mindfulness is and how to get started, [click here](#).

Keep learning

Learning something new is a great way to build your self-esteem and tackle low mood. It's also a good way to be social with others. Thanks to the internet, there are lots of ways to learn something new from home:

- **Try out a free course online.** [There are lots of sites that offer free courses](#), ranging from just a few hours to a few weeks or months. It's a great way to pass the time and feel as though you've done something for yourself during this experience.
- **Learn a language.** You can access [a huge range of free resources for language learning online](#), or buddy up with someone abroad and do a language exchange. Language learning is a brilliant thing to do socially!
- **Learn an instrument.** If you've got a guitar or piano in your house that's been untouched for years, now is the time to finally get round to honing your skills. If you don't know where to start with learning an instrument, [take a look at our free guide](#).
- **Do a skill share.** Why not see what you can learn from your family and friends? Arrange to meet via Zoom or Whatsapp to teach each other a skill – even if it's a small practical skill that can be learned in just a few minutes.

Why stop here?

For more ideas on what you can do to stay well during isolation, take a look at our [Making Connections From Home](#) guide. It's a comprehensive list of all the ways you can connect with other people online or over the phone and exploring similar interests. It features more games you can play, courses you can join, virtual events to attend, and much more.

<https://guideposts.org.uk/wellbeing/covid-19/5-ways-to-wellbeing-from-home/>

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