

# Staying well



# during & beyond COVID-19


Staying connected & keeping well



# INTRO

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a lot to process, to say the least! We know that a lot of you would have found starting university or progressing into the next year stressful, and this certainly won't have helped by the additional pressure of a global pandemic.

We have created this guide with the help of our Student Advisory Panel for students who may be feeling anxious about COVID-19, feeling isolated, or are physically isolating because of the virus. The guide aims to showcase ways to stay connected and keep well now and as we return to a 'new normal'.



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**STAY  
CONNECTED**

# STAY CONNECTED WITH FRIENDS & FAMILY.

Connecting with others is one of the five ways to wellbeing, and as social distancing and isolation has become a reality there are still many ways you can enjoy time with friends and family.



*Top Tip!*

*"...for my family, we did a video chat through Facebook every day, where we just spoke to each other about anything and everything..."*  
*Sarah, MSci Forensic Investigation*

- **Plan a virtual dinner party:** get your friends to all cook the same dish and eat it together on video chat
- **Host a happy hour:** teach the group to make a cocktail with ingredients around the house or talk about a spirit or beer
- **Organise a film night:** set up a Netflix Watch Party
- **Set up a book club:** meet up virtually to discuss your favourite reads
- **Plan a games night:** have a look at Jackbox Games, Psych, Among Us or Draw Something
- **Host a karaoke night:** get your mates on a call, stick on your favourite songs and sing your heart out

- **Write handwritten letters to people:** this is a great way to get creative and keep connected to others
- **Host a pub quiz:** why not set up regular quiz nights and ask someone different in the group to run this each time
- **Complete an online escape room:** test those escape skills with an online escape room that can be played by different households at the same time

## Top Tip!

"I would highly recommend Among Us for people isolating or just stuck inside, make a group discord call, maybe a few drinks, it has been an easy way to pass time and socialise for an evening with a group of friends as its free and can be downloaded on all phones."

Joe, Keele student



## Top Tip!

"For me personally, I have really enjoyed being able to face time relatives, it has helped me to feel more connected with people rather than just sending a text. It makes it feel more human being able to see someone's face."

Beth, BSc Psychology



## Top Tip!

"...connect with services at the university when you need support and/or a chat."

Beth, BSc Psychology

# STAY CONNECTED WITH THE UNIVERSITY

Connecting with the University will ensure you are up to date with all of the latest guidance, news and events that are taking place.

**Join a club or society:** connect with the SU to find out more about the clubs and societies that are available.

*"This could be through societies and sports taster sessions, or also getting in touch with your academic society too to ask about socials."*

*"Some clubs are running virtual training sessions which are really awesome, and something people might want to join in with."*

**Follow the university social media pages:** Make sure you follow Life at Keele and Keele SU for the latest updates on events

## Top Tip!

"Get involved in the chat function on Blackboard and/or teams to connect with other students (of course being appropriate). On my first day back, everyone was saying hi to everyone, we all had a mini catch up before the lesson started. I think it is a nice way just to reconnect with people, especially if you have not seen these people in a while like myself."

Beth, BSc Psychology





# **YOUR WELLBEING**

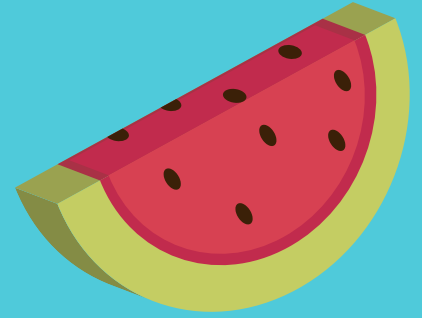


# EAT WELL



Eating a balanced diet can contribute towards maintaining good health and help you feel your best by:

- improving mood
- boosting energy levels
- preventing and/or managing diseases



*Did you know?*

Keeping hydrated is important for concentration while studying or doing any task. Keeping a reusable water bottle with you at all times should help remind you to regularly drink

**Scan the QR code to find out about the eat well guide, eating well on a budget & healthy recipes!**

- 1) Open the camera app on your phone
- 2) Point the camera at the code
- 3) Click on the link that pops up

Our eating habits affect our mood. Try to:

- Eat regularly
- Start your day with a good breakfast
- Keep healthy snacks on hand
- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Enjoy your food!



