

A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a light blue surgical face mask, a white collared shirt, and a grey pinstriped blazer, is sitting on a bus. She is looking towards the camera. The background shows the interior of a bus with yellow handrails and another person wearing a mask.

Life after lockdown: Your Wellbeing Action Plan

from the Charlie Waller Trust

What next... CWT Wellbeing Action Plan

We hope you find this booklet a useful resource. It is a personalised, practical tool that we can all use whether or not we have a mental health issue. It is inspired by Mary Ellen Copeland's Wellness Recovery Action Plan; an evidence based system used worldwide by people to manage their mental health.

We have adapted our Working from Home: Wellbeing Action Plan so that it can be used if you are returning to the workplace or are worried about possible changes ahead.

During the coronavirus pandemic we have all been through enormous change and some of us may experience further uncertainty and change in the coming weeks and months.

Some have described these times as the "biggest psychological experiment" we have experienced.

It is important to acknowledge during these times some people have found that they have embraced a 'new way of life' and for others they have found lockdown and the changes have had a negative impact on their mental health.

Remember, there's no 'normal' response to lockdown or lockdown easing. Your feelings might change. You might feel one way one day, and another way the next. It might not feel logical.

Your feelings might be influenced by:

- Your personal situation
- What lockdown has been like for you
- Your own views about what's happened so far, and what should happen next
- Lots of things that are out of your control.

During times of uncertainty and loss (loss may be bereavement, loss of job, loss of social connections), it is more important than ever to learn ways to be kind to yourself, ways to look after your mental health and to practice self-compassion.

We hope you find this booklet a useful resource.

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Your Wellbeing Action Plan

It might be helpful to answer the following questions:

What will be helpful for you to stay mentally healthy whilst being back at work or continuing to work from home?

For example, taking regular breaks, having a designated work space, balancing work hours and finding time to relax.

Are there any situations that you have already noticed are having an impact on your wellbeing?

For example, have you been made redundant, are you worried you may lose your job, are you also having to care for loved ones, children, are you worried about finances, have you experienced bereavement?

How might stress impact on your work if you are returning or have returned to the workplace?

For example, finding it difficult to make decisions, feeling irritable, finding it difficult to focus on tasks/work due to health related worries, finding it difficult to switch off from work.

What has worked (or hasn't worked) in the past?

For example, supervision with manager; taking regular breaks, good sleep patterns, exercise.

Any early warning signs of poor mental health that you can look out for?

*For example, finding it difficult to switch off and go to sleep, not having a structure or routine, not connecting with others, finding it difficult to motivate yourself, loss of role or identity (if you are not working). **Could you let your manager know, a loved one, peers or access support through your GP/online support?***

What support may you need from your manager before returning to the workplace, now that you are back at work?

For example, more frequent 1:1's, flexible working if you have childcare responsibilities.

Remember to ask yourself:

How do I know when I am stressed?

What are the things I can do to support my mental wellbeing?

What's in your stress container?

Stress flows into the container



If the container overflows, problems develop – 'emotional snapping'

Helpful coping strategies –

a working tap lets the stress out

Unhelpful coping strategies –

a blocked tap means water fills the container and overflows

Allow yourself to PAUSE:

Press the reset button; this may be a time when you can practice self-compassion and being kind to yourself, change critical and negative language you use when talking to yourself into something gentler and accepting. Speak to, encourage and comfort yourself the way you would someone you care about.

Allow yourself time to reflect and process your experiences; acknowledge this may be a time of suffering; that suffering is part of life. You may be experiencing lots of uncertainty, loss, bereavement, fear of the unknown.

Unwind; following the outbreak of coronavirus we are more acutely aware of life's day to day uncertainties. During times of uncertainty and worry it can be hard to relax, so practice relaxation techniques, mindfulness and take notice.

Seek support; you may be facing or experiencing financial hardship, you may be struggling with your mental health, you may have experienced bereavement. It is important to express any worries or concerns you may have.

Embrace change; are there new opportunities? For example, working from home in the future, can you let go of old habits that weren't helpful, have a better life-work balance, turn off pop-up notifications and alerts on your computer/phone, make use of 'do not disturb' or 'sleep' functions while you are working on tasks requiring concentration.



Five Ways to Wellbeing

Give yourself a hand with the five ways to wellbeing. Try to build these into your daily life – think of them as your ‘five a day’ for mental wellbeing. Ask yourself: how do I know when I am stressed?

Things I can do to support my mental wellbeing; every week and when I am stressed:



We need to ensure we are connecting with the people around us: think of ways you can still socially connect with others, using FaceTime or video calling rather than audio so that you can see others.



Go for a walk, run or cycle; play a game, garden, dance or do some DIY. Exercising can help you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity that you enjoy, one that suits your level of mobility and fitness. Even doing some stretches while you are watching TV counts. Exercising makes you feel good so it is important to think of ways that you can do this.



Be observant, look for something beautiful or remark on something unusual. Savor the moment and adjust to the changes happening. Enjoy the time that you have and allow yourself to relax. If you are finding it difficult to manage your emotions and the current uncertainty, a useful technique is a grounding exercise based on our senses:

Five senses grounding tool



5 things you can **see**



4 things you can **feel**



3 things you can **hear**



2 things you can **smell**



1 thing you can **taste**



Don't be afraid to try something new, rediscover an old hobby or sign up for a course. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favorite food. Learn a new language and set a challenge you will enjoy. Learning new things will make you more confident, as well as being fun to do. It may be that you have put off doing something and now you have the time and opportunity to embrace it.



Do something nice for a friend, colleague, loved one. It may be that you send them a message, phone them up, send a card. Look out as well as in.

CLANGERS

Developed by Dr Phil Hammond

At Charlie Waller we encourage **keeping well** with the CLANGERS as sleep, diet and relaxation are really important and even more so in the current climate where there remains a great deal of uncertainty.

Keeping well (with the CLANGERS)

Connect
Keep **L**earning
Be **A**ctive
Take **N**otice
Give
Eat well
Relax
Sleep



Sources of help

Samaritans call 116 123
jo@samaritans.org
www.samaritans.org

Shout text 85258

Calm www.thecalmzone.net

Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Beat www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk

NHS Every Mind Matters www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/

Cruse Bereavement Care www.cruse.org.uk

National Debtline 0808 808 4000

Today's plan

8am

9am

10am

11am

12pm

1pm

2pm

3pm

4pm

5pm

6pm

7pm

8pm

9pm

10pm

Today's goals

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Things to do

Notes

Five a day

Connect

Be active

Take notice

Keep learning

Give

Three positives

1.

2.

3.

Water tracker

