

Wellbeing blog 17th April.

Last week I talked about how to stay safe online whilst staying at home. I also mentioned how helpful online activity can be in making sure we stay connected with family and friends at this time.

We do need to be honest that we are living through challenging times and that we need to focus not only on our physical health but also on our mental wellbeing. I've done some research on practical strategies which can support positive mental wellbeing during the lockdown period and have been trying them out myself. Here's what I've found.

The first strategy is about staying connected with people and, as we've said before, technology really helps with this but isn't the only way. I've found that having pictures and photographs of family and friends really helps as well as listening to light hearted chatty programmes on the radio.

It's also important to decide on your routine, BGHS staff have had some really good advice about this and it is really helpful to try to stick to your normal routine as much as possible. Don't be tempted to let every day be a duvet day - very soon your sleep will suffer and that will impact on your mood.

Try to keep active, get as much sunlight and fresh air as possible and enjoy nature. Do follow the government guidelines about exercise and physical distancing whilst outside. I've been trying to go for a walk every day and it definitely makes me feel better - the lovely weather has helped too.

Find ways to spend your time; have a clear out, sort your files, tidy your bedroom, do all those little jobs you've been putting off. Trust me, it's really therapeutic.

Find ways to relax and be creative; drawing, colouring, writing and arts and crafts help you to relax. Why not try yoga or meditation? It's important to keep an open mind on these things. I've found the Mind website; mind.org.uk to be really helpful, their sections on relaxation and mindfulness are particularly interesting, I've used their strategies to positive effect. My attempts to learn to crochet have been less successful however!

Keep your mind stimulated and challenged; hopefully your school work will be doing this for you. Do remember to keep up to date and get in touch with your teachers if you are experiencing any difficulties. In addition to this, do take time to read, listen to podcasts and do puzzles. There are loads of Apps out there, many of them will help you learn new skills - give them a try, I'd be interested to hear how you get on.

Take care with news and information - do make sure that you get your information from a trusted source, the NHS Coronavirus Page and the government websites have the most up to date news. If watching the news makes you anxious, consider taking a break from it for a while.

If you are feeling anxious, and this is completely understandable at the moment - don't ignore it! It can help to talk, tell a trusted adult at home how you feel. Remember too that our pastoral and wellbeing staff can be contacted on our usual emails and we are always happy to help and support in any way we can.

Just a reminder that we have links on our website which can support and give up to date information. I particularly like the Headspace and Anna Freud resources. Have a look, I'd be interested in any feedback.

Do take care everyone, stay safe.

Mrs Hughes