

WELLINGTON
COLLEGE



Challenge 2021 – Lockdown 3:

It's going to be challenging but we will get there together

WELL-BEING ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR TEACHING STAFF



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INTRODUCTION

Where are you right now?

The College has become an empty shell once more; the planning that you had carried out so that you could start the term in an organised way wont work online; the hope of reduced restrictions due to mass testing and a vaccination now seems a distant reality..... and it's winter. It's cold, it's dark and it's January.

The business of Christmas may have felt more depleting than ever. Contact from friends may have gone strangely quiet, Christmas plans may have been made, revised, cancelled. There is a perception that you are supposed to be feeling rested but perhaps individual circumstances have meant that you feel a little bit jaded already. You were really looking forward to getting back to a routine and for life to become "normal" again – you were looking forward to the final stages of exam preparations, improved take-away options in the V+A and the opportunity to eat kiwi fruit again and of course, seeing your friends and colleagues. And then.....LOCKDOWN.

It is ***absolutely fine*** for you to be feeling anxious, frustrated and worried – whether you are looking forward to the prospect of online teaching again or whether the thought fills you with dread. Try not to 'silver line' the impact of the latest lockdown on you; recognise what you are feeling and see if you can work out the origin of that feeling – what is filling you with dread? What did you dislike last time about lockdown? How can you alter what you did to make things easier and more bearable?

Having had the experience of lockdown #1 in March may be a good and bad thing – you can learn from your experience but you also know some of the elements which were hard and which, quite possibly, you cannot change. It is important to try and remain in the present and think about your own self care plans and ways in which you will support yourself over the coming few months. This guidance aims to give you tips and resources about how to not only "get through" the next few months but to "get through well" and ride out the uncertainty.

Please remember that everyone is experiencing a diverse range of feelings at the moment. Respond to yourself *and* your colleagues with compassion, not with judgement or resentment and remember that help and support is there for you - always.

The impact that you make on our young people, your professionalism and commitment to the College as a whole is unparalleled. Do remember what a positive impact you have made to so many and allow yourself time to reflect on that. Whilst we are currently in the throes of winter, Spring *is* on its way and just as we will begin to see days lengthening and buds forming on the trees, we will continue to grow as individuals and as a community during this challenging time.

THE FEELINGS OF TEACHERS

The feelings of being powerless, ill-equipped and hopeless

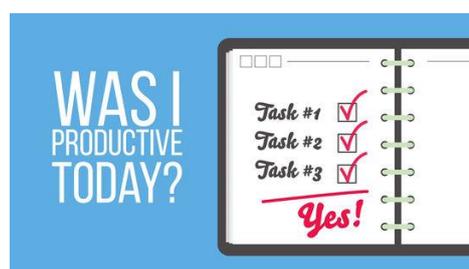
This global pandemic remains out of our control, but it does not mean you have no power. Think of all of the things that you did have the power to change during the last lockdown and think about the

strategies that worked for you. Some ideas which worked well for some individuals in the Summer Term were:

- MS Teams calls over break / lunches so you can chat and eat at the same time and feel like you have some company
- Blocking out times in the day for fresh air / exercise (either for a socially distanced walk with one other colleague or on your own)
- Walking whilst listening to a podcast or audiobook
- 5 minute walks / fresh air breaks between consecutive lessons
- Scheduling something fun one evening a week – eg an online quiz with a friend, cooking a meal with someone online

You can decide how to plan and spend your day. Schedule in clear breaks away from your computer, carve out family time and choose to do some things you enjoy or even take up a new interest. Don't put yourself under pressure to achieve something or put unrealistic demands on yourself.

Remember - you can't choose how the College, your colleagues, friends or neighbours on site will react but you can choose how **you** react.



You may have absolutely hated online teaching in the Summer – it may have left you feeling **ill-equipped** and incompetent with a constant underlying anxiety about the quality of your lessons, whether you were getting something wrong and what the pupils were actually doing at the other end of their screens. It is important to realise that you are in a much better place now – your IT skills, ability to manipulate MS Teams and set appropriate tasks are much further forward than March 2020. There are also vast numbers of online educational resources in your subject areas for you to turn to as well as expertise in your own department. Remember:

- Discuss any concerns you have with members of your department and work through a problem to find a solution
- Share resources and ideas
- Try not to achieve too much – lessons are 45 minutes – they should be pacy but also allow for consolidation and understanding to show through from the students
- Keep lesson content varied
- Think about how existing resources and lesson plans can be modified and not completely re-written
- Don't be embarrassed - talk as soon as you are finding something hard and don't let it fester – they may well be an easy solution out there which could easily change your perspective
- Think about any practicalities – do you need any extra IT equipment such as a better webcam / a stand alone keyboard / a mouse? (Speak to your HOD / IT department) Do you need to perform a work station assessment to ensure that your chair is at the right height / lighting is adequate? (Speak to Gay Steer).

