

A Guide supporting your Mental Health, Resilience and Well-being while working from home

For many people working from home might be the new norm. Let's face it, the current circumstances that we are living in, are not normal. It has brought a lot of stress and anxiety, but there are other challenges too e.g. home-schooling kids if you have a family or sharing limited space with a partner or a multi-generational family 24/7. You can do a lot to minimise the negative effect of your new routine and tap into your genius and creativity. Here are some ways to support your well-being, resilience, reduce feelings of isolation, and feel connected with colleagues while working remotely.

But first, let's get one key thing straight – Our mindset!

It is a good time to practice mindfulness and heartfulness for the positive growth of our minds!

 <h2 style="text-align: center;">Mindset shift</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">From Lock down to open open-minded</h3> 		
Mind under lock down	An open-Minded Person	
I am stuck at home	I am safe at home and lucky to have home.	I am still with my family and can access clean water.
I need to panic buy as I will run out of items	I have enough at home, let's use what we have wisely	Let me reduce, recycle and re-use
Everything is shutting Down	The most important places like grocery stores, medical facilities are still open	I can still meet with people online and plan things well in advance and do some online training for my personal growth
There is too much insecurity, I feel anxious and unsafe.	While I cannot control the current situation, I can control my actions by keeping myself safe, following the professional guidelines like washing my hands often for 20 seconds with soap and water , keep my social distance and stay home clean with all necessary precautions.	<p>I can keep myself healthy my practicing Heartfulness, have movement in my body all day, eating less and healthy, hydrate and sleeping well.</p> <p>I can also find a lot of fun like doing crafts, learn new cooking or read the book that taking dust on the shelf.</p> <p>I can keep myself happy.</p>

Planning & setting up the scene to thrive

“If you fail to prepare, you prepare to fail”



Getting organised & frame of mind

Waking Up

Although you may have some extra time in bed without a commute or doing school runs, aim to wake up around the same time every day. This helps stabilise your internal body clock and improve your sleep overall. You'll feel less tired, more refreshed, and find it easier to concentrate throughout the day.

Getting Ready To Work

Keep to your established morning routine if you can – get ready, shower, and dress nicely as if you are going to the office. This will help you get into the mindset that you are at work.

Setting Up Your Workspace

Try to set aside a work area separate from your sleeping area, if possible. This will help to prepare you for work mode and make it easier to switch off at the end of the day. To do this, you do not need a home office – a small desk set up in a corner of your room, or a laptop at the end of the kitchen table can do the trick.

If you're working in a small space, you could try setting up temporary 'zones' by hanging blankets or screens to visually separate your work area from your bed or living area.

Clear your work surface of clutter and set up your equipment to avoid physical strain – do a self-check using the guidance at [nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/how-to-sit-correctly](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/how-to-sit-correctly). If you don't have a chair with back support, you could add a firm pillow.

Family

Plan with your family over the weekends especially if you have kids. Prepare their weekly schedule and assign each one of them their responsibilities. Give them brownie points and in the evening reflect on the day. This could also be a good time for meditation as a family or couple. Schedule play time with the kids. Have fun. If you are on your own, you can meditate too and call your friends or parents and check how they are.

Shopping

Plan your shopping online as things can take a while to reach you. If you want to go to your local shop take all necessary precautions even when you bring your shopping home discarding unnecessary package and washing goods that can be cleaned before use. This will minimise your stress if you have good planning putting the right safety protocol at home.

News

Keep up with positive and reliable news. **Verify before you amplify.** See how you help others you can add value to society. Increase your generosity whatever big or small. This will make you feel good about yourself releasing the love hormones like oxytocin in the brain.

My Daily Productive Routine

Starting your day successfully will end your day successfully.



Waking Up:

- 1) Do your bedding and tidy your bedroom.
- 2) Have a glass of warm water. It helps to flush toxins from your body and boosts your immune system.
- 3) Do some morning exercise (20 minutes) depending on your preference. Morning Qigong/Tai Chi is great, but you might want to do other forms of exercise.
- 4) Rest and do some breathing exercise like doing your HeartMath (5 minutes). This also helps to boost your immunity.

All of that can take only up to 30 minutes. You can then have your breakfast and then shower.

Note: Qigong is energy work and gentle exercise. It is not recommended to wash straight after.

Get Moving All Day



Look for online indoor activity that suits you, such as a home Qigong, Tai Chi, Yoga videos or a fitness class. There are many live streaming classes at this moment and many local instructors have gone online.