# BE ACTIVE

Being Active shouldn't be seen as something we 'should' or 'have to' do - it's something to be enjoyed and a wellbeing tool for our mental and physical health

## Top Tips for Staying Active:

- Give an at-home workout a try: loads of great free videos can be found on Sport Keele Youtube, the Body Coach, Yoga with Adriene and Fitness Blender
- Take a walk around campus (as long as no rules are broken!): A map of walks around the Keele campus can be found on the Keele Sports webpages.
- Download a free app to help you get more active: try out One You Active 10 Walk Tracker, One You Couch to 5K, Rise & Recharge or Google Fit

## Top Tip!

"I'm usually very active, so with everything closed I ended up doing home workouts (Chloe Ting's). They're really good, and there's something for everyone! (I currently have a knee injury and could still complete them)."

Sarah, MSci Forensic Investigation

## Did you know?

Students who are active through their studies are more likely to obtain higher grades, feel more energised and have a good overall wellbeing



# SLEEP WELL

Getting a good nights sleep can support your overall health and wellbeing as it:

- improves mood
- boosts immunity
- reduces the risk of mental illness
- improves creativity, learning and productivity



*Did you know?*

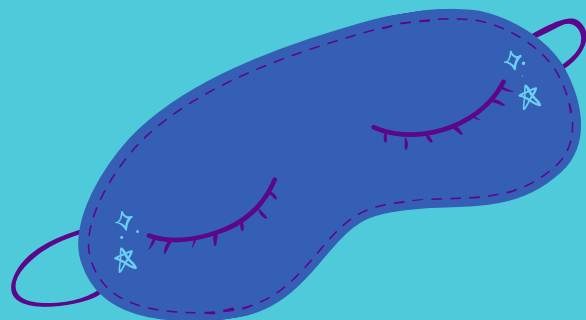
Exercise can improve sleep if performed in the morning or afternoon. Try not to exercise two hours before bed as the stimulation may keep you awake



More tips to improve sleep

**Top tips for a good nights sleep:**

- Have a regular routine! It's important to have "healthy sleep patterns because having little amounts of contact hours can make keeping a normal sleep routine harder".
- Create a restful environment
- Limit caffeine, smoking, alcohol and screen time



# RELAXATION & SELF-CARE

It is important to take time away from your studies to care for your wellbeing, although this can be challenging.

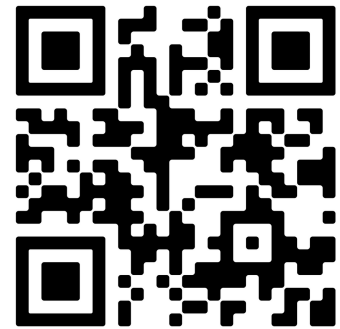
Taking time to relax will help to:

- improve mood
- reduce fatigue
- improve creativity
- improve concentration



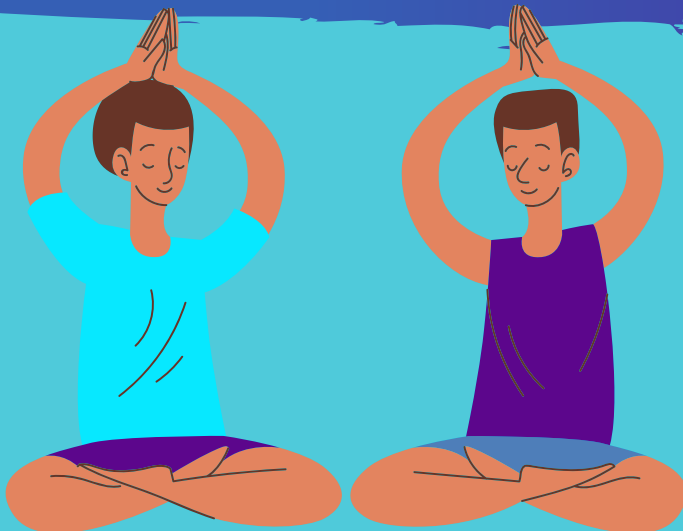
## Relaxation Tips

Mind, the mental health charity have developed a video sharing eight relaxation tips for your mental health. Scan below.



