



Materials to Support WFH under Covid-19

After more than 20 months battling Covid 19 and numerous rounds of restrictions, many of us and our colleagues are suffering from pandemic fatigue. Here is a compilation of materials to better help us maintain a sound mind while living with Covid and working from home.

How to: Support colleagues to stay mentally healthy in unusual working conditions



Actions for Businesses and Leaders:

- Regularly communicate with employees.
- Help teams stay connected.
- Engage senior leaders to role model mentally healthy behaviours
- Be aware that individual circumstances vary
- Help people create boundaries.
- Consider setting up peer-group support
- Review the process for performance reviews
- Ensure that employees are aware of resources for support on mental health and wellbeing
- Be mindful that certain groups or individuals may be more affected by ongoing events
- Encourage employees to stay active
- Communicate and signpost to information, resources and support that supports the specific needs of diverse groups.
- Promote selfcare
- Monitor employee wellbeing

Actions for individuals

- Spend as much time as possible with family and people with whom we are able to meet face to face
- Get as much exposure to natural daylight as possible, the earlier in the day the better
- Eat regularly and as healthily as possible, and ideally have as many meals as possible with family or housemates
- Walk and exercise regularly. If possible, with family or friends.
- Having a 'fake commute' at the start and end of the working day is beneficial for many people
- Pick up the phone and chat with people for no other reason than to ask how they're



Managers, here's how to support your staff during COVID-19



- o Maintain regular catch-ups with your team
- o Look out for signs of struggle
- o Set up regular 1:1 meetings with staff you're concerned about
- o Provide support, both in and beyond the workplace
- o Keep an eye on your own mental health

<https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/news/managers-heres-how-to-support-your-staff-during-covid-19/>

Working from home: A checklist to support your mental health

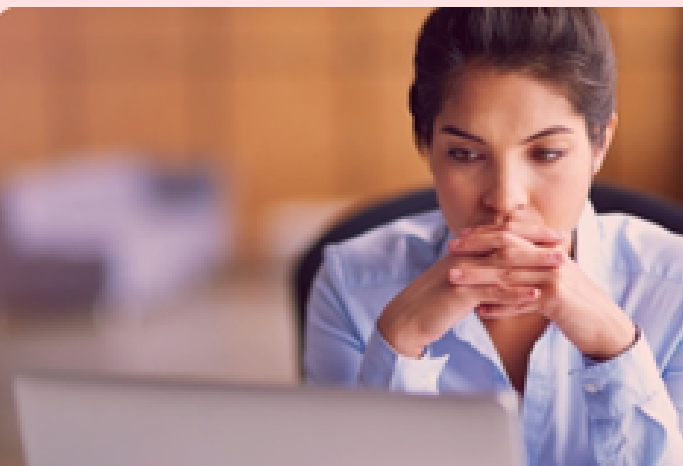
Checklist to help combat: Feeling isolated, being unable to 'switch off from work', having difficulty staying motivated, having difficulty prioritising your workload, feeling uncertain about your progress, and whether you're performing ok, insomnia and sleep problems

- Set up routine and structure for your workday – create boundaries between 'work time' and 'home time'
- Create a specific place in your home where you work (avoid your bedroom)
- Stay connected with co-workers and your manager by scheduling regular virtual or phone meetings
- Try a digital detox in the evenings
- Try and get outside at least once a day
- Focus on the silver linings
- Don't forget the other helpful actions for maintaining positive mental health
 - o Exercising, getting a good night's sleep, and eating well
 - o Doing activities, you enjoy
 - o Staying connected with social supports
 - o Managing stress through problem solving, relaxation or meditation
 - o Thinking in helpful ways



<https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/news/working-from-home-a-checklist-to-support-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus/>

Long, lonely lockdown: dealing with separation anxiety



Without regular face-to-face interactions – even fleeting ones like with a barista at the local coffee shop, or water-cooler banter around the office – many people may feel unmoored. Being restricted from visiting the usual people and places that bring us joy can lead to feelings of disconnection, apathy, and a lack of self-esteem – all of which are completely rational responses to frequent lockdowns.

