



Saint John of God Community Services clg *Liffey Services*

Update re Covid-19

Hello, and I hope you are keeping safe and well.

With the announced extension of restrictions due to Covid-19, as a service we wanted to make contact with you to ensure the following supports are in place:

- Regular telephone support
- The opportunity to participate in daily Zoom sessions for activities that your family member who is part of St John of God Liffey Services can participate in.

As a region, the Management Team will begin to examine how safely Day Services can recommence, that will adequately provide Day Services in line with best practice regarding Covid-19. Further information on this will be communicated in due course.

In the meantime, please feel free to contact the following should you have any queries or concerns:

Audrey Carroll – 087 759 6460 – Programme Manager, Dublin Day Service

Des Balmer – 087 244 9083 – Co-Ordinator, Kildare Day Services

Leo Gordon – 087 123 9196 – Co-Ordinator, Kildare Day Services

Kind regards

Elisa Doyle

Interim Regional Director

Saint John of God Liffey Services

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Hospitality Respect Justice Compassion Excellence



Watch this video about this Pack
<https://vimeo.com/408854851>
Or Scan this QR Code



We hope that you your family and friends are all well at this time. We know that this is a very difficult time for everyone, and we hope you are keeping well while staying in your home.

If you haven't already recieved a pack please find enclosed some engaging activity sheets that can be done on your own or with our zoom classes. We will be running weekday zoom classes and you can find the timetable and a guide to use zoom at the back of the book or scan this QR Code to access zoom 10am – 3pm and in the evenings at 6.30pm

<https://zoom.us/j/474389762?pwd=S3JSaFNvY2RVVnpxSGY1ZjAxUjNzZz09>

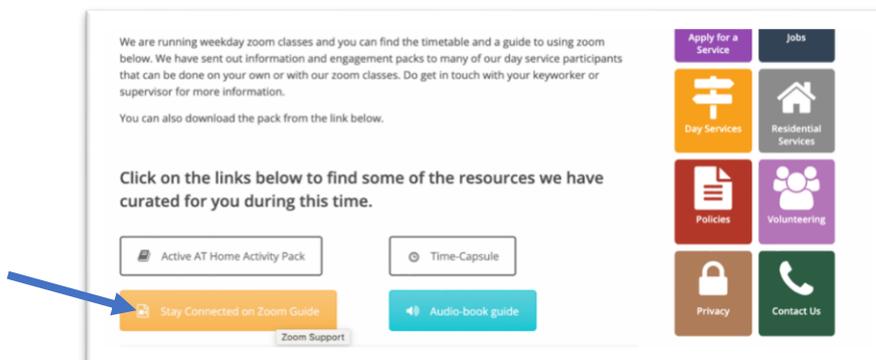
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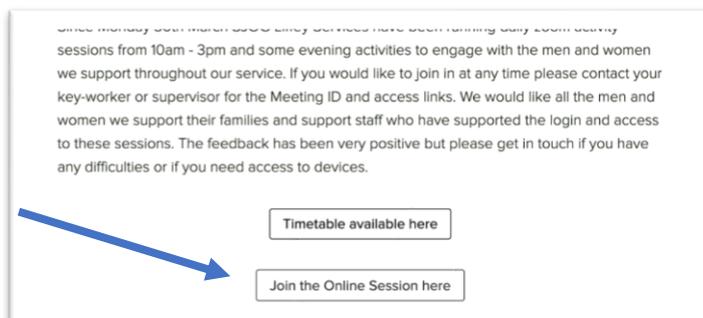
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If you have any difficulty to access zoom then follow these steps;

1. Go to our website www.sjogliffeyservices.ie/news
2. Click on the Stay Connected on Zoom Orange Button



3. Click on join the Online Session



The zoom id will not change so join at any time you can find the schedule on the other side of this sheet. Please note the schedule might change and if anyone needs any help please contact us. Remember we are all learning how to use new technology and we are in this together.