Relaxation Tips

It can be hard to take time to relax when you are stressed and worried, so try to take notice of what is concerning you and take control of them.



Self care is different for everyone, so it's important to find what works for you to help you relax.

# PRACTICE SELF COMPASSION

It's OK to not be OK.

Remember that these are  
difficult and  
uncertain  
times.

Be kind to  
yourself.





# MANAGING COVID-19 ANXIETY

# 1

## **Talk to someone about how you're feeling**

While it is normal to feel worried, if you are starting to feel overwhelmed, it's important to acknowledge your feelings and speak to someone you trust, whether that's a friend, a family member, a teacher or a helpline.

# 2

## **Arm yourself with the facts**

There is a lot of information about the virus out there and false reports can fuel anxiety. Stay on top of what's happening by using the government website; it is the most up-to-date and reliable source of information. The NHS coronavirus page can also be useful if you are worried about symptoms or family members.

# 3

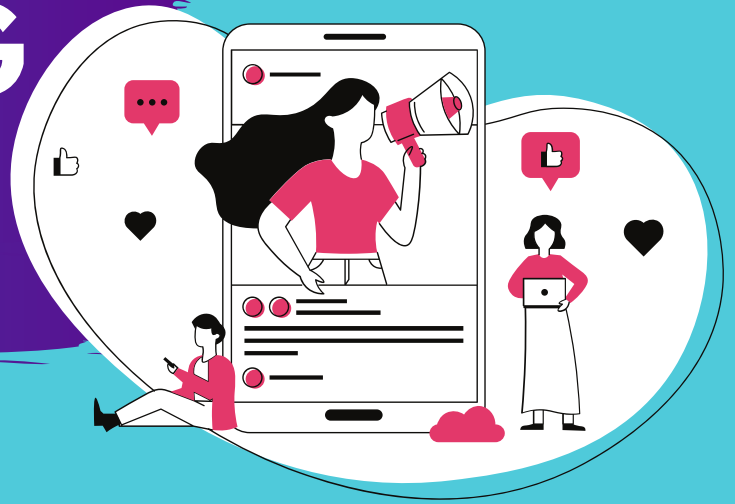
## **Know what you can do**

If you are feeling scared or panicked by coronavirus, remind yourself that there are practical things you can do. There is lots of advice about this on the NHS website.





# MANAGING COVID-19 ANXIETY



## 4

### **Don't overexpose yourself to the news and ensure updates are from reputable sources**

Staying informed can make you feel in control but the constant news reports could also become overwhelming. Try to get your information from reputable websites (like those we've mentioned above).

## 5

### **Find things that help you feel calm**

Like at any other time, it's important that you are not only looking after your physical health, but your mental health too. Think about some activities that can help when you are feeling overwhelmed, like breathing techniques, writing down how you feel, playing music or talking to a friend.

## 6

### **Try to cut down the amount of time you spend on social media**

Do take a break from social media if you feel like the updates are getting too much. Remember you are in control of what you see on your feed. Take breaks when you do feel like things are getting too much or mute and unfollow accounts that make you feel more worried.

# RETURNING TO THE NEW NORMAL

With lock down easing again, it is normal to have mixed feeling. To name a few, you may be feeling anxious, angry, frustrated, conflicted or confused.

Tips to manage these feelings:

- Don't feel pressured to socialise straight away
- You don't have to say "yes" to everyone
- If possible, ease your way out of remote learning or working
- It is OK to feel worried and anxious
- If you are struggling, speak to a loved one, access internal or external support (see later pages) like the togetherall community to get support



Managing Feelings



# RETURNING TO THE NEW NORMAL

*After every storm,  
there is a  
rainbow hope.*





**KEEP  
ENTERTAINED**

# 7 WAYS TO KEEP YOURSELF ENTERTAINED

Our Student Advisory Panel have suggested 7 ways to keep yourself entertained. Why don't you have a go at some of them?

