



Central and
North West London
NHS Foundation Trust

Stay well at home isolation pack



Wellbeing for life

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Keep up to date
www.cnwl.nhs.uk/coronavirus-updates

Social distancing

Social distancing are actions that communities can take to reduce face-to-face contact which may help reduce the spread of disease.



Individuals and families

- Stay home and do not go out in public when you are sick
- Avoid medical settings unless necessary
- Give six feet of space from others
- Wave instead of handshakes
- Practice excellent personal hygiene habits.



At work

- Work in ways that minimize close contact with people
- Minimize groups over 10
- Encourage telecommuting
- Clean your workspace frequently.



Those at higher risk

Public Health recommends that people at higher risk of severe illness should stay home and away from large groups of people. Those at higher risk includes people:

- Over 70 years of age
- With underlying health conditions
- With weakened immune systems
- Who are pregnant

Maintaining a balanced daily routine

The current pandemic may be having some impact on your mental health. You may be feeling some anxiety or low mood, and may not be able to engage in your usual daily activities which help to keep you well. During this time of self-isolation, reduced social contact and limited access to services, it is important to maintain a balanced daily routine. Here are some tips on planning your daily routine with the limitations of the current government guidelines on covid-19:

- Set a limit for how much time you are spending watching TV, searching the internet and reading about covid-19 to once or twice a day. Watching the news about covid-19 may give a sense of connection with others, however spending all your time indulging in this is not helpful and will increase your anxiety
- Instead of focusing on things you can't do, write a list of things you can do
- Write down the things in life you are grateful for
- Use this time to practice a skill eg. learning a new language, practice mindfulness/meditation, learn new recipes
- You are allow one daily exercise outside. If you can't go outside for this, get your daily fresh air by opening windows and sitting near it.
- Add some home-based exercise to your routine
- If you have access to video calling, set up times with your family or friends to chat
- Remember, if you can do things to keep yourself well, you are also helping the community!

What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is a distressing emotion, which has a crippling effect on individuals who suffer from it. It manifests as physical symptoms: (muscle tension, sweaty palms, racing heart, heavy breathing, light-headedness); as feelings (fear, panic, irritability, nervousness); as behaviour (avoiding situations, leaving situations, perfectionism); and as thoughts (overestimation of danger, underestimation of coping skills, worrying).

You may be familiar with some of the feelings above, especially at time when life can feel a little uncertain. This guide includes lots of helpful resources to help you develop some skills and methods to cope with these distressing feelings.

**Use the
templates on the
next few pages to
help you develop
a balanced daily
routine**

Maintaining a balanced daily routine whilst in self-isolation

Personal Management

Caring for yourself

- Get into a daily routine
- Have a shower
- Get dressed into clean clothing
- Eat balanced meals
- Drink plenty of water
- Tidy your room
- Take medication

Social

Staying connected

- Call friends/family for a chat
- Connect with others on social media
- Use the Ipad
- Reach out to staff for support and advice

Activities

For pleasure or learning

- Get creative (listen to music, painting, reading)
- Get active (dancing, exercise)

Environment

- Plan your day – Create a timetable with a balance of activities to keep you occupied
- Comfort – Keep your environment clean and tidy
- Limit social media/news/media updates to once or twice a day – find a reliable source for updates to reduce anxiety and stress.



Balanced Lifestyle Plan

I will create a balanced lifestyle by doing the following:

Taking care of myself

(exercise, baths, eating healthy food)

Taking care of my environment

(using your mind, challenges)

Staying connected with others

(call or use video calling to chat to others)

Taking care of my mind

(relaxation, mindfulness, deep breathing)

Enjoyable or Enriching Activities

(pleasure, learning & growing)

Plan your days

Monday

Breakfast:

Morning activities:

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Lunch:

Afternoon activities:

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Dinner:

Evening activities:

.....

Tuesday

Breakfast:

Morning activities:

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Lunch:

Afternoon activities:

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Dinner:

Evening activities:

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Wednesday

Breakfast:

Morning activities:

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Lunch:

Afternoon activities:

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Dinner:

Evening activities:

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Thursday

Breakfast:

Morning activities:

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Lunch:

Afternoon activities:

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Dinner:

Evening activities:

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Plan your days continued

Friday

Breakfast:

Morning activities:

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Lunch:

Afternoon activities:

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Dinner:

Evening activities:

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Saturday

Breakfast:

Morning activities:

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Lunch:

Afternoon activities:

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Dinner:

Evening activities:

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Sunday

Breakfast:

Morning activities:

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Lunch:

Afternoon activities:

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Dinner:

Evening activities:

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Weekly notes

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Use the STOPP acronym when you start to feel anxious

Stop!

Just pause for a moment

Take a breath

Notice your breathing as you breathe in and out. In through the nose, out through the mouth.

Observe

- What thoughts are going through your mind right now?
- Where is your focus of attention?
- What are you reacting to?
- What sensations do you notice in your body?

Pull back

Put in some perspective

- DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU THINK!
- What's the bigger picture?
- Take the helicopter view.
- What is another way of looking at this situation?

- What advice would I give a friend?
- What would a trusted friend say to me right now?
- Is this thought a fact or opinion?
- What is a more reasonable explanation?
- How important is this? How important will it be in 6 months time?
- It will pass.

Practise what works

- What is the best thing to do right now?
- What is the most helpful thing for me, for others, for the situation?
- What can I do that fits with my values?
- Where can I focus my attention right now?
- Do what will be effective and appropriate.