It is one thing to feel overwhelmed or exhausted. It is quite another thing to feel **hopeless**. If you are feeling hopeless, this is an indicator that you need to seek professional help and you need to talk with someone you trust about your feelings. Delyth Lynch and Cress Henderson are leading on teaching staff wellbeing this term – any anxieties you have will be dealt with sensitively and seriously.

Remember that resilience is not a personality trait, or a fixed characteristic that some are born with. It is a learned capacity, a process of adaptation, a strength that we build over time. That means that we are capable of being resilient. With practice, intention, time and the care of our community and colleagues, we are going to get through another lockdown and period of remote learning.

There are internal sources of support to help you and individuals who are readily available to talk to you; these include your departmental mental health ambassadors, our network of mental health first aiders and mental health committee, counselling through Health Shield, Human Resources, your HOD and all members of the ELT who genuinely want to listen, adapt and support. Please don't feel anxious about sharing your concerns; it is highly likely that you are not alone and sharing information could help others as well as yourself.

Each one of you is unique – some of you live alone; some of you live in a family and have competing demands of educating your own children whilst also planning and teaching lessons; some of you are living with keyworkers and supporting them in their vital roles; some of you have very young children to look after; some of you have elderly relatives to look after; some of you are vulnerable and have health implications. All of this on top of a generalised low level anxiety about uncertainty, the pandemic and the future. Do not judge others and their situation – none of us know what the situation is for other individuals and families. ELT also recognise that too – just find someone you trust and speak to them.

A period of low mood may occur with any one of us at any time and there will be different triggers. Allow others to help and try and view your situation through the lens of someone else – what would you be advising them if they were in your position? Many teachers find it difficult to be honest about their feelings of fear, uncertainty and self-doubt; they feel that there is an expectation to always be calm, positive and strong. This not only increases internal suffering but consumes a huge amount of emotional energy. Be kind to yourself – everyone has limited resources and by taking a more gentle approach, being honest about the areas you are finding hard and speaking about this will mean that some of the stress will be released and that you don't have to pretend to be ok when you are not.

MENTAL HEALTH

The Government has not set an end date to this current period of lockdown, but we can assume it will last a few months. What will follow is uncertain but it is likely to involve phased returns to work, education and access to other resources. It is vitally important that mental health is given the utmost consideration and that you also spend some time looking after yourself. Some general tips:

1. *Routines are important - try to get into a steady routine*
 - a. Wake and get up at the same time each day and have a set routine to get ready to work.
 - b. Have defined breaks and lunch times - it may be useful to copy your usual routine. When on a break, make sure you stop working and do something you enjoy. Make sure you leave your workspace in break periods.
 - c. Have a routine for evening meal as well. Try to eat healthily and avoid snacking throughout the day.
 - d. If you are looking after children as well as working from home, ensure you build this into your routine as well. Children will also benefit from having established routines.
 - e. If living with other adults or older children discuss and assign household jobs to peoples routines.

2. *If possible, have a dedicated workspace*
 - a. If you will be teaching from home, try to have a defined workspace away from your sleeping area. A home office is ideal, but it could be a desk in a room or even a specific space on a kitchen table.
 - b. As far as possible, make sure your workspace is set up to be conducive to working. Avoid clutter and ensure you are sitting correctly etc. to avoid physical strain or poor posture. Seek advice from Gay Steer.

3. *Take exercise*
 - a. Exercise is very important for your physical and mental health and should be built into your routine.
 - b. Find what works for you – if you hate running, then don't do it. Find something you enjoy and will look forward to – if you enjoy exercising with others find an online class you can participate in or buddy up with someone from College and do something together. You can also take exercise with others - virtually. An example could be going for a jog with a friend. Arrange the time, jog at separate locations but chat on the phone through earphones as you go. The same can be done with online sessions in your home using a webcam or similar.

4. *Avoid mental isolation*
 - a. Although we are all physically isolating ourselves to some degree, it is important to avoid mental isolation and loneliness.
 - b. Even if you are living with others, interactions with people outside your home will be important for your mental health.
 - c. Set up a group to chat to work colleagues in your school/department.
 - d. Make greater use of voice and video calls rather than emails or messenger apps to stay in touch with work colleagues and friends and family.
 - e. When not working, try to regularly call friends and family. You will be helping them also!
 - f. Senior and middle managers should schedule regular keeping-in-touch calls with colleagues. These should focus on wellbeing rather than work.
 - g. Arrange with colleagues to have virtual coffee breaks and make arrangements for allowable activities such as socially distanced walks.