SJOG Liffey Services Zoom Schedule



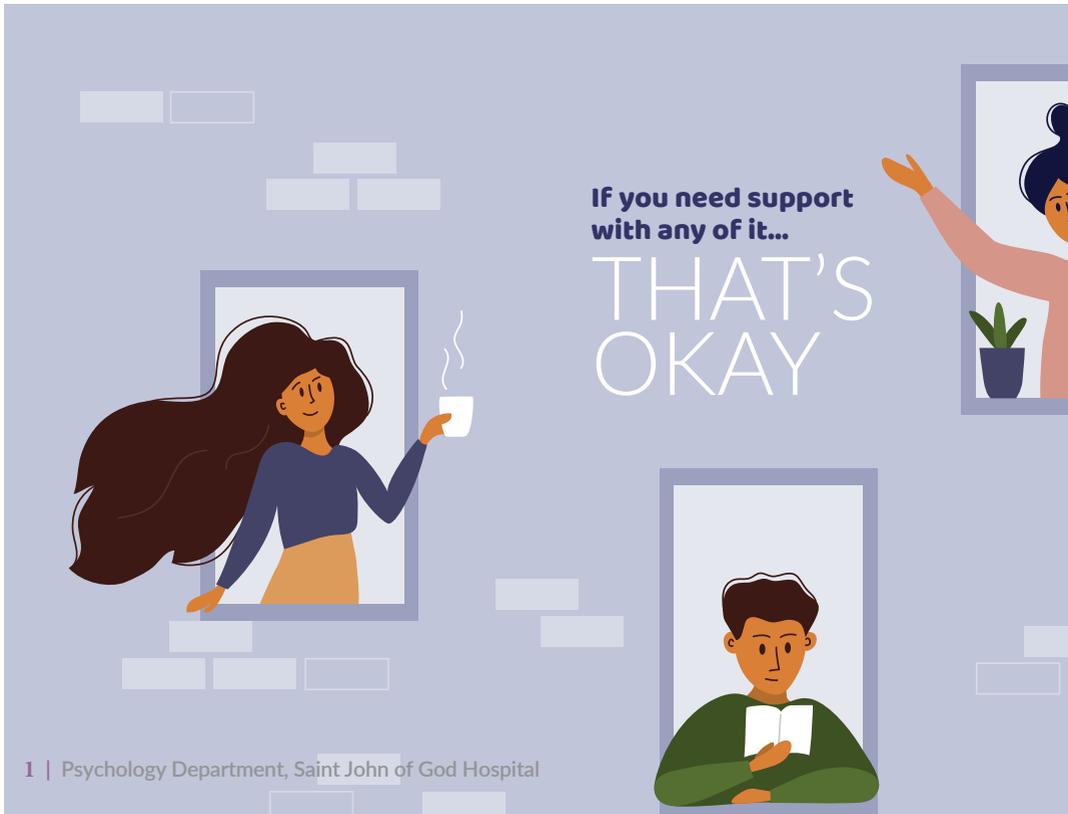
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10:00am	Getting to know you	Getting to know you			
10:30am	Stay Active	Stay Active	Stay Active	Stay Active	Stay Active
11:00am	House Olympics	Keeping Happy	Zumba	Employment Support	Pastoral Care
11:30am	Get Growing	Men's & Ladies Club	Stay Connected	Music Matters	Tech Corner
12:00pm	Lámh Connect	Lámh Connect	Lámh Connect	Lámh Connect	Lámh Connect
12:30pm		Get Moving	Keyworker session	Stay Informed Covid19	
13:00pm	Healthy Lunch		Healthy Drink		Healthy Dessert
14:00pm	Yoga	Money tips	Yoga	Get Thinking Quiz	Yoga
14:30pm	Relaxation	Mindfulness	Get Creative	Bokwa	Singalong Fun
15:00pm			BINGO		
18:30pm	Virtual Tours	Quiz Night	Movie Night	Audio Book Club	Friday Disco

Live Timetable is available on our Website www.sjogliffeyservices.ie/news and please follow our Facebook page [SJOGLiffeyServices](#) for more information

Take Care of your Wellbeing

This is an unprecedented time for Ireland as a nation; COVID-19 has brought many changes to our lives. It is a time of uncertainty and many of us are feeling stressed, anxious and vulnerable. Being in the role of a carer comes with added pressures as some of the supports and services that you relied on to help you in your role are not currently available.

We are sharing this handbook with you in the hope that it provides you with some extra tips for maintaining your wellbeing during this period, in order to allow you continue to care for your loved one. All of the wellbeing advice within this handbook is relevant at any time in our lives but is especially important in times of stress. Please remember that we are all in this together, please contact the support staff in your area for any further assistance.