STOP

TAKE A BREATH

OBSERVE

PULL BACK

PRACTISE WHAT WORKS



STOPP

Good Sleep Habits

Sleep problems are very common and even more common in people who misuse substances. The amount of sleep we need varies through our lives. There are different stages of sleep and it is important that sleep cycle is completed.

Things that interfere with sleeping


- Medical problems, particularly pain and conditions affecting the bladder.
- Certain medicines can effect sleep.
- Emotional upset (bereavement) or depressions and anxiety.
- Stress, anxiety and worry.
- Bad sleeping environment (i.e. bed, room, noise).
- Changing your sleep routine.
- Taking naps during the day.
- Caffeine – especially tea, coffee and Red Bull.
- Alcohol.
- Stimulant drugs like cocaine, amphetamine and crystal meth.
- Smoking.

Things that help sleeping

- Getting into a good sleep routine.
- Use your bed only for sleeping.
- Avoid any stimulating substances and activities.
- Do some exercise during the day.



A Good Sleep Routine

- Go to bed at roughly the same time every day.
 - Start to wind down before getting into bed.
 - Ensure your bed and room are comfortable and fit for sleep.
 - Get into bed approximately 20 minutes before you want to fall asleep and start to relax – perhaps by reading or some other form of relaxation.
 - Turn out light 5 minutes before you plan to fall asleep.
 - Do not try to fall asleep. Try listening to soft music or attend to your breath.
 - Do not think about complex or distressing things.
 - If you cant fall asleep after a reasonable period of time – get up and do something non-stimulatory like reading. Do not smoke or drink tea/coffee.
 - Get up at the same time every morning. Even if it is tempting to sleep later – do not – as this will affect your getting to sleep at night.
- 

My sleep plan

Things I can start doing to help me sleep

(e.g. exercise)

1

2

3

4

Changes I need to make to my bedroom

1

2

3

Changes I need to make to my routine

1

2

3

4

I will go to bed at:

I will get up at:

Useful apps

If you have a smartphone, take a look at some of the Apps listed below for inspiration on maintaining physical and mental wellbeing:

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy Companion (ACT)

Three months free with the promo code: TOGETHER

Develop and practice the skills you need to be present, open up and do what matters – with dozens of simple, yet powerful, interactive ACT exercises and tools based on the best-selling book, *The Happiness Trap*, by Dr Russ Harris.

If you're working with an ACT coach, clinician, or self-help book, then ACT Companion will help you put what you've learned into practice and create meaningful change in your life.

What is ACT? Acceptance and commitment therapy is a scientifically supported mindfulness-based behaviour therapy with over 100 published peer-reviewed studies demonstrating its effectiveness for a wide range of clinical issues (such as anxiety and depression) as well as mental wellbeing and peak-performance.

Dialup

Dialup is an app that was initially created to combat loneliness amongst individuals around the world by serendipitously connecting them to strangers for a chat. Now, they've developed a unique QuarantineChat service that connects individuals who are quarantined or in self-isolation following the coronavirus outbreak. If you're feeling lonely, you can chat with others around the world who are also stuck inside.

Nike Training Club

The best apps to download during self-isolation are the ones that will keep your mind, body and spirit healthy. Playing games is a great way to de-stress, but remember to keep your body moving, even in the confines of your home. Nike Training Club currently offers 185 free workouts at varying different skill levels. And, the workouts come in all different categories to suit your exercise preferences and goals, such as strength, endurance and even mobility training.

Duolingo

Take the time in self-isolation to learn a new skill or keep up with an already existing one. Duolingo is one of the best apps to download during self-isolation as it can not only enrich your mind but allow you to connect with others around the world. If there's one thing we'll take away from this pandemic, it's that we're all more connected than we probably once thought. And, one day when things get better, you'll be able to take that trip to France and speak French with the locals.

Todoist

Chances are that if you have a job that makes it possible to work from home, you're already doing so. And, that can be a challenge for a lot of people who've never done it before. With so many distractions at home, you'll want to download an app that can help you stay on top of your productivity. It's the ultimate to-do list app that will help you stay on top of tasks by sending your reminders and monitoring deadlines.

Draw Something

Stay connected with friends during self-isolation by playing games that allow you to connect remotely. Draw Something is one of the best apps to download during self-isolation. It facilitates remote connection and is fun, easy and lighthearted. You choose a word to draw for your friends and then watch them try to guess what in the world you're drawing. It's a fun back and forth game that'll make the time pass just a little bit quicker.

Musée du Louvre Official App

If you're craving culture in a time where travel is essentially prohibited, you can access beautiful artworks via your smartphone. Instead of physically going to the Louvre, download the museum's official app and travel to Paris via your phone. Explore hundreds of artworks and learn about their history as a way to enrich your self-isolation and inspire future travels. Other museums, such as the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, have apps you can download as well.

Headspace

We're living in a time of constant hysteria, anxiety and uncertainty. So, it's more important than ever to take care of your mental health. Taking time out of your day in self-isolation to journal, meditate or practice gratitude is a great way to ensure you're taking care of yourself. And, downloading a mindfulness app can help. An app like Headspace will lead you through guided meditations while others will give you prompts to help you think about all of the things you're grateful for.

Tips on healthy living

Your body needs to move

With our modern style of living, we often forget that humans are part of the animal reign. As any other specie, we need to move. Exercise is crucial for our health. Since the last 60 years, with the dawn of industrialisation and modernisation, people do not need to hunt and cultivate their food anymore. Our ancestors HAD to fight for their survival, harvesting their fields etc. Long story short: 30 minutes of exercise, 3 times a week is enough to keep your body in good shape!

