



EMPLOYEE SERIES

Tips for coping when working remotely and in Isolation



Make social connections part of your weekly routine at home and onsite:

- Schedule daily check-ins with family, friends and colleagues. They probably want the contact as much as you do. Remember you are 50% of EVERY relationship
- If you can't do it face to face; use phone, Zoom, 'face time', what's app, emails and old fashioned letters.



Develop routines and guidelines with your family. Be aware that partners and kids can also have similar feelings of loneliness or isolation. Talk as a family and ask for their suggestions about how you can connect better.



Plan activities on R&R in advance. This will make it easier to allow for a balance of family time, time with kids, do nothing time, me-time, couple time. Be willing to compromise.



If you want a wider network of friends where you live, think about taking advantage of social clubs and online groups such as meetup.com, which lists different social occasions according to interests and can be a good way to make new friends.



Becoming involved in something bigger than yourself can help reduce loneliness and increase a sense of belonging e.g. volunteering for human or environmental needs, join an online forum of like-minded people, about a cause or topic that interests you. If it is not possible to find something, you can look outside of yourself by recognising and helping others in your workplace that might be experiencing a hard time.



Find meaning and purpose. Acknowledge the sacrifices and gains that you are making by working FIFO— educate your friends and family on your reasons for both. Write it down and leave it on the fridge to remind those at home (and for yourself).



Something to work towards. What are some personal goals you hope to achieve in the next week, 3 months, 6 months and 12 months?



Be careful with screen time. To make it work for you: ensure that the content you are reading or watching is having a relaxing effect on your mind and body, if not, choose something else! Also be careful what time you use your screens. Screen time before bed delays the onset and quality of sleep.



Ensure there is a positive activity or event to look forward to at the end of your working day, your day off and on your R&R.



Establish a healthy routine. Self-care is the foundation to safety at home and in the workplace. Consider changing your routine around from time to time to help break up the monotony. Allow time for exercise, adequate sleep, healthy diet, relaxation.



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Schedule daily physical activity. 30-45 mins walking pace is all you need to remove the stress hormones from your body. Schedule that in. If you can do online workouts, go for it!
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Acknowledge 3 things that have gone well in your day. If you make this a habit you begin to look for the positives in each day.
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Rate each day on a scale of 1-10. If you are having more bad days than good or very low numbers, talk to someone.
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Laugh a lot. Dealing with a challenging situation will be helpful if you don't take yourself too seriously, remoteness can lead to quirky adaptations to usual activities.
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Be resilient. Plan for tough times in collaboration with your partner at home so they feel supported in your absence and you feel supported in their absence.
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Stressed, depressed or anxious? Take control. Read about warning signs, prevention and management. Find an appropriate place to share your concerns early so it does not get out of hand.
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Clarify with your partner what is happening at home. Stick to the facts and don't let your imagination run wild.
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Limit those activities that affect your mood – these can be different for everyone. Ensuring you have adequate sleep is a good start.
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Use your support network. Identify who will you go to if you are struggling? E.g. medical practitioner, family member or trusted friend or colleague, HR or your manager. You are entitled to free confidential EAP counselling through Access Wellbeing Services: 1300 66 7700

References:

Mining Family Matters

<https://miningfm.com/about-us/>

Mental Health Commission <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/media/2547/impact-of-fifo-work-arrangement-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-of-fifo-workers-full-report.pdf> by Centre for Transformative Work Design

Beyond Blue <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/personal-best/pillar/in-focus/looking-after-your-mental-health-as-a-fly-in-fly-out-worker>

The Risks of Social Isolation, Article <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2019/05/ce-corner-isolation>
<https://www.fifofocus.com.au/fifo-life-redfm-part-2-loneliness/>

If you would like to book an appointment and /or speak with one of our Counsellors, it's as easy as calling 1300 66 77 00 or New Zealand 0800 327 669 or visit our website www.accesswellbeingservices.com.au