Top Tip!

"...virtual bingo with the family where we emailed pdf versions of bingo calls and one person was the bingo caller using a bingo calling app."

Mia, Staffs Student



## 1 Podcasts

Listening to podcast can be like having someone to keep you company!

Beth says *"Of course, this will depend on what the student is interested in, I personally love Psychology and I listen to "Psychology in Seattle" who have a YouTube channel as well. They do podcasts and reactions, i.e. currently reacting to 90-day fiancé"*

## 2 TV

Make the most of our nights on the sofa watching quality TV. Sarah says *"I'd recommend Peaky Blinders for sure - it's definitely an interesting one, and the casting is brilliant."*

Top Tip!

"Remember that Spotify has a podcasts section, you might find something new/interesting to listen to. For example, I just came across one for conspiracy theories which seems interesting and one called "Happy place"

Beth, BSc Psychology

# KEEP YOURSELF ENTERTAINED



3

## Read a book

Any sort of reading is good for the soul

Sarah says "I also read A LOT - love a good book"

4

## Cook

Cooking can be a very fulfilling, rewarding and meaningful task. Beth says "Start cooking. During this period I have started cooking so much more! I recently made myself Moroccan-style spiced soup."

Sarah says "Me and my housemates used to try to cook our meals together so that we could socialise and share responsibilities."

5

## Learn a new skill

Keeping learning is one of the 5 ways to wellbeing.

"Learn something new, such as a new language. I have been trying to learn Japanese"

Top Tip!

"I found picking up doing crafts can be something that you can do by yourself but also with others in the household, such as knitting, sculpting or crochet"

Mia, Staffs Student





# KEEP YOURSELF ENTERTAINED

Top Tip!

"...Get active through online workouts or yoga. I came across videos for "Tae bo" which I really enjoyed and it was something different and got me moving."

6

## Get Creative

Getting creative is a great option when going outdoors isn't an option.

Beth says *"I really love doing handwritten letters to people, it feels more personal and I've gotten creative whilst doing it i.e. I draw a fancy border around it and pictures for the recipient. For example, I know someone who loves space so I created a space-themed card where they could open up the planets."*

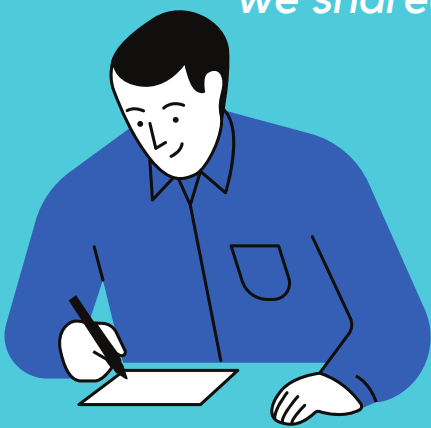
7

## Play a Game

From virtual bingo to online gaming - there is something for everyone.

Beth says *"Among us is really big at the moment, for me, it has been a great source of entertainment and a great way to connect with friends."*

Sarah says *"Me and my housemates.. would play on the Wii we shared too - Mario Kart tournaments were great!"*





**KEEP  
LEARNING**

# TIPS FOR LEARNING FROM HOME

By now the novelty of working or studying from home has likely faded away and maintaining productivity is challenging.

## MAKE A PLAN

The tutor or Lecturer will prepare your lessons, but it'll be good if you'll plan how you'll be studying at home.



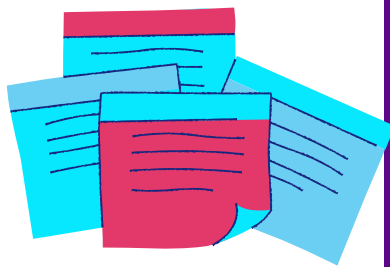
## BE PROUD OF YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Studying at home isn't easy. Reward yourself for each small success.



## TAKE NOTES

Notes will help you remember lecturers as you watch them. It'll also be useful for reviewing later.