Adopting A Healthy Diet

Did you know that people are eating often 3 times the amount of meat they need to be in good health? In fact, we should be eating around 70% of vegetables (mostly greens), 10-15 % cereals and other form of carbs and only 10-15% meat? Many people have diet that is mostly (80%) based on meat and carbs (10-15%) ? Eat veggies, your body will thank you!

Drink water

For your kidneys and liver to work properly, you need to drink at least 1 to 1.5 liters of water everyday. Not soda... WATER! People who do not drink enough water leave themselves at risk for several diseases like cancer, liver stones, obesity and many more affections. Dehydration also leads to a deficit of attention, difficulty to concentrate, wariness and fatigue.

DON'T Smoke!

Tobacco is responsible for millions of deaths worldwide every year. It also costs billions of dollars to many governments and families to treat diseases related to the use of tobacco.

Get Regular Medical Examinations

If you can afford it, get at least one general medical examination every year in order to detect diseases such as cancer, diabetes or cholesterol as early as possible. Early detection will drastically improve your chances of survival. (This is probably one of the most important of those good health tips)

Take care of your friendships

It has been proven that people having a lot of friends live longer. This is probably because it reduces the amount of stress.

Having fun and living your life to the fullest while being respectful of your own body are also good health tips. Remember that you also need to take care of your mental health, so go ahead and cheat a couple times a week, it won't hurt you to take a couple beers once in a while!



9 tips for eating well

These practical tips can help you make healthier choices. The two keys to a healthy diet are eating the right amount of food for how active you are and eating a range of foods to make sure you're getting a balanced diet.

A healthy balanced diet contains a variety of types of food, including lots of fruit, vegetables and starchy foods such as wholemeal bread and wholegrain cereals; some protein-rich foods such as meat, fish, eggs and lentils; and some milk and dairy foods.

1. Base your meals on starchy foods

Starchy foods such as bread, cereals, rice, pasta and potatoes are a really important part of a healthy diet. Try to choose wholegrain varieties of starchy foods whenever you can.

2. Eat lots of fruit and veg

Try to eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetable every day.

3. Eat more fish

Aim for at least two portions of fish a week, including a portion of oily fish

4. Cut down on saturated fat and sugar

Saturated fats include hard cheese, butter, cakes, cream and pies.

5. Try to eat less salt

No more than 6g a day

6. Get active and try to be a healthy weight

Being overweight can lead to health conditions such as heart disease, high blood pressure or diabetes. Being underweight could also affect your health.

7. Drink plenty of water

We should be drinking about 6 to 8 glasses (1.2 litres) of water, or other fluids, every day to stop us getting dehydrated.

8. Don't skip breakfast

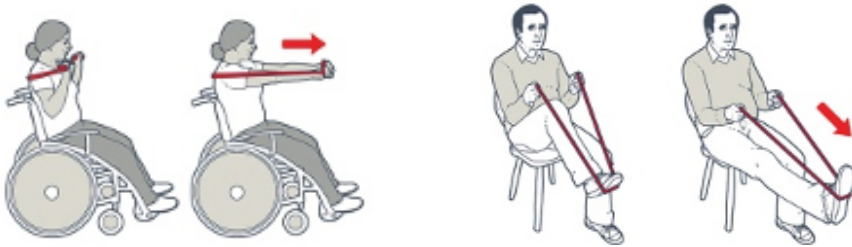
Breakfast can help give us the energy we need to face the day, as well as some of the vitamins and minerals we need for good health.

9. Learn to cook your favourite meals at home

You'll be surprised at how much healthier they are just from being cooked at home as opposed to getting takeaway.



Stretching exercises



Chest Press

Sit or stand and put the resistance band behind your back and hold each end of it. Stretch both arms out in front of your chest, then return to your starting position and repeat ten times.

Leg Press

Sit on a chair with your back straight. Place one foot in the middle of the resistance band and hold both ends of it with your hands. Bend your knee towards you, then straighten it back out in front of you before returning to your starting position and repeating with each leg ten times.

Seated stretches



Side bend

Back and forward bend



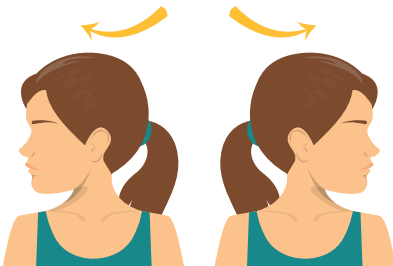
Bicep Curl

Sit or stand, place both your feet on the middle of the resistance band and hold each end of it with your hands. Raise your arms out in front of you to chest height, then return to your starting position and repeat ten times.

Seated Calf Press

Sit on a chair with your back straight. Place one foot in the middle of the resistance band and hold both ends of it.

Extend your leg and point your toes towards the ceiling, then point your toes forwards towards the ground. Return to the starting position and repeat with each leg ten times.

