

KEEPING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH IN CHECK



Simon Fell MP

**A FREE information
booklet from your local
Member of Parliament**

Our mental health and our physical health are just as important as each other. That's why, particularly at the moment, we need to make sure that we, our friends and our family look after our mental health as much as possible.

I hope that this short guide will give you tips and information on making sure that you look after your mental health at a time that can be scary to lots of people across the country. Remember, it's good to stay connected and informed, but not to the detriment of your mental health.

You can find the latest guidance and information from the Government by visiting [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus), but please do not hesitate to get in touch with me at simon.fell.mp@parliament.uk.



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LOOKING AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH WHEN YOU'RE AT HOME

It's really important to make sure that you have a structure to your day when you're at home, so here's a 6-point plan for your day:

1. Plan

Make sure you don't stay in your pyjamas all day – keep a regular routine that will keep your confidence up. And try to start your day at the same time that you usually would, because your body will stay in its natural rhythm.

2. Move

Keeping active and exercising where you are able to is key to reducing stress, increasing energy levels and helps your sleep pattern. And if you're stuck for motivation, there are plenty of exercise routines on YouTube that you could look at!

3. Relax

The NHS website has plenty of relaxation techniques that you could look at. They'll help relieve stress and will help give you a sense of well-being.

4. Connect

Find creative ways to keep in touch with your friends, colleagues and family. Just because you can't visit other households, it doesn't mean that you can't speak to those closest to you over the phone, social media or video calling. Have an online coffee break with your colleague or an after work call with your friends or family.

5. Reflect

At the end of the day, think about what went well and what you could improve on. What were you grateful for during the day? How can you make tomorrow better? Think about writing down your thoughts so you can go back to them at a later date.

6. Sleep

In these difficult times, you might have trouble getting a good night's sleep. To improve your sleep, try and stick to your usual bedtime and get up in the morning when you usually would. And try to avoid using your phone, tablet, computer or TV before bedtime.



STICK TO THE FACTS

It's really easy to become overwhelmed by all of the news surrounding Coronavirus.

So make sure that you can find a credible source that you can trust – such as [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) or the NHS website. And fact-check information that you get from social media and other people. The Government has set up a Coronavirus Information Service on WhatsApp, which covers the most common questions about the coronavirus.

You should also think about how inaccurate information could affect your friends and family too.

It's really important to think about limiting the amount of time that you spend watching, reading or listening to the news surrounding coronavirus.

Some people have found it easier to limit themselves to checking the news twice a day. It can be very distressing having large numbers of breaking-news alerts on your phone during the day.



MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE FOR OLDER PEOPLE

The vast majority of people across the UK have not experienced the kind of social distancing measures that have been put in place in our lifetimes.

So it's okay to feel a little unsettled or worried. Despite this, it's still important to make sure that you look after your own mental health if you are over 55 and living alone or shielding.

1. Keep up a routine, which will be helpful to give your day a sense of order and will help you stay in control.

2. Limit your intake of news, so that you aren't overwhelmed with the coverage of the coronavirus. Hearing about Covid-19 all the time can be stressful and worrying.

3. Keep yourself entertained by watching more films, television or listening to the radio.

4. Stay in touch with your friends and family by planning when you will call or video-call them. This also helps you look forward to something later on in the week.

5. Try and stay as active as possible by moving around your house or flat and trying to do some light exercise.



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Young Minds	Helpline for parents/carers concerned about a child or young person's mental health.	0808 802 5544
Papyrus	Support and advice for children and young people under the age of 35, or those concerned about them. Helpline for suicide prevention.	0800 068 4141 SMS: 07860 039967 pat@papyrus-uk.org
My Time (Barnardos)	Primary care mental health service delivered online or by phone. Referral via CAMHS or directly via email.	mytimecumbria@barnardos.org.uk
SAFA Self Harm Awareness	Virtual counselling for self-harm; all ages. County-wide until June, then South Cumbria only. Referrals: safa-selfharm.com/referral-forms	01229 832269 or 07508 035048 manager@safa-selfharm.com
Samaritans	Information on managing MH during Covid-19; free support via phone, email, or letter.	116 123
Helpline and texting service	Freephone, out of hours listening service.	0800 915 4640
First Step by the NHS	Self-help advice and self-referral for psychological therapies. lscft.nhs.uk/first-step	0300 555 0345 lcn-tr.firststepsc@nhs.net
Time to Change	Information on supporting your family, friends and colleagues during Covid-19.	info@time-to-change.org.uk

