

## TIP SHEET Nº4

# COVID-19 STAYING AT HOME GUIDE

Boredom, Relief, Fear, Novelty, Frustration, Fed Up, Lonely, Pleased, Excitement, Sluggish, Energised, Worried, Rested, Anticipation, Conflict, Hopeful!

When you first imagine Staying at Home, it might seem like a novelty or rest from school and the pressures of life. If you are not sick with COVID-19, there might be a sense of relief to be away from the risks of exposure of and to COVID-19. Or you may be pleased to take time away from social pressures. Others may wonder how they will survive without certain activities or people and those with strained family relationships may question how to cope with such close contact. With time there is a risk that isolation can lead to boredom, frustration, loneliness and fear. You might find yourself laughing one minute and shouting the next. These are common and normal responses to an unfamiliar situation and the following tips are suggested to help you with adjustment and coping.



## IT'S ALL IN THE PLANNING!

If you are at home without feeling sick, a plan for making the most of this time is worthwhile. If you have time to plan ahead, then some things you can do ahead of time might include:

- **WATCH:** Download and/or add to your favourite's list movies and/or TV series you have been wanting to watch but haven't had the time.
- **LISTEN:** Create playlists to help relax, get active, get motivated and just, well get you through!
- **TREAT:** Let your parent or household shopper know of some foods you would really like to have on hand if unable to shop.
- **READ:** Borrow some books out on a topic you are really interested in but never have time to learn about. Or lose yourself in a novel!
- **PUZZLE:** Buy or borrow a crossword or sudoku book or find an online source.
- **CREATE:** Think about a craft or garden project and get the materials you need.
- **PLAY:** Purchase (or swop with a friend) a board game that you have never played before.
- **CONNECT:** Consider your options for keeping in touch with friends, family and even your teachers! You might be able to have conversations over the fence with neighbours (remember social distancing), and there is always SKYPE, social media, telephone and facetime.
- **GARDEN:** Plant a microgreens garden, for something to do and to create fresh nutrients on hand.
- **CREATE A STUCK AT HOME CARE KIT** which contains five things a person can do to nurture themselves or have fun, for example: a bath bomb, a joke, scented candle, a physical challenge card (e.g. a trick on your scooter) a personal message or affirmation, a stress ball, phone number of a mate to call, fidget spinner, essential oil, silly putty, favourite toy or book, colouring page, bubbles.
- **CATCH UP AND EXTEND:** Collect some work to do for school. This can include things to catch up on or to extend and build on work you are already doing. Consider what else you might want to learn about, for interest or to get you ahead later.

## A RHYTHM TO YOUR DAY



Regular routines and activities give time a structure and life a purpose. In an uncertain situation, a regular rhythm provides predictability and security.

Keeping meals, chores and daily hygiene at regular times gives some order to the day. If you are not at school you might enjoy to stay in bed a little later, but getting up for breakfast at a similar time each day and following a daily plan of activities is helpful.

Break down your day and tasks into smaller chunks and do one thing at a time.

## CREATIVE JUICES



Slowing down and spending time at home can provide an opportunity for engaging in creative pursuits.

Maybe it will be more time for one of your existing creative hobbies or projects. Maybe the time provides an opportunity to learn a new craft or skill. Perhaps you might learn to knit or try portrait drawing? What about a Corona journal or some COVID-19 poetry. It could be a good time to enter a short story competition. Get together online with friends and write a script for a quarantine play.

## TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING?

**SCREEN TIME:** Keep technology in balance. You might want to use it to keep in touch and for some learning and entertainment. Remind yourself this is an opportunity to do some things you might not normally find time for.

**NEWS TIME:** A few news updates a day are enough. We know from those who experience tragedy that spending too much time watching or reading news afterwards affects them negatively. If you shield yourself from constantly checking the media for news about the virus, you will find it easier to remain calm. A regular daily update from a reliable source is enough.

**OFFLINE:** Keep in mind that streaming services may experience overload, so plan for times of no availability. There are many stories available that can offer an alternative, for example [Stories Audible](#).



## YOUR MIND YOUR FRIEND

Your mind is one of your best allies in keeping your spirits up during self-isolation. Below are some tips to keep you unstuck.

- If you are feeling scared or confused, get more information from reliable sources or talk to a trusted adult.
- Think about the other challenges in your life and how you coped and remind yourself that you can cope with this too.
- Try to see the opportunities in self-isolation - an opportunity to catch up on a book or movie series, get up to date with some study, redecorate or tidy your room, spend time with family members who are usually busy, a time to reflect and redirect your life.
- Take a look at now from the future. What will you be thinking about this in one year's time? What stories will you be telling?
- Remind your mind that this is temporary: like a season it will pass.
- Turn your mind to notice the Helpers, the good in the world. Be grateful.
- Critique Your World - Question, investigate, consider and examine the information, viewpoints, values and your own thoughts!