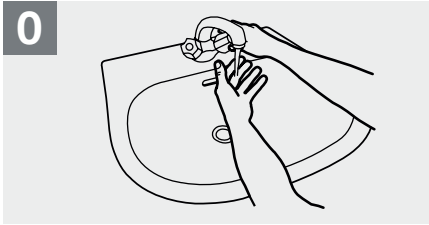


Neck rotation

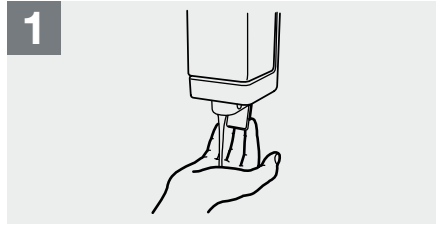


Shoulder shrug

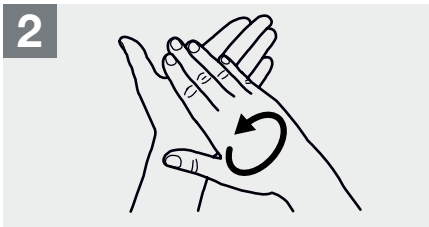
How to hand wash



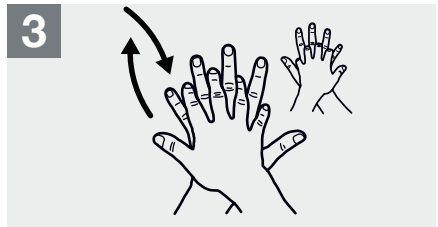
Wet hands with water;



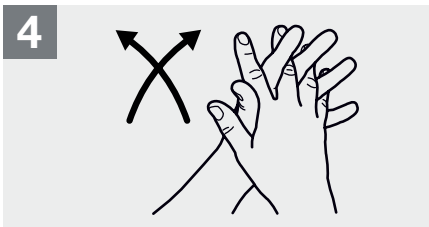
Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;



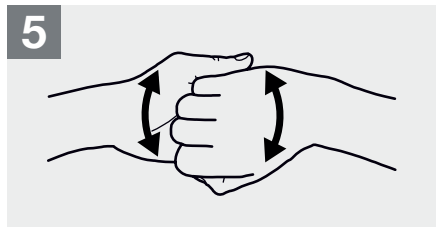
Rub hands palm to palm;



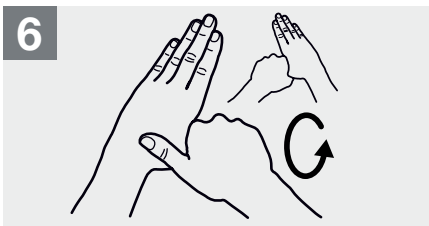
Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



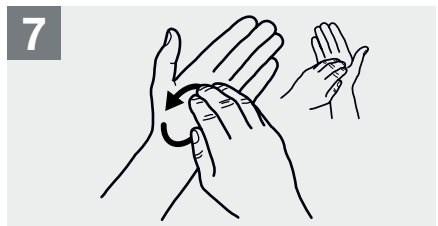
Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;

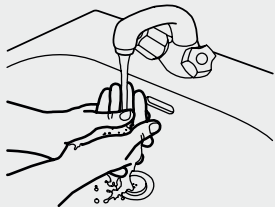


Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;

8



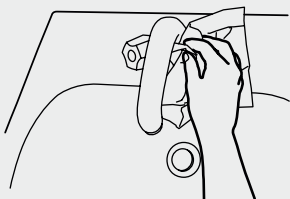
Rinse hands with water;

9



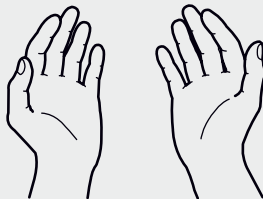
Dry hands thoroughly
with a single use towel;

10



Use towel to turn off faucet;

11



Your hands are now safe.



**40 to 60
seconds**



Relaxation Management

Relaxation is sometimes seen as a luxury, but in fact, regular relaxation and stress management are important for physical and emotional health. This is because your body's stress response can get triggered often throughout the day and, if your body doesn't return to its regular state of relaxation afterward, you may get stressed. Here are some relaxation strategies to help you combat stress:

Breathing Exercises:

These can be your first line of defense against stress. Breathing exercises are wonderful for relaxation because they can be used anytime and at any place, they work quickly, and are easy to master.

Music:

Playing music is a great way to relieve stress and promote relaxation for your family and friends as well as yourself.



Exercise:

It may seem that exercise is the opposite of relaxation, but a good workout can actually make you feel more relaxed afterward for a few reasons. First, working out can be a good way to release stress and blow off steam. Second, the endorphins released during a good workout can aid relaxation quite nicely. Additionally, exercise can get you into a state of flow where it's difficult to stay stressed – your body has to move toward relaxation as your stress response begins to reverse.

Read a Book:

Getting lost in a good book can be a great way to relieve stress. Here's a selection of good fiction and non-fiction that can be especially helpful for stress relief.

Meditation:

Many people try meditation and find that it's a wonderful relaxation tool. Many others consider trying it, or try it a few times, and decide it's not for them. If you're in the second group, you may want to consider giving meditation another look – it's excellent for relaxation as well as developing a more positive attitude and, if practiced long-term, greater resilience toward stress.

Try some of the relaxation techniques below on the next few pages:

Ten steps to mindfulness meditation



1. Create time & space

Choose a regular time each day for mindfulness meditation practice, ideally a quiet place free from distraction.



2. Set a timer

Start with just 5 minutes and ease your way up to 15-40 minutes.



3. Find a comfortable sitting position

Sit cross-legged on the floor, on the grass, or in a chair your feet flat on the ground.