5. *Take your leisure time – and take it seriously*
 - a. At the end of the working day, make sure you stop working and do something you enjoy. Leave your workspace and do not return until the next day.
 - b. This could be watching the TV or catching up with social media, but try to limit screen time. Reading a book or magazine is a great alternative.
 - c. Avoid excessive alcohol or caffeine consumption. These are quick fixes which could lead to more issues in the future.
 - d. Don't forget to check in with family and friends.
 - e. Try something different - there are many people offering free online lessons in a variety of skills and crafts. This could be the ideal time to learn a new skill or hobby.
 - f. If you are living with your family, ensure you have some time together and do a group activity, such as a board game or jigsaw.
 - g. Don't be afraid of changing routine – if it fits better for you to take time out at 11am rather than 6pm, do it. There are different ways of reaching the same outcome. You will not be judged or criticised for finding a way which **works for you**.

6. *If needed, get support*

- a. If you are feeling that you need extra support to cope with mental health issues, there are numerous avenues of both internal and external support. External sources of support and advice can be found in the directory at the end of the document.

Internal sources include:

- i) ELT leads – Delyth Lynch and Cress Henderson
- ii) Your departmental mental health ambassador
- iii) A trained mental health first aider. These are:

Dave Walker
Delyth Lynch
Sean Farrell
Julia Sutcliffe
Kam Opie
Sam Gutteridge
Jack Murray
Jo Brayton
Caroline Evans
Heather Andrews

George Wells
Chloe Whitelaw
Ana Romero
Ellie Farrell
Caroline Kenworthy
Kate Pratt
Miranda Patterson
Rachelle Kirkham
Erynn Oliver

- iv) Human Resources (Jacqui Self)
- v) Our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) – Health Shield
- vi) A Values Guardian
- vii) Your HOD

- b. Think about adding the following strategies into your everyday routine which will help centre and ground you, especially at a time when you might be feeling acutely anxious:

Come back to the present - instead of back to the future (fears) or the past (failures). Our capacity to think, overthink, and rethink, is unique in nature. It's a superpower...and often in the mundanity of our day to day lives, it can be the source of a lot of distraction at best and self-sabotage at worst...

Savour the good stuff. Find it, and hold onto it in your mind...the natural opioids of pleasure are essential to the brain's recovery and movement from stress / anxiety circuitry and return to balance. Give yourself more time to hold onto and grow the good. What are the good things in your life right now? How can you dial up your perception and awareness of those so that they are your screensaver?

Seek nature - natural settings and sunlight work wonders. What is it about nature that you love? How can you access it more?

Get moving - what has the most impact in lifting your spirits? Slow, strong, fast, intense movement? What takes you out of your head, into your body and helps re-set your energy?

Check in with yourself. What's the story that your stream of consciousness is telling you? What are the trends in your thinking? What is working for you? What is NOT working for you?

Enjoy creativity and 'flow' . From cookery to poetry, painting art to repainting a wall or DIY. Could you get going with a project and commit to it in your routine? Schedule it in your calendar so there is always time set aside.

A MENTAL HEALTH GUIDE TO COPING WITH LOCKDOWN IN THE WINTER

 @BELIEVEPHQ



LIGHTING

On dark mornings wake up gradually with increasing light. Try out a SAD light or lumie bodyclock



STAY CONNECTED

Even though it might be difficult to see friends and family it is important that you stay connected to them on a regular basis



HELP OTHERS

Whether it is helping around the house or supporting your brother or sister, helping others can help provide you with positive emotions



LIMIT NEWS

Limit the amount of time you spend on social media and checking news



COPING STRATEGIES

Identify some positive strategies you can engage in that help you to deal with stress, worry or anxiety



CONNECT TO YOUR VALUES

Re connect with things that are important to you and try to engage with them on a regular basis



TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF

Plan time into your week where you can engage in activities that are relaxing. It is important to have time for yourself where you engage in some self care



PLAN YOUR WEEK

Organise your week and plan in activities that provide you with a sense of pleasure and achievement



STAY ACTIVE

Throughout the day try and be active. Take a break from your work and walk around. Regular exercise can also be great for reducing stress and boosting mood



POSITIVE HABITS

Write down a list of 5 - 10 positive mental health habits you can engage with on a regular basis to maintain your mental fitness



ASK FOR HELP

If you notice yourself struggling reach out to family, friends, your doctor or a local mental health charity for help



DIRECTORY OF RESOURCES

Alongside this guide there will be weekly mental health emails and appropriate responses to any changes made to working conditions / CV19 restrictions. There is also a non-teaching staff guide as well as a guidance booklet for parents and students. These are all available on the Covid 19 tile and will also be emailed to all staff.

Please do take time to read what guidance and advice has been sent home as it will help both your teaching and tutoring and also give you vital signposts if some of your students are struggling in any way.