## MAKING MUSIC

Create your own staying at home playlists. Perhaps one for dancing or aerobic exercise and one for meditation and relaxation. Perhaps an uplifting one for when spirits get low or a playlist to express your frustration and irritation.

Share your playlist with others. Invite your family to listen to your selected tunes or host a virtual music session. Try a singing group.

Take time to practice your instrument or learn a new song. Get together with friends who play instruments and create a virtual quarantine band. If you are not feeling very creative listen to one of the playlists already created on Spotify.



## KEEP CONNECTED

Consider your options for keeping in touch with friends, neighbours and even teachers. You might be able to have conversations over the fence with neighbours, and there is always Skype, social media, telephone and Facetime.

Remind yourself that **self-isolation is an act of kindness for our neighbours and friends**, think of it as a service to society where you are helping to reduce the chances of others getting sick.

Express some love and support for the people you live with. Love is a verb, so show them you care with acts of kindness and caring.

Reach out to others and find out how they are doing. Show support and share ideas for coping.

Get creative with Skype and Facetime, the grandparents can join you for dinner by sitting on the screen at the end of the table or find a board game to play with connected screens.

## FAMILY TIMES

Try to enjoy the opportunities of staying at home to spend more time with your parents and siblings and whanāu.

Consider what the family can do together during this time. Perhaps sit down family meals may be possible at times where sports practice took family members into separate orbits, or a family project such as redecorating the house may provide a shared activity.

You may be pleased to have lots of time with your parents or siblings or it may be a source of concern or dread. Take time to talk together to work out what different people's hopes and concerns are about the staying at home time. Remember, you don't have to spend every moment together.

Try to spend some time alone and where possible spend time in different spaces within the house. More arguments may occur than usual with increased proximity and distress. Be patient and remember this is a time to help each other to ride the emotional rollercoaster.

## CARE FOR YOUR BODY



Think about how you might like to get or keep fit including things you may need like good music and exercise equipment and support. You might try some online yoga, or set up your own backyard or inside circuit training - you don't need much space or equipment for push ups, squats, lunges or crunches. And then there is just good old dancing and letting yourself go, or Facetime into your mate's home and create a virtual disco.

If you feel the urge to be competitive create a virtual competition - a dance off, push up challenge or a group yoga class. Quarantine could mean you have time for that long bath soak, footbath with green tea (throw in a bit of salt and mint), some lovely cream or even a taking turns at massage with a trusted family member.

[Ministry of Health Being Active](#) and [Home Exercises](#) by This Girl Can

## LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE



There is likely to be silver linings in your quarantine experience. Take time to consider your experience and reflect on your life. What will you tell your own children about the experience? The opportunity to slow down and live simply may only occur this once in your lifetime. Take time to learn about yourself, how do you respond to the isolation, or being less busy? Observe your values and priorities. Notice any reflections you have about your life and future and talk about the experience with others.

Reflect on the wider community and the opportunity for societal change. There are likely to be silver linings for our social and cultural fabric. Share your hope with others.

[Test of National Values](#) (Source: Stuff)

# STAYING AT HOME WORKSHEET: IT'S ALL IN THE PLANNING

**TREATS?** Write down three treat foods you would like in the house

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**WATCH?** What is on my list of things to watch?

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**OPPORTUNITY?** What is something I have wanted to do for ages, that I could do whilst staying at home?

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**STRENGTHS?** How did I cope with my last big challenge? What strengths did I show? How could I use my strengths to get through the 'Staying at Home' challenge?

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**PLAY?** What is a board game or other activity that I could play/do?

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**CONNECT?** Who will I miss and how will I keep in touch?

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**LEARN?** What schoolwork could I do/catch up on whilst staying at home?

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**BODY?** What ideas shall I try for getting/keeping fit?

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**CREATE?** What could be my project or creative outlet? Write down what I would need to get ahead of time.

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**VENT?** Who could I talk to if I find myself feeling scared or frustrated?

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**RHYTHM?** What activities or rituals would I like for my daily rhythm? What would my day look like?

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**FAMILY?** How would I like to connect with my family? What could I do if I need space from them?

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**COPE?** What am I likely to get irritated with at home? How could I cope?

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**Get Help! Check out the Help for Mental Health Tip Sheet for services to support you. Get in touch with any mental health professionals you would normally use.**

Adapted from the Covid-19 Wellbeing Guide for Schools, with permission from and acknowledgement of Julie McCormack, Clinical Psychologist [Family Psychology](#) and Sian Carvell, Future Curious Limited.