Normal human responses to a global pandemic

That do not need to be pathologized or treated as abnormal

- Food and eating challenges & difficulties
- Resurgence of compulsive or addictive behaviours
- Obsessive or intrusive thoughts, memories or fears
- Generalised fear, anxiety, panic & feeling overwhelmed
- Depression, dissociation, shutdown, freeze, hopelessness
- Feelings of abandonment or loneliness or isolation
- Sense of loss of control or powerlessness, feeling confused
- Anxiety around money, shelter, food, and other survival needs
- Past traumas being triggered, activated or re-experienced
- Health anxiety heightened (about Covid19 and otherwise)
- Feeling unheard or unseen amidst the flood of stories
- Feeling like existing chronic needs are being ignored
- Thoughts and feelings about death and dying
- New and old grief surfacing
- Feelings of anger, irritation and frustration
- Caring for everyone to own detriment, compassion fatigue
- Feeling exhausted, fatigued, unmotivated, lethargic
- Hyper-focus, surges of energy, keeping 'doing' to distract
- Immune system depleted, other illnesses starting, chronic flares

And if you do need support with any of it, that's okay too.



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Someone who is feeling depressed or anxious will often find the following helpful...

- **Talking about their feelings**

If someone is feeling depressed or anxious, or something very upsetting or traumatic has happened to them, they may find it helpful to talk to someone close to them about it. (Patience and understanding will be more helpful than trying to get the person to 'cheer up'). Open communication during this crisis, when we are all experiencing heightened levels of anxiety, is very important.

- **Help them maintain routine in their day**

In ordinary circumstances you and your loved ones would shower, dress, have breakfast and have to go outside each day. Try to replicate this routine and resist the urge to spend the whole day on the couch in your pj's. Rising at the same time daily, showering and dressing, having breakfast and getting out for a walk as well as planning some activities around the house (cooking, wardrobe clear out, reading time, movie night) will help reduce anxiety and give purpose and structure to the day.

- **Support them in maintaining social contact with other people**

This will help them to feel less isolated. Despite COVID-19 restrictions on physical proximity to others, we can still maintain social connection by interacting with others in the same household, encouraging communication with friends and family over the phone or using video calling apps like Skype and Zoom. You can even get creative and help plan an online group catch up, book club or table quiz.



- **Persevering with treatment**

With changes in regular routines there is a heightened risk of forgetting to take prescribed medications. Those close to the person should encourage them to keep taking their medication (maybe set reminders on phones) or to continue to engage with their therapist over the phone or video conferencing if possible. This support and consistency with treatment may be more valuable than ever. Liaise with your local pharmacist to ensure regular prescriptions can be filled and collected in a timely manner.

- **Keeping active**

Physical exercise is good for relieving feelings of anxiety and depression, and can also help people with sleep problems and apathy. Supporting the person to do other activities that they enjoy will often also help. Despite COVID-19 restrictions which limit us to a 2km radius of our homes, it is still possible to exercise regularly. 2km equates to about a 20 min walk at average pace, so 40 mins there and back home again. Those cocooning can engage in home workouts or use the living room for Yoga practice; there are lots of free guided videos on YouTube.



- **Eating a healthy diet**

A poor diet can contribute to feelings of anxiety and depression, as can alcohol and caffeine. This can also disrupt sleep, which is essential to our mental health. With more time at home there may be temptation to increase the consumption of snack foods and alcohol, so try to keep this intake at a moderate level. Fresh fruit and vegetables as well as frozen varieties continue to be readily available in our supermarkets. You can even plan meals together and spend time in the kitchen making new recipes to help add structure and a sense of achievement to the day.



- **Helping those with memory difficulties to remember the rules of cocooning**

Change in routines and the introduction of restrictions are difficult for all but particularly for those with memory difficulties. Visual reminders, such as a white board or a sign, in key locations around the home can be helpful in aiding remembering. (See back inside cover of this booklet for a useful cut-out).

You wouldn't let this happen to your phone



Don't let this happen to you, either

SELF CARE IS A PRIORITY, NOT A LUXURY



Tips for carers



- **Pace yourself**

Monitor yourself for disrupted sleep, excessive fatigue, irritability, poor focus and marked anxiety. If we run on empty, we can't care for those depending on us. This is a marathon, not a sprint.