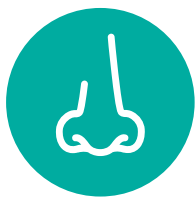
4. Check your posture

Sit up straight, hands in a comfortable position. Keep neck long, chin tilted slightly downward, tongue resting on roof of mouth. Relax shoulders. Close eyes or gaze downward 5-10 feet in front of you.



5. Take deep breaths

Deep breathing helps settle the body and establish your presence in the space.



6. Direct attention to your breath.

Focus on a part of the body where the breath feels prominent: nostrils; back of throat; or diaphragm. Try not to switch focus.



7. Maintain attention to your breath

As you inhale and exhale, focus on the breath. If attention wanders, return to the breath. Let go of thoughts, feelings or distractions.



8. Repeat steps 6-7

For the duration of meditation session. The mind will wander. Simply acknowledge this and return to your breath.



9. Be kind to yourself

Don't be upset if focus occasionally drifts or if you fall asleep. If very tired, meditate with eyes open and rearrange posture to more erect (but still relaxed) position.



10. Prepare for a soft landing

When the timer goes off, keep eyes closed until you're ready to open them. Be thankful. Acknowledge your practice with gratitude.

Relaxation ideas

Abdominal breathing for stress/anxiety relief

You will get the most benefit if you do this regularly, as part of your daily routine. You can do this standing up, sitting in a chair that supports your back, or lying on a bed or yoga mat on the floor. Make yourself as comfortable as you can. If you can, loosen any clothes that restrict your breathing.

If you're lying down, place your arms a little bit away from your sides, with the palms up. Let your legs be straight, or bend your knees so your feet are flat on the floor.

1. Let your breath flow as deep down into your belly as is comfortable, without forcing it.
2. Try breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth.
3. Breathe in gently and regularly. Some people find it helpful to count steadily from one to five. You may not be able to reach five at first.
4. Then, without pausing or holding your breath, let it flow out gently. Try to make sure that the out breath is longer than the in-breath. You can count from one to eight, if you find this helpful.
5. Keep doing this for at least three to five minutes.

Progressive muscle relaxation

This technique can help release areas of stress/tension in your body. You can find this on YouTube (for a video) or Google (if you want a written script).

Body scan

This technique can help ground you in the present moment and relax your body. You can find this on YouTube (for a video) or Google (if you want a written script).

Grounding exercises

If you are finding yourself worrying repeatedly and feeling caught up in these worries/stress, try using a grounding technique. These techniques can help keep you in the present instead of worrying about things that are not happening right now. Below are some exercises you could try:

Grounding Exercise 1:

- Begin by tracing your hand on a piece of paper and label each finger as one of the five senses.
- Then take each finger and identify something special and safe representing each of those five senses. For example: Thumb represents sight and a label for sight might be butterflies or my middle finger represents the smell sense and it could be represented by lilacs.
- After writing and drawing all this on paper, post it on your refrigerator or other safe places in the home where it could be easily seen and memorize it. Whenever you get triggered, breathe deeply and slowly, and put your hand in front of your face where you can really see it – stare at your hand and then look at each finger and try to do the five senses exercise from memory.

Grounding Exercise 2:

Keep your eyes open, look around the room, notice your surroundings, notice details.

- Hold a pillow, stuffed animal or a ball.
- Place a cool cloth on your face, or hold something cool such as a can of soda.
- Listen to soothing music
- Put your feet firmly on the ground
- FOCUS on someone's voice or a neutral conversation.



Sensory Awareness Grounding Exercise 3:

Here's the 54321 "game".

- Name 5 things you can see in the room with you.
- Name 4 things you can feel ("chair on my back" or "feet on floor")
- Name 3 things you can hear right now ("fingers tapping on keyboard" or "tv")
- Name 2 things you can smell right now (or, 2 things you like the smell of)
- Name 1 good thing about yourself

You can find these exercises at:

www.peirsac.org/peirsacui/er/educational_resources10.pdf



Visualisation exercises

- You can type into YouTube visualisation exercise e.g. beach visualisation, cloud visualization, forest visualization. Experiment and find which one you like!
- You can type into Google visualisation exercises to find a written script which someone else can read out to you.

You can find the following exercise at:

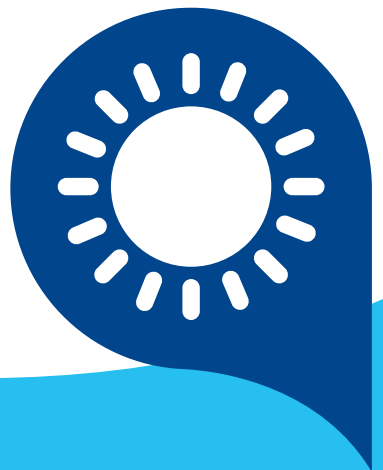
www.innerhealthstudio.com/visualization-relaxation.html

Example visualisation exercise: beach

- Get comfortable. Sit in a supportive chair or lie on your back.
- Relax your body by releasing any areas of tension. Allow your arms to go limp... then your legs....
- Feel your arms and legs becoming loose and relaxed...
- Now relax your neck and back by relaxing your spine.... release the hold of your muscles all the way from your head, down your neck.... along each vertebra to the tip of your spine...
- Breathe deeply into your diaphragm, drawing air fully into your lungs.... and release the air with a whooshing sound....
- Breathe in again, slowly.... pause for a moment.... and breathe out.....
- Draw a deep breath in.... and out....
- In..... out.....
- Become more and more relaxed with each breath....
- Feel your body giving up all the tension.... becoming relaxed.... and calm.... peaceful....
- Feel a wave of relaxation flow from the soles of your feet, to your ankles, lower legs, hips, pelvic area, abdomen, chest, back, hands, lower arms, elbows, upper arms, shoulders, neck, back of your head, face, and the top of your head....

