

Routine

Keeping a routine plays a really important role in helping you to look after your mental health. It can bring a sense of control, structure and predictability to your day, can reduce stress and can help you feel more grounded. As a result of the lockdown, you may have found that the routine you had before the lockdown has had to change or it may feel like it has completely disappeared.

Top tips for getting back into a routine:

- Start small – look at things that you're already doing like getting up, going to bed and having meals and try to keep those to regular times
- Keep the parts of your pre-lockdown routine that you can, whether that's listening to a certain radio programme in the morning or phoning / video calling friends at the time that you would normally see them
- See if you can find ways to adapt activities that you were doing before so that you can do them at home whilst restrictions are still in place
- Build in time to look after you. Make regular time to do something that makes you happy; read a book, do something creative or just have some quiet time
- Add in exercise. This doesn't mean you have to go for a run every day, but doing simple stretches, chair exercises or a short walk regularly will help you feel better
- Add in something different for each day of the week. Having something to look forward to is really important and can help you stop the days all blurring in to one
- Build in time for things you have to do. Laundry, housework or replying to messages in your emails or on social media which can build up quickly and may become overwhelming. Making a dedicated time to chip away at them each week can make them more manageable and can make you feel more in control
- Have a balance of activities and recognise how much mental and physical energy they take. For example, playing computer games takes lots of concentration and focused attention but not necessarily so much physical activity, so it might be helpful to schedule yourself in something more physical to follow it such as going for a walk.



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Focus on the positives

Make time at the end of the day to look back on what you've done and to recognise your achievements, no matter how big or small they might be.

What have you achieved this week?

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Future ideas

Have you got any ideas of other activities that you might like to try next week?

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