- **Breathe**

Try mindful breathing several times a day. Take a moment for low and slow breaths before you get up, before you walk up or down the stairs or before you enter a room. Breathing helps us to calm down and improves our concentration.

- **Maintain good health habits**

As stress and demands increase, healthy habits often take a hit. Make sure you eat at meal times and maximise healthy eating, limit alcohol, try to get enough sleep, prioritise aerobic exercise and get some sunlight.

- **Exercise, exercise, exercise**

Aerobic exercise is vital for stress reduction. For home exercise and yoga videos there are many options available online (see Online Resources Section). A short aerobic walk or workout is better than nothing.



- **Take breaks where possible**

Plan down time, it helps us refuel physically and emotionally.

- **Promote teamwork**

Are there other family members who could step up and help out? Don't be afraid to ask.

- **Connect, connect and connect again**

Reach out to family, friends, and your favourite community groups for social contact. Call, Facetime, Zoom, Skype or try Google Hangouts to reduce your isolation. Meaningful and fun connection, emotional support and healthy problem solving are vital to your health and well-being. Consider joining another family or friend for a meal by social media to reduce isolation for everyone.



- **Flexibility is essential**

Increased demand for care, social distancing and other unique stressors will test our flexibility and adaptability. We will all have to practice outside of the box—especially when things go wrong and are chaotic. It's OK. Ask for support, evaluate, modify and move forward.

- **Anxious or worried?**

Increased anxiety is common as we navigate COVID-19 and its broad consequences, especially when the demands on us have increased. Action is one of the best treatments for anxiety. Share your concerns and problem solve with family and friends to plan coping steps.

Ideas for minding your own wellbeing

As already mentioned, increased anxiety and low mood are very common in times of crisis. Thus it is important that we look after our own mental health to allow us continue to care for those dependent on us.

What can we do when we feel like things are getting on top of us and we feel overwhelmed?

Recognise threat emotions

These are intense emotions that take control of our mind and make us act (fight, flight, avoid, freeze, collapse). There are 3 intense threat emotions, these are:

Anger & Frustration

All kinds of sources of anger: anger at the situation, anger at not having the right supports. It is important that we are able to articulate our anger and frustration and normalise and empathise with the sense of frustration and anger that we might have when we are in these high stress situations.

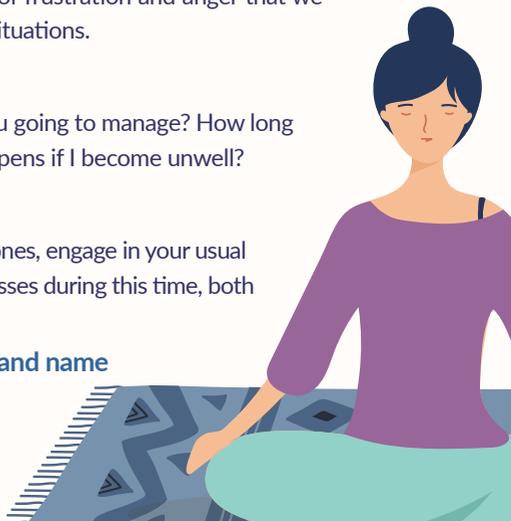
Threat & Anxiety

Worry about future, mistakes etc. How are you going to manage? How long will this last? Will I be able to cope? What happens if I become unwell?

Grief and sense of sadness

Sadness due to being unable to be with loved ones, engage in your usual activities, and socialise as usual. Grief for the losses during this time, both general and personal.

It is important that we are able to recognise and name these emotions when they occur.



Manage those difficult threat emotions

Cultivate slowing, calming and settling – what is it that gives you a sense of feeling grounded and how can you do these things? For example:

Breathing exercises – slower, deeper, more rhythmic breathing.

