

Covid-19 Wellbeing Advice

Available Support

As we continue to experience the challenges and changes presented by Covid-19, it is more important than ever to look after your mental health and wellbeing. With all the uncertainty, anxiety and low mood have increased for many people and this may be impacting your sense of self, self-worth, relationships, study and overall college experience. We want to support you to have the best possible experience during your time at college and part of this is to validate the feelings that you may be experiencing and to remind you that there is much support available to you. Below are some suggestions and guidance on how to support yourselves, each other and where to find additional support. If you are struggling, please remember that our mental health team members are here for you. You can find a reminder of their contact details listed below. If at any point you feel unsafe or need immediate support, please use the support numbers below.

A. Here are some tips to consider:

- Remember to take things one step at a time.
- Manage expectations, your own and others. There may be days that it feels harder to be productive, so take it one step at a time.
- Create a schedule and try to stick to regular routines. Structure can help manage anxiety brought on by uncertainty. On the days that you are not coming into college in person, get up at the same time, eat regular meals and try to spend some time outdoors.
- Where possible, try to have shared mealtimes or social time with family when at home and friends when at college.
- Reach out to others who may be feeling lonely or isolated, or if you need some support yourself. It is ok not to feel ok and if things are difficult it is more important than ever to be together with people who care and don't judge. Remember, a little kindness and compassion goes a long way (remember the importance of kindness and compassion for self as well!)
- Connect with others: Whether you are self-isolating, on an in-college or at home study week, maintaining regular contact with others is important.
- As it is getting colder it is harder to meet people outside. Staying connected is important, so if you are not able to meet in person, try to find ways to enjoy time together remotely. You may wish to try:
 - Play games together online, here are some suggestions:
<https://www.independent.co.uk/extras/indybest/gadgets-tech/best-apps-to-play-with-friends-games-iphone-facebook-houseparty-online-coronavirus-a9436271.html>
 - Watch free gigs with friends online or organise a remote movie night together and discuss the film afterwards.
 - Many museums and galleries are offering virtual tours, again depending on your shared interest a quick google search will bring up a list of results.
 - Zoom is free to download and you can have meetings with groups for free for 40 minutes at a time.

- Remember to include activities each day that you enjoy and that make you feel calm. If it helps, plan these into your day.
 - Getting some regular exercise each day is helpful for both physical and mental wellbeing; try to build a daily walk or some form of activity into each day and getting some natural daylight.
 - Try to limit exposure to constant news updates and try to avoid online content that adds anxiety or worry.
 - Try to find things to do that don't involve being online, you may wish to take up a new interest or do something creative. Here are some links and suggestions you might be interested in, on and offline:
dhards
1. You may wish to join Mindful Arts and Creative Expression online, this is a free global creative initiative which Jude Smit (college Mental Health Advisor) has been involved with and provides a reflective space where you can connect with your feelings in a creative way and if you choose to, you can share your creative reflections with others on the associated Instagram account. No arts experience is needed. There are 14 weeks of content available online. <https://movie-ment.org/mindful-arts-creative-expression/>
 2. The college Mindful Art group meets weekly, on Wednesday lunchtimes in person or online via Microsoft teams, if you would like to join, please contact mosseiran@esher.ac.uk or jsmit@esher.ac.uk.
 3. 64MillionArtists is still providing daily challenges: <https://64millionartists.com>
 4. Free art activity pack: <https://firstsite.uk/art-is-where-the-home-is/>
 5. www.obby.co.uk runs courses, classes and workshops online, but these are not free.
 6. You may wish to try out new recipes for meals or for baking, or planting things you can watch grow. If you can, access nature daily.
 7. Many exercise and music groups have gone online, a quick online google will produce results, there are also YouTube clips that provide guidance for exercise, music and creative pursuits.

Teaching and learning

The college is providing regular updates about your teaching and learning, please check your emails and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact your tutor, TTL or class teacher.

B. Additional resources and helpful links

The college has an online anxiety management short course available through the portal. This has been specifically created for students at college and can be worked through at your own pace.

<https://studentspace.org.uk/> Student Space is a new online resource specifically dedicated to supporting students with the challenges and impact of Covid-19.

NHS – looking after your mental health: <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

If you need to self-isolate, there are various blogs about ways to support yourself: <https://mentalhealth-uk.org/help-and-information/covid-19-and-your-mental-health/>

<https://mentalhealth-uk.org/blog/6-ways-to-boost-your-wellbeing-while-staying-indoors/>

How to support your friends/family/others: <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/coronavirus>

Some other general guidance with links: [Looking after your mental health during coronavirus outbreak](#)

https://www.studentminds.org.uk/coronavirus_lookingafteryourmentalhealth.html

<http://www.safehandsthinkingminds.co.uk/covid-anxiety-stress-resources-links/>

How are others managing the challenges? Student Minds blog is a helpful place to connect.

<https://www.studentmindsblog.co.uk/search/label/Covid-19>

C. Support numbers

Who to contact if you need support

- **Samaritans:** 116 123 operates a 24-hour service <https://www.samaritans.org/>
- **Saneline:** 0845 767 8000 (6pm-11pm)
- **Rethink:** 0845 456 0455 (Mon-Fri 10am-2pm)
- **The Listening Place:** <https://listeningplace.org.uk/>
- **CALM (charity supporting suicidal men):**
Helpline: 0800 58 58 58 Website: <https://www.thecalmzone.net/>
- **Papyrus HOPELINEUK** Call: [0800 068 4141](tel:08000684141)
Text: [07860039967](tel:07860039967)
Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org
- **The May Tree Crisis House:** 020 7263 7070 or <https://www.maytree.org.uk/>
- Contact **NHS 111** on 999 if you feel at risk
- You may also consider making yourself a safety plan, <https://www.stayingsafe.net/> has a useful tool that you can download.

D. Esher Mental Health Team

Kate Parsons (KBP) Student Welfare Manager: kparsons@esher.ac.uk

Jude Smit (JGS) Mental Health Advisor/Specialist Assessor: jsmit@esher.ac.uk

Sara Doak (SED) College Nurse: sdoak@esher.ac.uk

Lisa Herouvin (LH) College Nurse: lherouvin@esher.ac.uk

John Graves (JPG) Student Counsellor: jgraves@esher.ac.uk

Viv Louizos (VEL) Student Counselling Services Co-ordinator: vlouizos@esher.ac.uk

Tom Webb (TDW) Learning Support Manager: twebb@esher.ac.uk