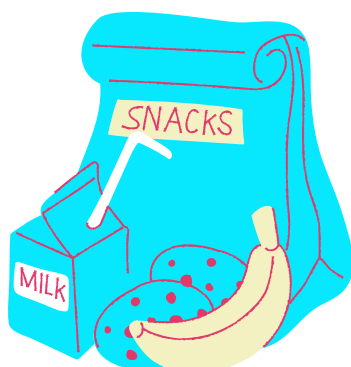
## DO ONE THING AT A TIME

Finish one lecture before moving to the next. Do one assignment before another. Lessen multitasking.



## TAKE A BREAK

Do your work in blocks to lessen the strain. After finishing one lecture, take a five minute break before moving on.



## KEEP YOUR ROUTINE

Treat your day as if you're going to Uni. Get up, take a shower, have breakfast.



# STAYING PRODUCTIVE

The Student Advisory Panel have shared some of their top tips for staying productive

*Top Tip!*

"... try and separate your spaces, e.g. don't attend your lectures whilst you're still in bed. Try and have a work area, and a chill area."

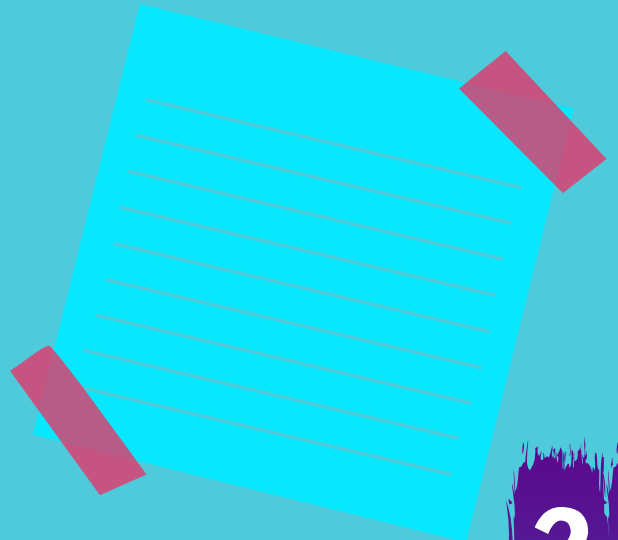
Sarah, MSci Forensic Investigation

- **Scheduling your time very well** - it can be easy to leave everything to the last minute, but if you plan a time every day to do a bit of work, it can all be done very quickly. Try to make work fun - so this could be through creating kahoots with a group of your coursemates with a prize, or having casual (digital) group conversations about work.
- **Make your notes look good** - adding some pictures and colour can make studying more enjoyable

*Top Tip!*

"Have a separate space for study/work"

Amber, MSc Applied Research



# STAYING PRODUCTIVE

*Top Tip!*

*...Make sure you get out of the house (if possible) - go for a brisk walk, then come back and continue with your studying/writing/researching/etc."  
Beth, BSc Psychology*



- **Make sure you take a break** - During this period, the hours seem to pass by so quickly, you might open up a piece of work in the morning and the next thing you know it is time to go to bed! Taking a break can boost concentration and productivity, as well as boost your wellbeing.
- **Create a schedule for yourself** - It's easy to get behind with coursework, especially when working remotely due to lack of motivation or difficulties with the new style of learning. Try to create a checklist and a schedule which will also stop you worrying when things are due.





# STAYING PRODUCTIVE

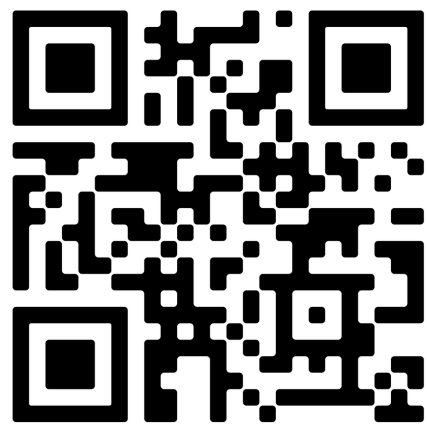
*Top Tip!*

*"Most importantly understand that there has been a big change - it is different and we are all just adapting. Don't be so hard on yourself."*