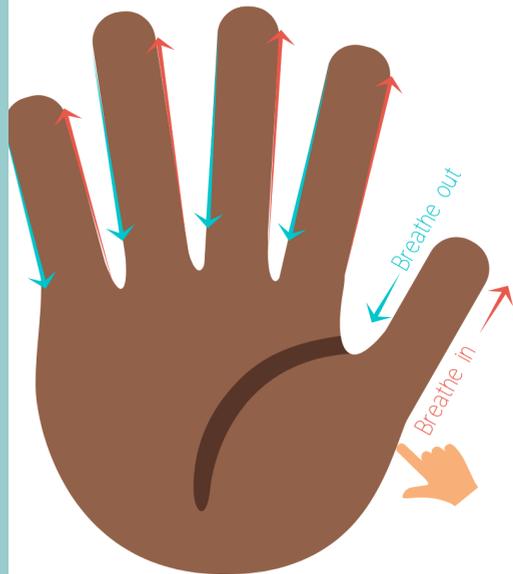
Breathe in for 5 seconds, hold for 2 seconds, breath out for 5 seconds. Breathe smoothly and deeply, full breath in and full breath out. Ensure if you are sitting that you sit upright with shoulders back and open your chest. Focus on a theme in your mind that connects you to what your breath is doing – bring your attention to something you find peaceful and calming, picture it. For example, a still lake, a gently lapping sea, a tree with no breeze – whatever image works for you. Strengthen the image by tapping into as many senses as you can (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste) and slowly repeat the mantra (in a calm and soft tone voice) “my mind is slowing down”, “my mind is slowing down”.

3 minute breathing space: www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOne1POTKL8

Breathe app or The Breathing Zone app (see Online Resources Section for details)

5 Finger Breathing:

1. Stretch one hand out so that you have space between your fingers.
2. Hold up your pointer finger from the other hand.
3. Start at the bottom of your thumb. Use your pointer finger to trace up your thumb as you **slowly** breathe in through your nose.
4. When you get to the top of your thumb, **slowly** breathe out your mouth as you trace down the other side.
5. Repeat for all fingers until you have traced your whole hand.



Manage those difficult threat emotions (con't)

Be aware not to be pulled too much by your rumination (thoughts)

– feel grounded.

Grounding

Grounding is a technique that helps keep someone in the present. It helps re-orient a person to the 'here and now' and to reality. Grounding skills can be helpful in managing overwhelming feelings or intense anxiety. They help someone to regain their mental focus from an often intensely emotional state.

Grounding skills occur within two specific approaches:

Sensory Awareness and **Cognitive Awareness**

Sensory Awareness

Grounding Exercise 1

Begin by tracing your hand on a piece of paper and label each finger as one of the five senses. Then take each finger and identify something special and safe representing each of those five senses. For example: Thumb represents sight and a label for sight might be butterflies, or my middle finger represents the smell sense and it could be represented by lilacs.

After writing and drawing all this on paper, post it on your refrigerator or other safe places in the home where it could be easily seen and memorise it.

Whenever you get triggered, breathe deeply and slowly, and put your hand in front of your face where you can really see it – stare at your hand and then look at each finger and try to do the five senses exercise from memory.



Sensory Awareness

Grounding Exercise 2

- Name 5 things you can see in the room with you.
- Name 4 things you can feel (“chair on my back” or “feet on floor”)
- Name 3 things you can hear right now (“birds chirping” or “tv”)
- Name 2 things you can smell right now (or, 2 things you like the smell of)
- Name 1 good thing about yourself

Other Grounding Activities

- Keep your eyes open, look around the room, notice your surroundings, notice details.
- Hold a pillow, stuffed animal or a ball.
- Place a cool cloth on your face, or hold something cool such as a can of soda.
- Listen to soothing music
- Put your feet firmly on the ground
- Focus on someone’s voice or a neutral conversation.



Cognitive Awareness

Grounding Exercise

Re-orient yourself in place and time by asking yourself some or all of these questions:

1. Where am I?
2. What is today?
3. What is the date?
4. What is the month?
5. What is the year?
6. How old am I?
7. What season is it?

Control the Controllable

Often when we become overwhelmed with stress and anxiety we can get distracted by things that are outside of our control. We need to learn to focus our energy on the things we can control – Control the Controllable.



THINGS I CAN CONTROL

Washing my hands and practicing good hygiene

Staying home

The things I consume (food, water, media & news)

Self-care

My thoughts and actions

Reaching out for support and to help others

Knowing that I am doing everything I can and being at peace with that

The world's situation and spread of the virus

What other people do or don't do to take care of themselves

The government's response

Statistics and facts

Laws and regulations

THINGS I CAN'T CONTROL

Shift your mindset



- I'm going to get sick ● -----> I will self-isolate and wash my hands, this will significantly **DECREASE** my chances of getting sick.
- I can't cope ● -----> This is a very difficult situation and I am doing the best I can and that is good enough.
- I will run out of items at home during self-isolation ● -----> I have prepared for this and I will use my items wisely. I have everything I need for now.
- Everything is shutting down, I'm panicking ● -----> The most **IMPORTANT** places, such as medical centres, pharmacies and grocery shops remain open.
- There is too much uncertainty right now ● -----> While I can't control the situation around me, I **CAN** control my actions. Doing breathwork, calling loved ones, getting enough sleep and proper nutrition, prayer, and doing activities I love at home will all help during this time.

