

WAKEFIELD YOUNG CARERS NEWSLETTER - June 2020

**LOOKING AFTER YOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING DURING LOCKDOWN**

Everyone needs to look after their own health and wellbeing during these tough times – especially if you are looking after others. It's important to make some time for self-care - something that many carers often neglect.

1. Take Some Time-Out

- Life is a little strange right now and it's normal to feel a bit worried, scared or helpless about the current situation.
- Taking time to relax and get some headspace can help with difficult emotions and improve our wellbeing.
- Unplug from social media and unwind - whether it's a soak in the bath, reading, watching a film or meditating.
- Make use of helpful resources to support mental health and wellbeing
<https://www.camhs-resources.co.uk/> and www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/

2. Stay Connected with Others

- The simplest thing we can all do for mental wellbeing is to stay connected and maintain friendships. Use social media, texts, calls – even write letters to reach out and stay in touch with those you care about.
- As social activities are difficult at the moment, we need to connect with others in new creative ways. Use apps (like *Skype & Zoom*) to organise video catch-ups with friends and family, play interactive games (on *Houseparty* app) or build a virtual team and take part in an online pub quiz (e.g., on *Facebook*).
- Remember that friends and family are only a phone call away! Identify who you can turn to when you feel worried. Share your concerns with others you trust –doing so may help them too!
- If you can't speak to someone you know use the Drop in and Chat service on WWW.WF-I-CAN.CO.UK or check out www.childrenssociety.org.uk/coronavirus-information-and-support

3. Look After Your Body

- Our physical health has a big impact on how we feel. Avoid falling into unhealthy habits that can end up making you feel worse. Get a good night's sleep each night and eat healthy, well-balanced meals.
- Keeping active is important - build some form of exercise into your daily routine. Walk, run or cycle around the block. Whatever it is, aim to get outside for some sunlight and fresh air each day.
- If you can't go outside, try to move around inside (dance to your favourite tunes or try shadow boxing!).
- Take up daily Yoga, Pilates or Zumba (Youtube has millions of free online exercise videos). You don't need fancy sports equipment to keep fit – get creative and repurpose your plastic bottles as dumbbells!

4. Keep Your Mind Active

- When we are feeling worried or sad we may stop doing things we usually enjoy. Make an effort to focus on the things you love doing. Keep up with your hobbies (if you can still do them at home) or find something new to try!
- Get creative with arts and crafts - <https://saturday-club.org/online/> has lots of creative inspiration!
- Keep your brain active by reading, writing stories, playing games, puzzles (crosswords, sudoku, jigsaws). Find something that works for you and set yourself goals. Check out www.scouts.org.uk/the-great-indoors
- Learn new things from free tutorials & courses online. Stay ahead with www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize

5. Keep a Routine

- The lockdown has caused lots of disruption to everyone's normal routine. Think about adapting and creating positive new ones. Sticking to a regular daily routine will help you feel focussed and help maintain an active body and mind.
- Try to limit the time you spend watching, reading or listening to coverage of the outbreak and ensure you take regular breaks from screen-time – this includes having time away from TV, Netflix, gaming and social media.

TALK TO SOMEONE: If you are finding things tough – remember you are not alone. Chat to someone on the Drop in & Chat service through the online resource for young people – WWW.WF-I-CAN.CO.UK