- Allow your entire body to rest heavily on the surface where you sit or lie. Now that your body is fully relaxed, allow the visualization relaxation to begin.
- Imagine you are walking toward the ocean.... walking through a beautiful, tropical forest....
- You can hear the waves up ahead.... you can smell the ocean spray.... the air is moist and warm.... feel a pleasant, cool breeze blowing through the trees....
- You walk along a path....coming closer to the sea....as you come to the edge of the trees, you see the brilliant aqua color of the ocean ahead....
- You walk out of the forest and onto a long stretch of white sand.... the sand is very soft powder.... imagine taking off your shoes, and walking through the hot, white sand toward the water....
- The beach is wide and long....
- Hear the waves crashing to the shore....
- Smell the clean salt water and beach....
- You gaze again toward the water.... it is a bright blue-green....
- See the waves washing up onto the sand..... and receding back toward the ocean.... washing up.... and flowing back down..... enjoy the ever-repeating rhythm of the waves...
- Imagine yourself walking toward the water.... over the fine, hot sand.... you are feeling very hot....
- As you approach the water, you can feel the mist from the ocean on your skin. You walk closer to the waves, and feel the sand becoming wet and firm....
- A wave washes over the sand toward you.... and touches your toes before receding...
- As you step forward, more waves wash over your feet... feel the cool water provide relief from the heat....

- Walk further into the clear, clean water.... you can see the white sand under the water.... the water is a pleasant, relaxing temperature.... providing relief from the hot sun... cool but not cold....
- You walk further into the water if you wish.... swim if you want to.... enjoy the ocean for a few minutes..... allow the visualization relaxation to deepen.... more and more relaxed... enjoy the ocean....
- Now you are feeling calm and refreshed...
- You walk back out of the water and onto the beach...
- Stroll along the beach at the water's edge.... free of worries... no stress... calm..... enjoying this holiday....
- Up ahead is a comfortable lounge chair and towel, just for you...
- Sit or lie down in the chair, or spread the towel on the sand.... relax on the chair or towel.... enjoying the sun.... the breeze.... the waves.....
- You feel peaceful and relaxed.... allow all your stresses to melt away....
- When you are ready to return from your vacation, do so slowly....
- Bring yourself back to your usual level of alertness and awareness....
- Keep with you the feeling of calm and relaxation.... feeling ready to return to your day....
- Open your eyes, stretch your muscles... and become fully alert... refreshed... and filled with energy.



What can I do to relax?

You can use these exercises when you're feeling stressed, busy or worried. Don't worry if one technique doesn't work for you – try it a few times and, if it doesn't feel effective, move on to a different exercise.

- Relax your body
- Get creative
- Take a mindful walk

Remember:

- You can use relaxation techniques regularly, or every once in a while.
- Try and make some time in your day to try these exercises. Don't treat relaxing like a task that needs to be completed – try to think of it as giving yourself some time and space.
- Find somewhere quiet and comfortable where you won't be interrupted, if you can.
- Make sure your surroundings are the right temperature – it can be hard to relax if you're too hot or cold.



Relax your body

When you're stressed, your muscles might be tight and tense. This exercise helps you notice tension in your body and relax your muscles.

What do I need?

- somewhere comfortable to sit or lie down
- space where you won't be interrupted

What do I do?

- Lie down or sit with your back straight and your feet on the floor. Close your eyes or focus on a spot in the distance.
- Start by clenching your toes as much as you can for a few seconds then releasing them. Notice the difference between the two feelings.
- Match this to your breathing. Tense your muscle as you take a deep breath in, and relax as you breathe out.
- Move up your body to your thighs, your stomach and all the way to your shoulders and hands, clenching and relaxing each muscle in turn. Take time to notice any parts of your body that feel tense, tight or tired. You can repeat if you still feel tense.
- Take a moment to relax, then slowly and gently begin to move. When you feel ready, you can stand up slowly.

Alternatives

Instead of tensing your muscles, try placing something warm on each part of your body in turn.

Get creative

Colour, creativity and movement can help you feel relaxed by:

- distracting you from worrying thoughts
- giving you an outlet and focus for your emotions
- stimulating your senses

What do I need?

- a table or desk
- some blank paper
- some crayons, coloured pencils or pens
- some sticky tape or masking tape to hold your paper down (optional)

What do I do?

- Make sure you are sitting comfortably with your feet firmly on the floor, your back straight and your shoulders relaxed.
- Take your paper and crayon, and draw a circle that fills most of the page – don't worry if it's a bit wonky!
- Now keep drawing. You could keep going over the circle, or fill it with a pattern, but try not to let your crayon leave the page. Don't worry about creating a finished picture, just keep going.
- Take time to focus on what you're drawing.
- Focusing on these sensations can help you quieten your mind, like meditation.
- Once you have done this for a few minutes, try using a different colour or pattern.

Alternatives

- If you're focusing too much on getting the pattern right, try using your other hand.
- If you find it hard to get started, try using a colouring book.

Take a mindful walk

Spending time in green spaces can reduce stress, anxiety and depression and gentle exercise is a good way of relaxing.

What do I need?

Just yourself and somewhere to walk – try a local park, woodland, nature reserve or just your garden.

What do I do?