Accept “good enough”

You cannot change the facts of life, so don't take on responsibility that isn't yours. This can lead to an overwhelming sense of sadness – stay separate and empathise.

- Learn to tolerate and accept one's limitations
- Accept “Good Enough”.
- Watch out for attacking self-criticism, it is not helpful. Replace with **compassionate self-correction** – be encouraging and supportive to yourself. If you find this hard to do for yourself, imagine it is a friend/family member or child that you are talking to.
- High levels of self-criticism can lead to depression.
- Notice and be aware of the difference between compassionate self-correction (which is inspiring, supportive and promotes learning) and attacking self-criticism (which will undermine you). Notice attacking self-criticism and switch into your compassionate self.

Developing the Compassionate-Self

- Cultivating a compassionate mind – what you focus on has a big impact in your brain. Example: If you are hungry and you see a delicious meal, smell a delicious meal or think (fantasise) about a delicious meal, it will stimulate your hypothalamus and you will start to salivate. Your imagination has a powerful impact on your body.
- A compassionate mind will change your brain and body, and triggers helpful internal systems.

How to Develop a Compassionate Mind

- Use your body to support your mind:
 - Breathing exercises
 - Posture
- Close your eyes and ask yourself “what would I be like if I was at my most compassionate best?” Compassion is about being courageous and wise.

What does your ‘compassionate best’ look like? If you are at your courageous best and at your wisest, what would you be like? What qualities would you have?

Imagine a time you were at your compassionate best, a time when you were courageous and wise, notice **what** emotions you are feeling and **where** in your body you are feeling them. You probably feel kind, tolerant, strong and capable. Where in your body are you feeling this? Intensify these feelings.

Tell yourself “I have the courage to engage with suffering” and “I have the wisdom to know what to do.”

- Sometimes the beginning of wisdom is to recognise “I don’t know what to do?”, “I need to find out”, “I need support”, or “I need to ask for help”.
- Think about the qualities you would have if you were your most compassionate self. Bring to mind all these qualities and practice them.

With practice, you will be able to switch your mind into a compassionate state of mind.

Your threat system is automatic but your compassionate mind is learned, it is a skill and requires practice.

