



## Your Mental Health & Wellbeing During COVID-19

There is no doubt that Coronavirus (COVID-19) has presented new and unique challenges. We have been navigating unchartered waters with this virus, making it important to adapt to a new way of working and interact while also taking care of our mental health and wellbeing.

By now, most of us are working remotely for the first time, isolated from co-workers, friends and family. Our daily living routines have been disrupted causing added anxiety, stress and strain physically, mentally, and financially. It is completely natural for this disruption and uncertainty to lead to anxiety and stress.

Now more than ever, we all must take care of our mental health and wellbeing. As we continue to protect ourselves against potential exposure to the Coronavirus, keep in mind that social distancing does not have to mean social isolation. This resource provides practical tips on maintaining care of our mental health and wellbeing.

- Keep a regular schedule:** Maintain your routine and schedule. You have probably by now set up a designated space for you and each family member to work and learn. Don't forget to include periodic breaks for recharging in your schedule. If you haven't got a schedule already, here is a sample:

Time	Activity
7:00 am:	Wake up, stretch, take care of kids/animals
7:30 am:	Breakfast and family time (technology free!)
8:30 am:	Work and check updates with small breaks every 30 min or so
12:00 pm:	Lunch break, get fresh air, stretch & exercise
1:00 pm:	Work with breaks every 30 minutes, check in with co-workers
5:00 pm:	Dinner and screen break! Call a friend, family, or loved one
7:00 pm:	Self care time

- Keep your immune system strong:** Make a commitment to staying strong by:
  - Washing your hands with soap for 20 seconds
  - Getting enough sleep
  - Eating well, staying hydrated and taking vitamins

- **Stay Connected:** Continue to stay connected with family, friends, and support systems using technology like facetime and other video-based options. Talk about your fears and concerns with people you trust. Chances are they are feeling the same way.
- **Prioritize personal hygiene and limit contact with others:** This is imperative to avoid spreading the virus. Here's a reminder of what to do !:
  - Again, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds and use hand sanitizer regularly.
  - Use a tissue to cover your sneeze or cough, or when unavailable, cough or sneeze into your elbow.
  - Disinfect with anti-bacterial wipes areas and objects that are heavily trafficked or are touched regularly where you live and work.
  - Avoid contact with those who are sick and avoid touching your face, eyes, nose, and mouth.
  - Stay home when you are sick.
- **Exercise and stay active:** This is not only good for your physical health, but also your mental health. Periodically, get up and move around your home. Walking, stretching, planks or jumping jacks—whatever works best for you to reduce or alleviate stress and increase endorphins. While our favourite gyms are closed during this time, **Spectrum.Life** offer fitness classes via live video link.
- **Get fresh air:** If circumstances allow, go outside for a brisk walk and fresh air, but avoid crowds and try to maintain the recommended distance with others.
- **Stay informed:** Knowledge is power, and it's good to stay updated on progress being made in combating the virus. Stay informed on the latest updates from reliable sources like the **World Health Organization (WHO)**.
- **Limit media consumption:** Avoid continuous exposure to news, media, and social media that may trigger or elevate anxiety, stress, or panic. Stay informed by following few, authoritative resources, but limit media consumption.
- **Set boundaries on work schedule:** When working from home, be sure that you are working reasonable hours. It can be tempting to work more while you have your work at home, however it can also be taxing on your health and well-being, so stick to a schedule with healthy boundaries.
- **Distract and redirect:** Engage in activities that benefit your wellbeing, bring you joy and distract you from existing challenges. This might include mindfulness and yoga, also delivered by **Spectrum.Life** remotely. You may also enjoy reading, art projects, cooking with new recipes, breathing exercises, or listening to a calming podcast or music.
- **Get creative to stay connected:** Share tips with co-workers and friends on what's working well for you and encourage them to do the same. Come up with new ideas like planning exercise challenges together – try one-minute planks, 10 jumping jacks, or whatever you decide, just keep it simple. Share photos of pets enjoying the new routine. Watch movies at the same time via whats app streaming. The sky's the limit on creative ways to stay connected. Stay well.