

# **MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH IN A PANDEMIC**



**MAJOR  
PLAYERS**

# LOCKDOWN 2.0

So here we are again... but this time we're a little more prepared. In lockdown, our normal coping strategies might not be available to us, so this is the time to draw on our inner resources to cope the best we can.

If there is anything lockdown 1.0 taught us, it's that we are all impacted differently. With this in mind, we've created a comprehensive guide on how you can take of yourself mentally and emotionally during lockdown 2.0.

## **Create a daily plan**

We thrive off structure and routine. If you're not careful, the blurred boundaries between work and home life can throw this all off balance. Whilst it might be tempting to lie in and stay in your PJ's, try and keep to your daily routine as much as possible.

Sticking to a routine will not only make you feel grounded, but it will also feel rewarding knowing you got the most out of your day.

## **Start with mindfulness**

The benefits of learning to get out of your head and into your body is highly rewarding. By being mindful the present, it is impossible to dwell on the past (depression) or worry about the future (anxiety).

Start your day right with a meditation session using apps including Calm and Headspace.

## **Train your brain**

Practise gratitude for the positive things in your life right now rather than focusing on the things you don't have. By writing down what you're grateful for (i.e. your health, your cosy bed, close friends), you can train your mind to focus upon the positives rather than the negatives.

## **Eating and drinking well**

What you put in your body will affect how you feel about yourself. Be conscious of your food choices as these will impact your mood, energy and productivity. Also, remember, alcohol is a depressant in some people. Enjoy the occasional tipples, but call yourself out if you notice it negatively impacting your everyday.

## **Move your body**

Try and exercise, even it's for 15 minutes. By doing so, your body releases feel-good hormones, endorphins and serotonin, which gives you a natural energy boost and triggers positive feelings within the body.

Plus, your body also becomes better at managing cortisol levels - the hormone that's released in response to emotional or psychological stress.

## **Balance your activities**

During the first lockdown you may have felt pressure to hustle harder than ever. And whilst it's satisfying to tick items off your to-do list, there's also merit in giving yourself a break and doing activities that are just for fun.

What nourishes you or brings you a sense of joy? Maybe it's an online yoga class, a group meditation or a gaming session. Whatever you're into, make sure you strike a balance between essential tasks and mindful activities that are just for you.

## **Give yourself a break**

It's normal to be experiencing ups and downs at the moment. On down days, be extra gentle with yourself. Remind yourself how far you've come, and take a moment to appreciate the positive things in your life.

## **Plan for 2021**

You may have had to put a lot of things on hold, but nevertheless, start planning for the future. What holidays would you like to go on? What hobbies do you want to take up? Make a 2021 bucket list.

## **Embrace moments of joy**

Whilst major events like birthdays, weddings and holidays have been put on hold, try and spark some joy in the little things within your days. Perhaps it's a text or email you've received, the early morning sunrise or your favourite show on Netflix releasing a new season!

Being grateful for the little things will improve your positivity and mental wellbeing.

## **It's good to talk**

Ensure that you have open, honest and compassionate conversations with someone you trust - it's incredibly powerful and empowering. Internalising conflict over the long-term can be very inflammatory, affecting your mental and physical health.

Never be afraid to seek professional help and keep trying different people until you feel comfortable and find the right fit.

## **This isn't forever**

Everything is temporary. Negative feelings you may have now, won't be there forever. Remember, there are much, much brighter days ahead of you!

If you ever feel in need of support with your mental wellbeing, or general life support, you can reach out to a wide range of support organisations which we have listed on the following page.

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# SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

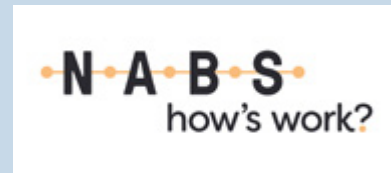
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## Leapers

Leapers are a community offering mental health support to freelancers, the self-employed, and small businesses. They have also created a plethora of tools, resources and guides that will help support you through the pandemic and beyond.

[www.leapers.co](http://www.leapers.co)



## NABS

NABS is an employee support organisation for the advertising and media industry. They offer expert, impartial and friendly advice for the wellbeing of everyone. They also work out what's for you and provide practical solutions. Find out more about what they do [here](#).

[www.nabs.org.uk](http://www.nabs.org.uk)



## Mental Health Foundation

The Mental Health Foundations mission is to help people understand, protect and sustain their mental health. They offer a wide range of support from guides, podcasts and videos - all available to download.

[www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)



## MIND

MIND are one of the UK's leading mental health charities and throughout the Covid-19 crisis they have continued to provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing mental health issues.

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

## NHS Crisis Line

NHS urgent mental health helplines are available to people of all ages. Offering 24 hour advice with a mental health professional.

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline>

## Kooth

An online community offering mental wellbeing support. Free, safe and anonymout support.

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

## The Mix

Offers essential support for under 25's through one-to-one and group sessions.

[www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

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