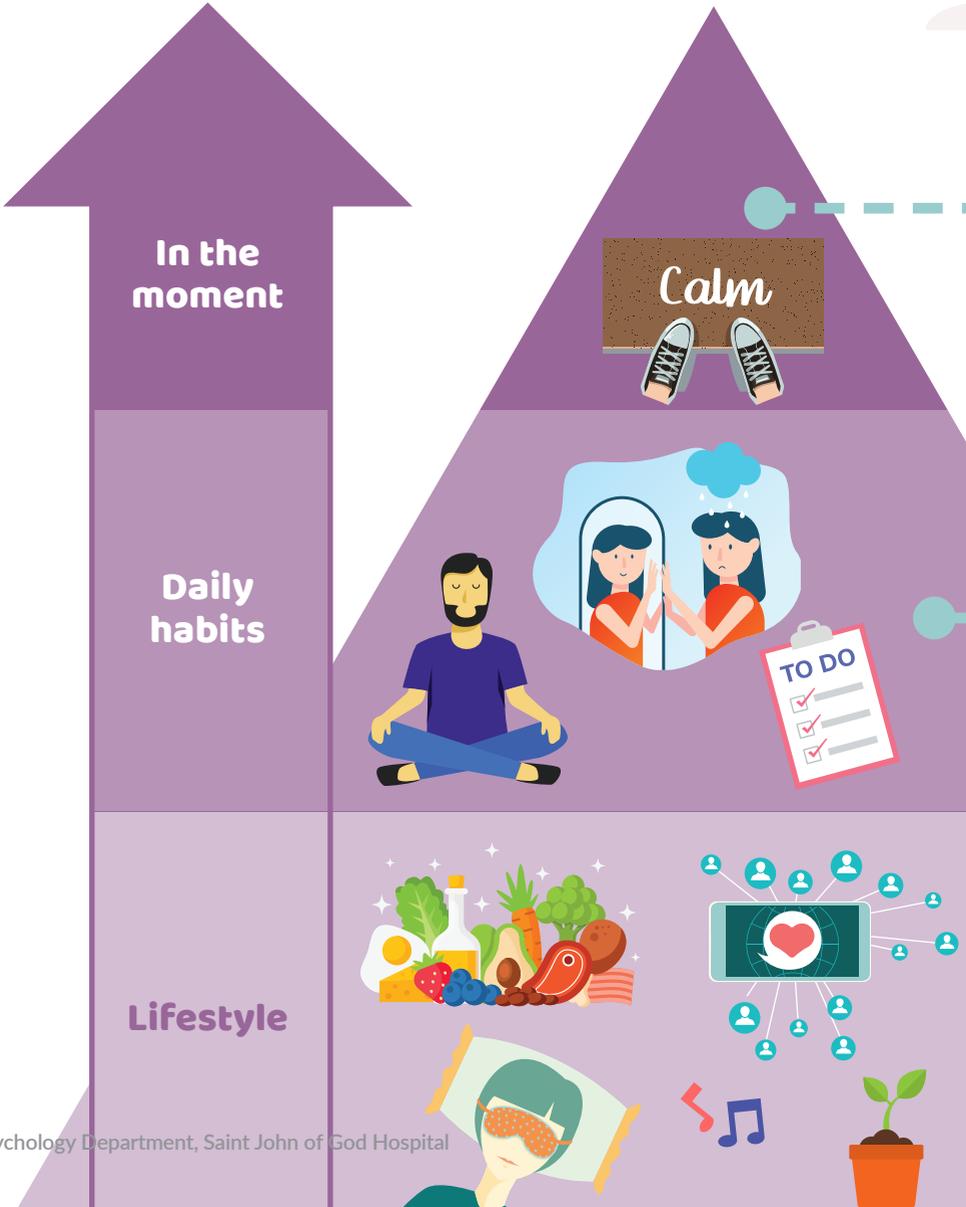
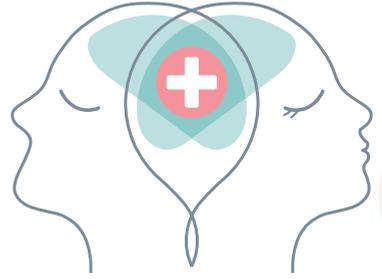


Summary

In summary, you need to train for compassion because your threat system will *always* take priority in a stressful situation, through no fault of your own. So,

1. Learn to notice
2. Breathe and slow down
3. Focus on posture
4. Focus on your compassionate state of mind
5. Create the conditions so you can perform at your best.
6. Notice the good – the brain is orientated for threat and noticing bad things, balance this by deliberately bringing to mind the things that have gone well. Internalise the good.

Mind your mental health: A toolkit for all





Stay grounded

- Notice your **breath**/your feet on the ground
- Remember **this will pass**
- Pay attention to the present - **what can I do right now?**