- Staying connected - discussing day-to-day activities with friends and family members
- Talking shop - connecting with colleagues and engaging on professional issues can help you maintain key competencies and confidence
- Scheduling regular chats with others – scheduling regular virtual catch-ups with friends and family can build stability and predictability in an otherwise uncertain period.
- Try something new
- Focusing on the present
- Seeking support – for those who are really struggling, Hotlines:
<https://www.gov.sg/article/call-these-helplines-if-you-need-emotional-or-psychological-support>

<https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/news/long-lonely-lockdown-dealing-with-separation-anxiety/>

The importance of self-care during lockdown

Self-care refers to the activities and practices that we deliberately choose to engage in on a regular basis to maintain and enhance our health and wellbeing.

It is important to find an approach that SETTLES the mind:

Stay focused on the here and now and take each day one step at a time.

Engage and stay connected to friends, family and support networks.

Thoughts are thoughts, not necessarily facts.

Be alert to negative thoughts and don't give them power.

Treat people with kindness

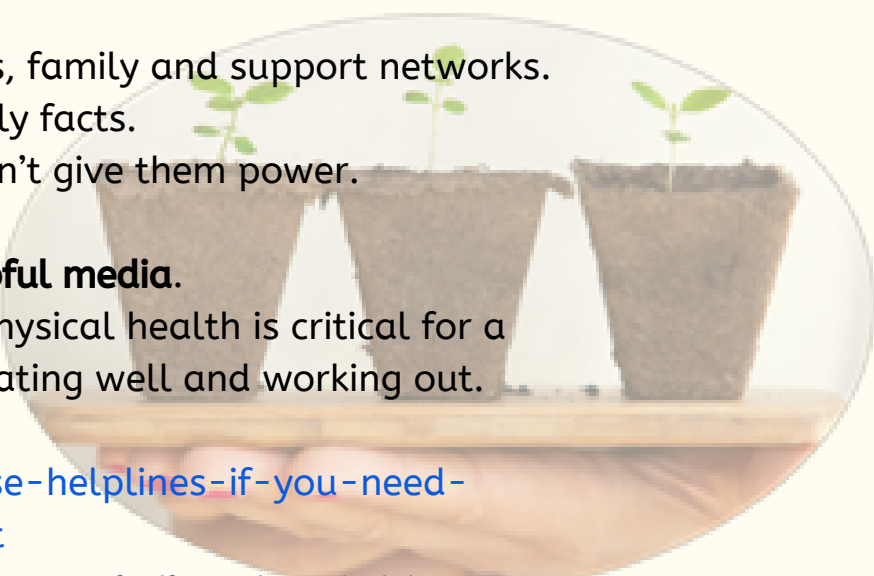
Limit information and time on unhelpful media.

Exercise, research shows that good physical health is critical for a healthy mind, focus on good sleep, eating well and working out.

Seek help, where necessary.

<https://www.gov.sg/article/call-these-helplines-if-you-need-emotional-or-psychological-support>

<https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/news/the-importance-of-self-care-during-lockdown/>





Coping with the continuing pandemic



Dr Joscelyne shared some tips to learn to manage this ongoing stress with continuing pandemic:

- Reflect on how well you did last year. It was a tough year with a lot of stress, and you got through it.
- Build a repertoire of coping strategies.
- Don't dwell on the future. You simply don't know what is going to happen and you can't plan for 12 months ahead because things might change. Instead plan very small things.
- Take up the support on offer. Accepting you need help to get through is a big step forward.
- Don't use unhelpful crutches. Alcohol and other drugs may feel like they lower stress but they are highly addictive and increase stresses, especially if used in the long-term.
- Look for the positives.

