



## EMPLOYEE SERIES

### Tips on how to manage in isolation

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**What is social distancing** – it broadly means not shaking hands, avoiding crowds, standing several metres from other people and, most important, staying home if you feel sick. Businesses are doing it when they ask employees to work from home or stagger work hours. Governments are doing it when they close schools. We're seeing it in the sports world, with no-spectator games or the postponement of sporting events. Museums, theaters and concert halls where large groups of people gather are closing their doors. It means trying to find the least-crowded public transport option or possibly walking, cycling or driving instead. The idea is to empower people to minimise the spreading of contagion.
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**Communicate, communicate, communicate** – it's important for your mental health and wellbeing to talk about how you are feeling and what you need. If you feel you can't talk to your people, reach out to helplines or book a telephone counselling session with AWS!
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**Make the most of the time you have with your people** – what an opportunity to share and reconnect with your partner and children. Create a structure and routine to your days. Focus on five skills you want your family to master by the end of isolation – for example, making pancakes, learning poker, knitting, touch-typing or learning to jive – dedicate some time each day building skills that you have never had time to develop previously!
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**Protect your immunity** – Nobody seriously is suggesting that eating more blueberries and kale will protect against the virus, but there is evidence that alcohol depletes immunity and increases anxiety. You may want to reconsider reaching out for that bottle of wine!
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**Move your body** – Keep a routine of exercise whether it be walking in nature, following an on-line yoga app or a home gym! You want as many endorphins firing as possible!
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**Panic buying** – Be kind. Be considerate. Be compassionate. Support your local community and try to use local stores, which are likely to suffer more from an economic downturn than large supermarket chains. You can pack a freezer full of Chinese dumplings, which you will thank yourself for when you don't feel like cooking.
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**Jump online** – whether you're playing someone in your favourite game, or simply connecting in forums with like-minded people, chatting online is a great way to battle isolation and loneliness. Skype your tribe on a daily basis! You can remain socially connected even though you're physically distant!
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**Plan your day** – routine plays an important role in maintaining good mental and physical health. Try to follow your ordinary routine as much as possible when in isolation. Plan your day in order to increase productivity and ensure you allocate time to look after yourself. Plan different activities on various days or habits you want to start or keep up including self-care and gratitude and remember to plan regular breaks throughout the day. *Please find attached a Daily planner and instructions to help you remain focused and achieve goals.*

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](http://www.accesswellbeingservices.com.au)



# What's your plan for today?

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

 **ROUTINE**

**Breakfast:**

**Lunch:**

**Supper:**

 **PRODUCTIVITY TASKS**

 **SELF CARE PLAN**

Physical:

Social:

Restorative:

Household:

Living the vaule of:

 **GRATITUDE**

 **NOTES**

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## What's your plan for today?

### Instructions

We are social, productive, creative, and somewhat anxiety-prone creatures. For some, the idea of working from home and spending extra time with families is exciting, for others, it's daunting. We know that isolation and loss of routine and productivity are strong risk factors for depression. That's why it's essential to maintain a workable, values-oriented routine while at home.

1. Print a page for each family member daily
2. Make a plan each morning or the evening before
3. Reflect on how it went and adjust accordingly



### ROUTINE

- Plan for healthy meals and snacks. Roaming through the kitchen and grabbing a handful of this or that while we are bored and less active will add up to low mood and weight gain over time.
- Time-blocking with intention. Consistent routines help avoid the what -do-I-feel-like-next vortex of phone scrolling and feeling crummy about it.
- Alternate activity types, build in breaks with physical activity. A 5 minute kitchen dance party to your favourite song while you wait for the kettle to boil, run up and down the stairs, put a few more pieces in the puzzle, chip away at the creative project you've been too time-strapped to get to.
- If you have kids at home, try to balance routines with tasks for yourself and task the kids need help with. Let them know when you'll be doing something together to reduce interruptions while in virtual meetings. Have a piece of paper you can post when you're in a virtual meeting that tells them you're not able to talk but offers somewhere to write a question.



### PRODUCTIVITY TASKS

- Space for work, study, or household activities. What can I do today to feel productive?
- Don't have any work or study? This could be working on a home project you've been putting off, cleaning out a closet, reading, doing your family tree, planting veggie seedlings indoor in preparation for spring, sorting through the photos on your computer, painting the console table etc.
- Keep in mind we often need less time to do work task when we aren't commuting, talking to co-workers, and sitting in long meetings.
- Don't forget to check the tasks off as you go. Our brains get happy dopamine rush when we check things off.

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## SELF CARE PLAN

- Physical: go for a walk, dance to your favourite song, run up and down the stairs. Your body must move.
- Social: Virtual coffee by phone or video with a friend, check in on loved ones, post good on social media.
- Restorative: Stretch, meditate, read, do yoga, have a bath. Do something to nurture your soul.
- Household: Boring self care. Make your bed, catch up on laundry, do some spring cleaning.
- In line with the value of \_\_\_\_: How are you living your most important values today?
- Blank: This is your wild-card. What do you need to do to feel well today?



## GRATITUDE

Gratitude is proven to boost our physical and mental health. Build resilience and connection by noting what makes you grateful each day.



## NOTES

- How did today work out?
- How can you make your life better tomorrow?
- How did you make the world better today?
- What inspired you today?
- Task you'd like to get to later?

Reference: [www.balanceworks.online](http://www.balanceworks.online)

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