Manage distress

- Visit www.beaumont.ie/marc
- Relaxation
- Breathing

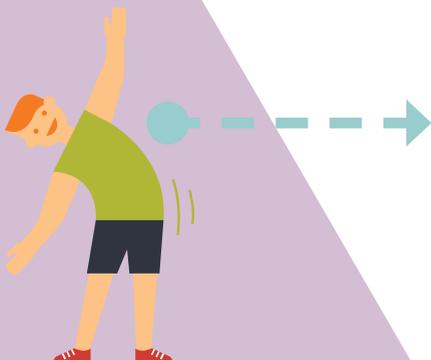
Control the controllable

- Short to-do list
- **Small goals**
- Remember your values



Self-compassion

- Being kind, not critical to ourselves. **This is a difficult time.**



Lifestyle

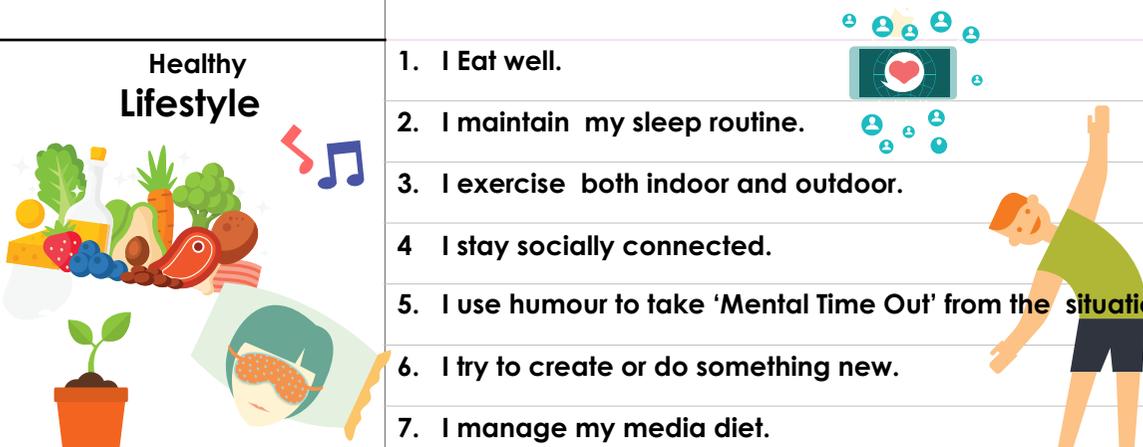
- Eat well
- **Sleep** routine
- **Exercise**
- Stay **socially connected**
- Create something/use humour to take a **mental time-out** from the situation
- Manage your **media diet**

My Daily Wellbeing Checklist



Name: _____

Date: _____

		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Stay Grounded Stay calm in the moment 	1. I keep noticing my breath and my feet on the ground.							
	2. I keep remembering that this time will pass.							
	3. I pay attention to the present- what I can do right now?							
 Daily Habits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage Distress • Control the Controllable • Self Compassion 	1. I do my deep breathing exercises.							
	2. I engage with my favourite relaxation activities.							
	3. I keep short to-do list.							
	4. I keep list of small goals.							
	5. I try to be kind to myself during this difficult time.							
Healthy Lifestyle 	1. I Eat well.							
	2. I maintain my sleep routine.							
	3. I exercise both indoor and outdoor.							
	4. I stay socially connected.							
	5. I use humour to take 'Mental Time Out' from the situation.							
	6. I try to create or do something new.							
	7. I manage my media diet.							

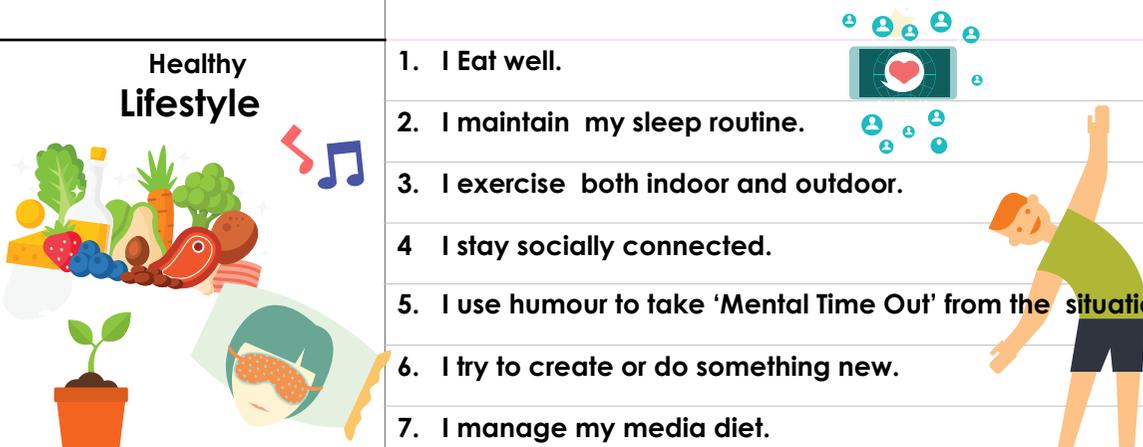
(Checklist is based on and to be used in conjunction with SJOG Hospital Carer Booklet)

My Daily Wellbeing Checklist



Name: _____

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		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
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(Checklist is based on and to be used in conjunction with SJOG Hospital Carer Booklet)