

## Wellness at Home

COVID-19, or as commonly referred, the Coronavirus, has forced businesses around the world to ask employees to work remotely and from home. For many people, if not most this will take time to become accustomed to, and will likely cause disruption to their daily flow.

The following are some tips on how to make working from home, work for you.

### General wellness

*It's quite likely that we will need to accept a certain amount of distress and anxiety relating to the Covid-19 outbreak, in the short and medium term. This is not something that will disappear quickly and the effects will be present for some time.*

- If you have self-care techniques that work for you, try and make sure that you utilise them regularly.
- You may need to think differently – for example doing exercise workouts from videos instead of attending classes. If you don't already do regular exercise, now is the perfect time to start. There are many cardio exercise videos available online to encourage you to keep active within your home. Even 5 minutes of exercise can help in reducing stress.
- Journaling your thoughts, rather than seeing a mentor/counsellor face to face, journaling can help to offload anxieties and increase mindfulness.
- Self-compassion, and support for others is going to be very important also. Remember we are all in this as one, no one will be left unaffected.
- Continue to eat normally, and as healthy as possible. Over-eating, or boredom eating, will be easy to do but should be avoided. Instead, drink a glass of warm water each time you want to snack. It has been recommended by health professional to drink warm water or hot drinks (tea, coffee) to help to keep the throat flushed.

## Remote Working

### **IT and technology**

*For many of us IT and technology will be a lifeline during this period.*

- Ask for help with IT – from IT departments and from colleagues.
- Use training manuals to guide you to learn new skills
- Try and use video calls whenever you can – there's no substitute for seeing another person's face. If videoconferencing is a step too far, you can do WhatsApp video for basic video calls with close colleagues.
- Up the communication – pick up the phone instead of emailing if a quick decision is needed.
- Think about your digital working style and how it fits with others in your team – you need to find a rhythm. Sending an email doesn't mean that everybody has read it – and some people like to send emails at off times – but they don't necessarily expect you to answer.

## **Getting into a routine**

*A structured day can be a good way to address this.*

- Designate a place to work that is as free of distractions as you can make it.
- Set a routine for working at home – it's important to get up and get started, to take regular breaks including a lunch break, and to finish working and turn off at an appropriate time.
- No matter how tempting, avoid working in your pyjamas all day. This is likely a big change already so, try not to lose all your daily routines at once.
- Try and set clear tasks for the day – three major decisions or activities is a good day's work – but keep an eye on ongoing tasks too. Have a proper lunch break. Stop, make something nice to eat, and eat away from your work area. Try and get outside and get some natural light if you can do so safely and try some exercise.
- Use your diary to clearly say to others when you are working and when you are available to speak.

## **Keep up the formal and social flow of work**

*It's important that structured and unstructured connections with work and colleagues carry on whilst people are working remotely or flexibly:*

- If you are a manager, discuss with your teams how you'd like to run supervision, check-ins, and sign offs remotely.
- Try to use video for all formal discussions, and any discussions where you are checking in on someone's well-being - the non-verbal communication is key for this.
- Follow-up video chats or calls with a quick note with a summary of the actions to take, or your understanding of the major points to ensure that things are clear.
- If a new starter joins your team during this period, try to take time off your workflow and have a long videoconference induction with them and a virtual lunch.