It might seem obvious how to go for a walk, but try following these steps to make the most of a mindful walk in nature.

- Find a green space. When you get there, stop for a moment and take a deep breath.
- Start walking slowly – try not to focus on getting somewhere quickly.
- Really focus on each step you take. Notice which part of your foot touches the ground first, and feel the transfer of weight through your foot.
- Think about the rest of your body – how are you holding your arms?
- Notice the ground underneath your feet. Is it grass or earth? Does the ground feel soft?
- Listen to the sounds around you – can you hear birdsong, or wind rustling through the leaves?

Alternatives

- If you can't go to a green space, you can try opening your window and noticing what's around you. Notice any clouds in the sky, or trees and plants you can see. Can you feel rain, wind or sun on your skin?
- You could try looking after a plant. Spend time focusing on its scent, shape and texture. You could try picking up some of the soil and focusing on how it feels.

Breathing exercise for stress

This calming breathing technique for stress, anxiety and panic takes just a few minutes and can be done anywhere. You will get the most benefit if you do it regularly, as part of your daily routine.

You can do it standing up, sitting in a chair that supports your back, or lying on a bed or yoga mat on the floor.

Make yourself as comfortable as you can. If you can, loosen any clothes that restrict your breathing.

If you're lying down, place your arms a little bit away from your sides, with the palms up. Let your legs be straight, or bend your knees so your feet are flat on the floor.

If you're sitting, place your arms on the chair arms.

If you're sitting or standing, place both feet flat on the ground.

Whatever position you're in, place your feet roughly hip-width apart.

- Let your breath flow as deep down into your belly as is comfortable, without forcing it.
- Try breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- Breathe in gently and regularly. Some people find it helpful to count steadily from one to five. You may not be able to reach five at first.
- Then, without pausing or holding your breath, let it flow out gently, counting from one to five again, if you find this helpful.
- Keep doing this for three to five minutes

Activities

The Simpsons characters

A	R	Y	R	H	M	R	P	Y	O	M	U	Y	A
L	R	S	M	O	O	C	E	T	T	C	S	T	S
N	P	H	S	M	L	T	T	U	T	A	N	T	I
E	A	I	H	E	Y	O	P	N	S	R	R	A	D
D	H	A	T	R	E	A	P	E	O	L	U	P	E
M	H	U	M	C	N	K	B	L	A	U	B	R	S
R	S	B	L	M	R	O	E	S	U	C	R	R	H
H	A	O	A	U	A	A	E	O	A	A	M	A	O
M	W	S	S	R	B	R	S	N	P	Y	T	L	W
O	O	T	T	R	T	I	G	I	E	R	L	P	B
E	Y	L	M	A	R	G	E	T	L	T	E	H	O
E	O	S	E	A	W	I	L	L	I	E	N	R	B
E	R	P	U	I	S	Y	O	T	T	E	N	R	P
O	L	S	R	E	H	T	I	M	S	A	Y	O	I

Cletus
Krusty
Smithers
Willie
Carl
Nelson

Sideshow Bob
Bart
Lenny
Moe
Mr Burns
Homer
Patty

Otto
Ralph
Barney
Marge
Ned
Lisa

World's longest rivers

P	I	M	Y	P	C	N	O	K	U	Y	R	I	I
U	U	E	L	O	U	Z	A	S	R	U	R	S	U
Y	N	O	N	I	A	R	A	N	M	S	E	R	I
E	Y	G	R	F	S	M	U	A	A	U	U	E	M
S	O	I	F	O	I	R	S	S	N	R	E	I	I
I	R	N	C	E	Z	T	G	N	A	Y	A	I	S
N	Y	E	C	M	M	E	K	O	N	G	S	P	S
E	I	P	P	I	S	S	I	S	S	I	M	Z	O
Y	O	C	S	I	C	N	A	R	F	O	A	S	U
N	O	Z	A	M	A	M	V	S	R	I	C	S	R
R	A	K	D	E	O	A	O	U	S	P	O	I	I
S	N	I	G	E	R	N	L	D	E	N	S	M	I
S	E	L	I	N	M	E	G	N	A	K	Y	E	S
G	N	E	R	Z	I	L	A	I	S	S	I	O	E

Yangtze
 Indus
 Sao Francisco
 Mekong
 Mississippi
 Nile

Volga
 Missouri
 Congo
 Parana
 Yenisey
 Niger

Purus
 Yukon
 Amur
 Amazon
 Lena

The Rainforest

Y	O	A	H	U	M	M	I	N	G	B	I	R	D
J	A	G	U	A	R	G	I	B	B	O	N	T	E
Y	E	R	O	T	S	R	E	D	N	U	D	A	N
O	G	I	F	R	E	L	G	N	A	R	T	S	G
R	I	P	A	T	O	I	W	A	C	A	M	A	N
N	S	A	N	A	I	L	O	H	U	S	E	P	A
R	Y	P	O	N	A	C	H	A	O	A	R	R	R
A	R	M	Y	A	N	T	S	S	T	S	R	G	R
F	I	C	O	A	T	I	I	O	R	C	H	I	D
C	R	O	O	L	F	T	S	E	R	O	F	T	O
E	M	E	R	G	E	N	T	L	A	Y	E	R	C
A	L	U	T	N	A	R	A	T	R	O	N	O	W
O	A	M	K	S	I	L	I	S	A	B	N	R	M
P	O	I	S	O	N	D	A	R	T	F	R	O	G