Breaks and Lunch Time:

- No matter what exercise you choose, **take regular screen breaks** to look after your eyes, neck and stretch throughout the day or doing some Qigong/Tai Chi exercise.
- Take a clearly defined lunch break and move away from your workspace.
- Make sure you get enough Vitamin D i.e. sunshine
- During this time, you might need some extra supplements like Vitamin C. Check with your doctor. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-c/>

If breathing is life, movement is living.

Stay Connected

Make sure you keep communication open with your team, as often and as frequently as possible. **Senior leaders should role model** healthy working from home habits and behaviours. Here are some suggestions that we are trying:



- Video calls instead of emailing
- Short check-in and check-out calls between managers and their teams, at the start and end of the workday
- Optional Q&A sessions for colleagues to dial in and chat through any concerns or queries they have about working from home

Virtual social sessions, Courtesies & Fun

If you usually schedule time in the workday for an activity or exercising with your colleagues, continue to make time for this over the webcam or WhatsApp video call. Here are some ideas.

Turn your morning or afternoon coffee break into a virtual coffee break

- Say hello with a big smile. A smile is a curve that set everything straight. 😊
- Share your photos, selfies during your lunchtime
- Video calling for our afternoon craft or cooking session. Show off your skills you kept hidden
- Daily online quiz session
- If you feel appropriate, share your working space, why not give your colleagues a webcam tour? Or show off your pets at the end of a team catch up.

Evening winding down:



- **If you're not self-isolating**, go for a walk or a jog down the street for the day (following government guideline) – You can especially use that to wind down in the evening or start your day with it or simply go for a lunch walk. Since we are allowed one exercise per day, use it wisely. You might find that after spending all mornings at home, it is good to get some fresh air in the afternoon or evening. If you have a garden, then lucky you. Do some gardening and make the most of the garden.
- Cook a nice meal and give yourself a challenge to cook a top meal on a budget.
- Do your journaling. Perhaps in this moment of quiet you will find new ideas and inspiration reflecting on your day, on your past and what could be the 'new YOU'.
- Do 10 minutes meditation before you sleep.

Get Support

During times of stress it helps us to stay connected. Keep in touch with friends and family where you can. Use instant messenger or other social media means to communicate with your colleagues if you are feeling out of the loop or need to talk to someone.

Find out what resource your workplace has put in place. If you are your own boss, there are plenty of good online mental health resources.

Mental health helplines:



Samaritans offers free, confidential support 24 hours a day on 116 123.

Find a list of national mental health services and helplines at [mentalhealth.org.uk](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk).

Local authority advice:

https://www.luton.gov.uk/Health_and_social_care/coronavirus/Pages/default.aspx

NEED HELP?

Here's who to contact in Luton

<h3 style="text-align: center; background-color: #92d050; padding: 5px;">Need Food</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">and in financial hardship</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>luton foodbank <small>so you don't have to be hungry</small></p> </div> <p>Luton Council Citizens Advice 0800 4561673 0844 245 1285</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center; background-color: #92d050; padding: 5px;">Elderly</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">and/or with underlying health condition</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Luton Age Concern LUTON</p> </div> <p>Urgent help 01582 456812 01582 547659 admin@ageconcern.org.uk</p>
<h3 style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 5px;">Self-Isolating</h3> <p>and need food/medicine or someone to speak to</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 20%;">  <p>01582 452356</p> </div> <div style="width: 20%;">  <p>07555 726984</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 20%;">  <p>07950 541170 07950 541244</p> </div> <div style="width: 20%;">  <p>07307 191582 07824 534049</p> </div> <div style="width: 20%;">  <p>01582 211066 emergency.support@crisisaid.org.uk</p> </div> <div style="width: 20%;">  <p>07973 337269 07903 236926</p> </div> </div>	
<h3 style="text-align: center; background-color: #92d050; padding: 5px;">Parent/Carer</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">of a disabled child/adult</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>fobe <small>friends of bright eyes</small></p> </div> <p>07871 500706 info@fobe.org.uk</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center; background-color: #92d050; padding: 5px;">Need Advice</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">or guidance</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p>LUTON IRISH FORUM 01582 720447 info@lutonirishforum.org</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;">  <p>citizens advice 03442 451285 citizensadvice.org.uk</p> </div> </div>