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

"Campaign Against Living Miserably"	Mental wellbeing resources during Covid-19; night-time helpline; aimed at men.	0800 58 58 58
NHS Helpline	Helpline offering advice and emotional support for managing mental health during Covid-19.	0800 915 4640 Text: ""hello"" to 07862 022846
Big White Wall	Free access to online psychological therapy (levels 1 & 2). Video CBT available following triage (16+).	Online registration
Action for Wellbeing	Self-referral service for 1-1 telephone support for people experiencing suicidal thoughts.	07568 704 638 hello@actionforwellbeing.uk
SAFA Self Harm Awareness	Virtual counselling for self-harm; all ages. County-wide until June, then South Cumbria only. Referrals: safa-selfharm.com/referral-forms	01229 832269 or 07508 035048 manager@safa-selfharm.com
Mind in Furness	Whether you're stressed, depressed or in crisis, we'll listen, give you support and advice, and fight your corner.	01229 827094 info@mindinfurness.org.uk

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

<p>Ulverston Mind</p>	<p>We provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. We campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.</p>	<p>01229 581578 advice@ulverstonmind.org.uk</p>
<p>Every Life Matters</p>	<p>Link to our booklet and website: every-life-matters.org.uk every-life-matters.org.uk/find-support</p> <p>It is impossible to list all so please use the Every Life Matters directory for other sources of support.</p>	<p>07908 537541 info@every-life-matters.org.uk</p>
<p>B.M.G. Barrow Men's Group</p>	<p>A confidential place for men to get together and connect. No prejudice or judgment just a cuppa and a listening ear.</p>	<p>BarrowMensGroup@outlook.com</p>
<p>U.M.G. Ulverston Men's Group</p>	<p>A confidential place for men to get together and connect. No prejudice or judgment just a cuppa and a listening ear.</p>	<p>Search 'Ulverston Men's Group' on Facebook</p>

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

National Domestic Abuse Helpline	Confidential helpline offering support women experiencing domestic abuse.	0808 2000 247 nationaldahelpline.org.uk
Springfield	Specialist domestic abuse refuge in Cumbria also offering advocacy support and counselling for women.	01539 726 171 springfieldsupport.org
Men's Advice Line	Confidential helpline offering support for male victims of domestic abuse.	0808 801 0327
National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline	Confidential support to all members of the LGBT communities, their friends, families and agencies supporting them experiencing domestic abuse.	0800 999 5428
The Mix	Support service for under 25s on mental health, domestic abuse, homelessness, money and more.	0808 808 4994 themix.org.uk

HELPING OTHERS WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

Each year, around 1 in 4 people experience mental health problems. Most of us know a family member, colleague or friend who has struggled with their mental health.

According to the **Every Mind Matters** campaign, there are a number of things you can do to help

- **Express concern** by letting someone know you're worried. It's a good way to start a conversation about how they are feeling, and it also shows the person that you care and that you have time for them.
- **Reassure them**, because the first time someone mentions their worries is a huge step. Let them know that you're there for them if and when they need to talk.
- **Be patient** as you won't always know the full story. Just being there for someone can be a huge help if they want to open up to you at a later date.
- **Look after yourself** when looking after others. It can be upsetting to hear someone you care about in distress. Make sure that you take time to yourself so that you can relax and do things that you enjoy, whilst taking into account the Government guidelines on social distancing.
- **Offer some practical help** like an act of kindness. Offer to do some shopping for them or try and find some practical information if they are not in a position to do it themselves.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse can have an enormous effect on mental health.

Abuse (both in childhood and in adult life) is often the main factor in the development of depression, anxiety and other mental health disorders, and may lead to sleep disturbances, self-harm, suicide and attempted suicide, eating disorders and substance misuse.

Don't blame yourself your mental health difficulties are not your fault, and you are not responsible for the abuse: the abuser is. People experiencing domestic abuse can get help and support from a range of services providing confidential advice and signposting to support services.



USEFUL CONTACTS AND WEBSITES

Samaritans

Call: 116 123 Email: jo@samaritans.org

Calls to 116 123 are free and will not appear on itemised phone bills

NHS 111 online: 111.nhs.uk

NHS Every Mind Matters Campaign nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters

Mental Health Foundation mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus

Mind – The Mental Health Charity

mind.org.uk/coronavirus-we-are-here-for-you

Call: 0300 123 3393 (open 9am-6pm, Mon-Fri)

gov.uk/coronavirus

gov.uk/find-coronavirus-support

Women's Aid domestic abuse support

Womensaid.org.uk/information-support

Women's Community Matters

womenscommunitymatters.org

Nan Tait Centre, Abbey Road, Barrow in Furness, LA14 1LG

01229 311102



I hope that you found this guide useful, but if you have any other questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

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