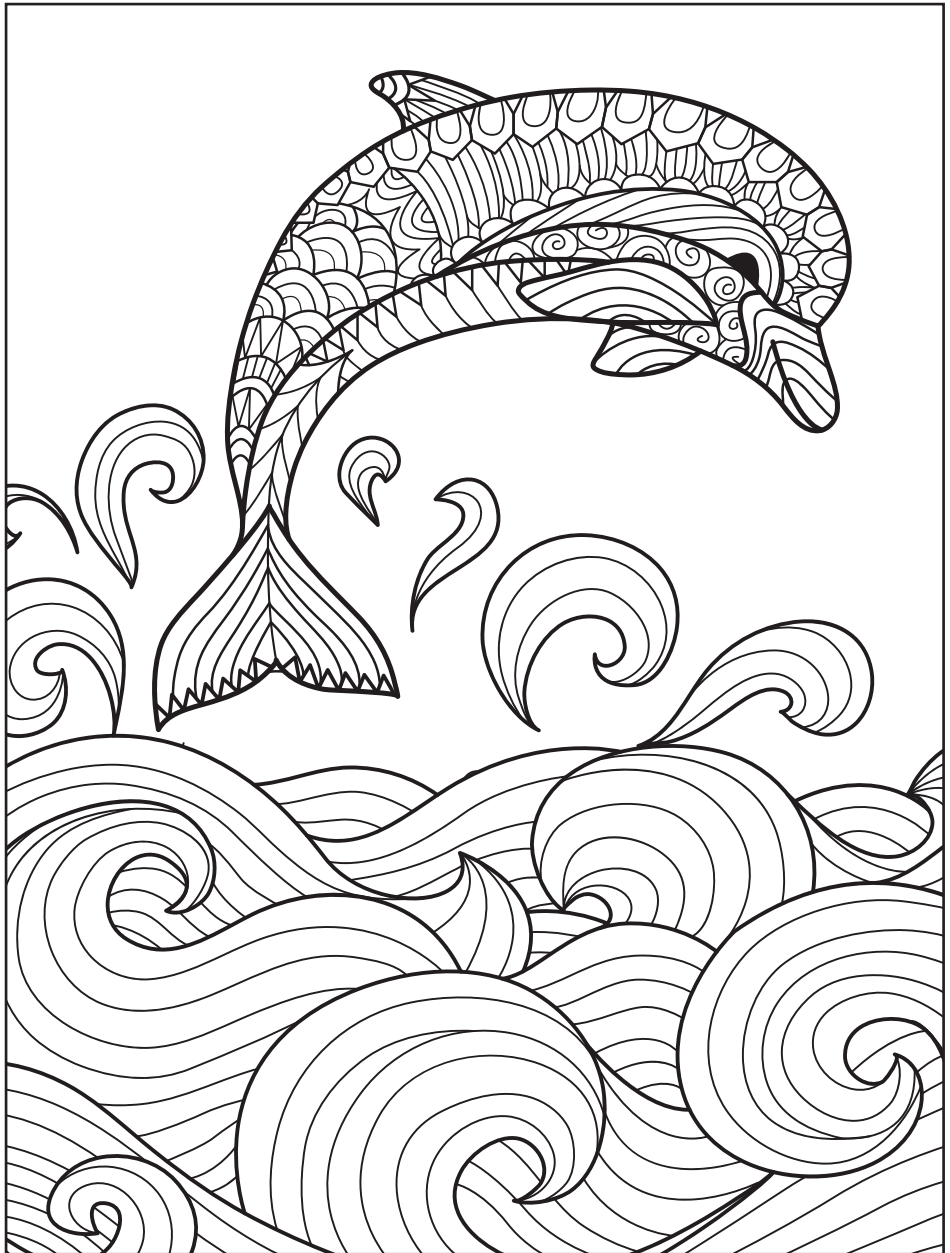
Forest floor
 Emergent layer
 Orchid
 Hummingbird
 Macaw
 Jaguar
 Poison dart frog

Tarantula
 Toucan
 Canopy
 Liana
 Basilisk
 Understorey
 Army ants

Strangler fig
 Gibbon
 Apes
 Tapir
 Coati

Mindful colouring

Send us your creations communications.cnwl@nhs.net





Sudoku

			9				6	7
	9					2		8
4	6			7	8			
3	2			9	4		7	
7			6		3			2
	1		7	8			4	3
			8	5			1	6
5		1					9	
6	7				9			

9		6		1	3			8
	5	8					9	
	3						1	
	6		8			9	2	
		3	4		9	1		
	4	9			6		3	
	9						8	
	1					6	7	
4			9	6		3		1

Useful contacts and websites

National advice and updates on Coronavirus can be found on the UK Gov website: **www.gov.uk/coronavirus**

Covid Mutual Aid UK is a group of volunteers supporting local community groups organising mutual aid throughout the Covid-19 outbreak in the UK. They focus on providing resources and connecting people to their nearest local groups, willing volunteers and those in need: **<https://covidmutualaid.org>**

You can find many resources on developing self management/coping skills and maintaining: **www.getselfhelp.co.uk**

You can access free books for anxiety, low mood, bereavement and others topics here for guided self-help: **<https://web.nrw.nhs.uk/selfhelp>**

For anyone experiencing a mental health crisis in the following areas:

- Brent
- Hillingdon
- Harrow
- Kensington and Chelsea
- Westminster
- Milton Keynes

**Contact Single point
of Access Crisis Telephone
for support 24hrs a day,
7 days a week:
0800 0234 650**