Stay Informed
 bit.ly/lutoncag3
 Luton COVID-19 Action Group

Compiled By
 **INSPIRE FM** 105.1
POSITIVELY INSPIRING THE COMMUNITY



12 practical and key lifestyle tips to stay safe and be less stressed & resilient during this pandemic



This is not a medical advice. We are sharing our own experiences of some good practice. A few will depend on your own circumstances and might not be relevant. **But please do check with your health provider before you do anything and make sure you educate yourself.**

- 1) A steam bath like you would do if you have sinus can help if you feel the ONSET of the symptom. You can even have a steamy shower as the virus cannot stand that temperature. This worked recently for someone who felt the ONSET of the symptom and was shared by a Doctor.
- 2) Eat Healthy and drink plenty of water (warm is preferable). Remember your Vitamin C, a good dose (check with your Doctor especially if you have kidney problems) and Vitamin D3. The UK National Health Service (NHS) website recommends Vitamin C daily intake no more than 1gm per day whereas some other health websites go up to 2gm per day. In the current context do consult your doctor and ask how much you can take. Different people with different conditions might need a different dose. A simple advice like this can save you.
- 3) Wash your hands thoroughly (rubbing the hands and in between the fingers) and regularly with soap and water for 20 secs especially if you have to go out. Keep your nails short.
- 4) Leave your shoes as you enter your house from outside. If you cannot leave them outside keep them safe at the entrance. Do not walk with your dirty shoes around your house. This is basic hygiene. Note in this context the virus can survive on your shoe soles for days.
- 5) It may sound odd or weird, but you don't need to panic buy tissues. Use water to clean yourself. It is more hygienic. In eastern countries, the middle-eastern and many parts of Europe like Spain, people wash their backside. You don't need a bidet. Use a plastic jug. It might be a bit inconvenient but models like plastic 'tea pots' are good. Dry yourself with a small towel and keep it for you only and put them in the washing machine every day. No more tissue panic buying. You can cut a large towel into pieces though small towels are easily available.
- 6) Make sure when you bring your shopping home you have sanitised your kitchen table and divide into two. Put your shopping on one side and wash and discard anything packaging or fruits and veggies and put them on the other side. Then arrange them in safe containers or your fridge.

- 7) Speaking with a Traditional Chinese Medical practitioner, fuming the house with some Chinese herbs helps to purify the air and kill bacteria. You can also burn sage or even Frankincense and Myrrh but be careful of people who have allergies and ensure you have enough aeration and put them out of reach of children. Palo Santo is also great wood essence from South America. The smell will also uplift your mood.
- 8) Do your Heart-focused breathing. It activates the Heart Centre i.e. the Thymus which helps the T-Cells (white blood cells) production, which is vital in an immune response against pathogens, bacteria and virus.
- 9) Plenty of laughter as it activates the Thymus. It also activates your parasympathetic system i.e. the rest and digest.
- 10) Body movement and exercise is key to boost your immunity, physical and mental health. You will release happy brain chemicals like oxytocin and endorphin.
- 11) If you are in a multigenerational accommodation and someone is unwell or you are living with a vulnerable person, talk with them about how self-isolation might work in your house if and when necessary. Try to isolate each one in a room. Sanitise the washroom every time you use it and have separate towels. Clean frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, handrails, remote controls, table tops as well as phones as there are more people in the house. Try to keep a distance of two metres (three paces) if you need to be in the same room unless you are providing personal care, such as bathing; this is called social distancing. Avoid being in the kitchen at the same time with a vulnerable person. Try to take your meal in your room. Talk to each other over the phone or a walkie talkie if you have.
- 12) Finally, basic hygiene, cover your face if you are coughing. Call NHS 111 for medical advice or <https://111.nhs.uk/> **Call 999 for a life-threatening emergency.** <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/>

Breathing Technique for Meditation.



The HeartMath® breathing technique.

It will help you to regulate your emotions and boost your immune system.

Practice the basic HeartMath Heart-Focused Breathing® at least 5 minutes each day.

Here is the technique in 3 simple and effective steps:

- (1) Shift your attention in the area of the heart by gently touching your heart area.
- (2) Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area.
- (3) Breathe a little slower and deeper than usual.

You can then **add this part on top** of the above which is called the Quick Coherence® Breathing Technique.

- (4) Bring a feeling of either gratitude, appreciation, care or compassion for somebody or someone.



Image courtesy HeartMath® www.heartmath.com



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