- **Set yourself achievable targets, daily and/or weekly** - *"For example, today my target is to complete my lecture notes for one of my modules. Last night I was starting to write them out, but I recognised that I was just exhausted, so I set that as my target for today. Now, I was able to wake up refreshed and felt ready to complete my notes."*

*Top Tip!*

*"Make sure to take breaks - when isolating you won't have as many reasons to go out or leave the house so it's easy to sit all day. I try to have a complete day off where I can relax or do something fun which helps me feel more motivated/recharged."*



Studying at home tips



# STAYING PRODUCTIVE



*"One big thing me and my friends are struggling with in isolation is feeling quite down and lack of motivation.*

*Something we have decided to do as a group but you can also do alone is to write out 3 things each day.*

- ***One thing I want to achieve today***
- ***One thing I will do to relax/take care of myself***
- ***One thing I am grateful for in my life today***

*My other friend is just writing down 3 positive things each morning to start off the day well!"*

Lauren, Keele Student



Check out the Keele Academic Life webpages whether you want to develop your academic skills, develop your digital skills, or develop your career, they are here to provide you with the support you need.



Academic Life

The image features a solid teal background enclosed within a thin white rectangular border. A large, horizontal, textured purple brushstroke graphic is positioned across the center of the frame. The text "FIND SUPPORT" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, centered over the purple brushstroke.

**FIND  
SUPPORT**

# SUPPORT AT KEELE

*Top Tip!*

*"And most of all remember to reach out if you need to, or if you just need someone to chat too..."*

*Beth, BSc Psychology*

**Student Services:** One stop shop for support needs including welfare, financial support, support for vulnerable groups, disability support and international student support  
01782 734481 | [student.services@keele.ac.uk](mailto:student.services@keele.ac.uk)

**Counselling and Mental Health:** Qualified mental health professionals with a wide variety of backgrounds and expertise  
01782 734187 | [counselling@keele.ac.uk](mailto:counselling@keele.ac.uk)

**Chaplaincy:** Chaplains supporting those of all faiths and none. Scan for the contact details for each Chaplain



**Peer Supporters:** A group of trained student volunteers who can offer confidential mental health support to their fellow students. Scan to register to chat with a Peer Supporter

# SUPPORT AT KEELE

**RA's**: a team of full-time Keele Students who live in Halls can provide students with welfare support all through the evening/night

To contact an RA, call 01782 733004 (and ask to speak to an RA)

## **Out of Hours Support**

**Out of Hours Support Officers**: During term time, you can get support from our OOH Support Officers 6pm-6am | 01782 733004

**Keele University Security**: Based at the Darwin Building, they operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week | 01782 733004

**ASK**: ASK at KeeleSU can provide advice and guidance on a variety of student queries including housing, money, health, family and wellbeing.

01782 734800 | [su.ask@keele.ac.uk](mailto:su.ask@keele.ac.uk)

***IT IS OK TO  
ASK  
FOR HELP***

# OTHER SUPPORT



**Togetherall**: 24/7 online peer and professional support, with trained counsellors | [www.togetherall.com](http://www.togetherall.com)

**Student Space**: Support for students during the pandemic and advice and information | [www.studentspace.org.uk](http://www.studentspace.org.uk)

**Mind**: Advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem | [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

**Staffordshire Mental Health Helpline**: Support if you are feeling concerned, worried, stressed or low, or if you are worried about someone you know.

Call 0808 800 2234 | Text 07860 022821 |

Email [Staffordshire.helpline@brighter-futures.org.uk](mailto:Staffordshire.helpline@brighter-futures.org.uk)

Open 7pm-2am weekdays, 2pm-2am weekends. Every day of the year.

## National helplines:

Beat Eating Disorders Studentline **0808 801 0811**

HopelineUK 0800 068 4141

SANELine 07984 967 708

Samaritans 116 123

Contact your **GP** or call **111** for advice & support

**If you require urgent support call 999 or visit your local Accident and Emergency**



Staying connected & keeping well



made for you by

start to   
**SUCCESS**

[www.starttosuccess.co.uk](http://www.starttosuccess.co.uk)

[info.starttosuccess@keele.ac.uk](mailto:info.starttosuccess@keele.ac.uk)