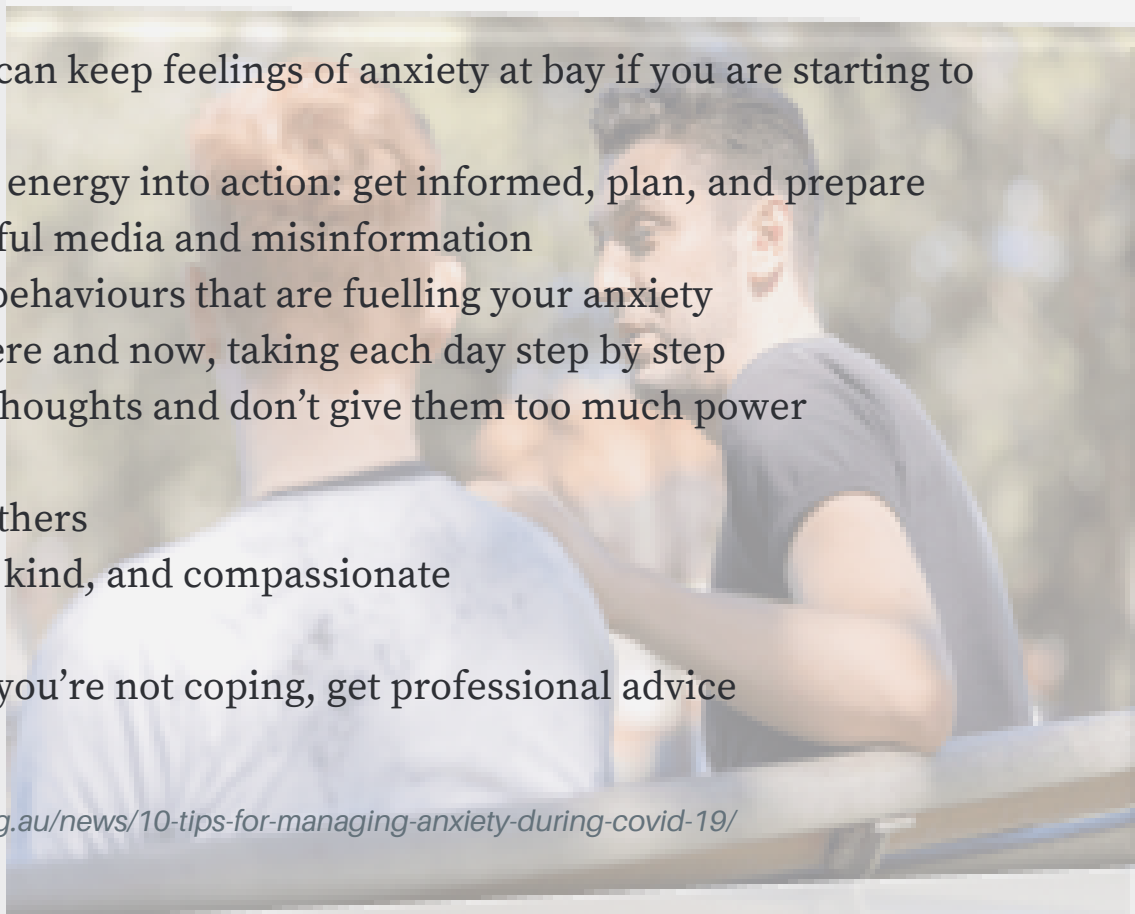
Look out for each other. If you've noticed a change in behaviour in a friend or family member, tell them you have and ask if they need help.

<https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/news/coping-with-the-continuing-pandemic-in-2021/>

10 tips for managing anxiety during COVID-19

Practical ways that you can keep feelings of anxiety at bay if you are starting to feel overwhelmed.

1. Channel your anxious energy into action: get informed, plan, and prepare
2. Limit or avoid unhelpful media and misinformation
3. Cut down or stop the behaviours that are fuelling your anxiety
4. Stay focused on the here and now, taking each day step by step
5. Be aware of negative thoughts and don't give them too much power
6. Look after your body
7. Stay connected with others
8. Help other people, be kind, and compassionate
9. Take a breath
10. If you're feeling like you're not coping, get professional advice



<https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/news/10-tips-for-managing-anxiety-during-covid-19/>