Staff resources

- Mental health at work toolkit:
<https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/toolkit/lockdown-looking-out-for-ourselves-and-each-other/>
- Mind – CV19 resources: <https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/coronavirus-and-work/>
- 10 wellbeing strategies for teachers: <https://mailchi.mp/3fbc74d319ba/educators-well-being-during-the-covid-19-outbreak?fbclid=IwAR3AKCaZ1HT4zbYONVA4MA904V3sqCq5nZVx81QzYVwbIKm7ZjuTWgyNjJA>
- Sea Change podcast on mental health in educators during COVID-19:
<https://anchor.fm/ellen-mahoney>
- NHS wellbeing advice: <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/>
- The Education Support Partnership has a free confidential counselling service for teachers on [08000 562 561](tel:08000562561). Their support is not limited to work-related issues.
- Time to Change resources: <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/coronavirus>
- Managing sleep: <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sleep-guidelines-covid-19-isolation>
- The Samaritans offer free, confidential support 24 hours a day on [116 123](tel:116123).
- Training for Influence Series 3: <https://training4influence.co.uk/podcast/series-3/>
Emotional resilience, putting yourself first and avoiding burnout
- Self care for teachers:
<https://ukedchat.com/2021/01/04/permission-take-care-yourself/>
- How to teach and manage your own children
<https://www.tes.com/news/four-tips-help-you-teach-and-parent-simultaneously>

How to work effectively from home

- Mental Health at work – all results for working at home:
<https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/?s=home+working>
- Successful working from home:
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus>
- Wellbee – working from home tips:
https://f.hubspotusercontent10.net/hubfs/7792519/welbee_wfh_individuals.pdf?utm_campaign=Sprint%20Campaign%20Follow%20Up&utm_medium=email&hsmi=105797585&hsenc=p2ANqtz--fAlLRYyb0BFeS0BkPfcrg-vqT-2UFSXju8vOh-q6qc3UuvQA2aWgNJO-SsKjVXF6R9FFodZFNp_Flno-jA2zRjGrarQkl5mCR10UNI7XgcMLb38&utm_content=105797585&utm_source=hs_email
- Working from home – your wellbeing action plan:
<https://www.cwmt.org.uk/working-from-home>
- The Guild- Remote working resources advice

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IVPRguoqlkUiD0d4Ut3MPhXK2-SyDvsUfQz-
uiAvnNk/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IVPRguoqlkUiD0d4Ut3MPhXK2-SyDvsUfQz-
uiAvnNk/edit)

- Tips to avoid work from home burnout
<https://hbr.org/2020/04/3-tips-to-avoid-wfh-burnout>
- Educational resources and general advice:
<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/coronavirus/resources/>
- Tips for working at home – video on working at home with children:
[https://www.shponline.co.uk/lone-working/home-
working/?elq_mid=3455&elq_cid=1651564&elqTrackId=BF2BD984DFEE12A01A8756D1E780
2BED&elq=f66a9451bbba45bcaa910a0872cebb73&elqaid=3455&elqat=1&elqCampaignId=2
145&mc_cid=b9bfaeac45&mc_eid=0cdf62e2f8](https://www.shponline.co.uk/lone-working/home-
working/?elq_mid=3455&elq_cid=1651564&elqTrackId=BF2BD984DFEE12A01A8756D1E780
2BED&elq=f66a9451bbba45bcaa910a0872cebb73&elqaid=3455&elqat=1&elqCampaignId=2
145&mc_cid=b9bfaeac45&mc_eid=0cdf62e2f8)

Student resources

General College contact information for students:

Counselling team: counsellor@wellingtoncollege.org.uk

Health Centre: HealthCentre@wellingtoncollege.org.uk
(01344 444111)

For concerns over academic work or general pastoral issues, please contact your HM in the first instance who will be able to help or signpost you in the right direction.

Main pastoral contact for any general questions or higher level pastoral concerns – David Walker
daw@wellingtoncollege.org.uk

Main academic contact for higher level academic concerns – Matt Oakman
mjo@wellingtoncollege.org.uk

Secondary pastoral contact for general questions or concerns or to report anything which has made your child feel unsafe or if you have concerns about the safety of another pupil at the College – Delyth Lynch
dal@wellingtoncollege.org.uk

Disciplinary and behavioural concerns and the general day to day running of the College – Cress Henderson
cjeh@wellingtoncollege.org.uk

Whisper online reporting system for students called Whisper. This has been highlighted to students and parents in their information booklets, so do please familiarise yourself with this new way of reporting as well.

Supporting young people during COVID-19

Helping teenagers cope with lockdown

<https://parentinfo.org/article/quaranteened-helping-teenagers-cope-with-lockdown>

What is it like being a teenager in lockdown? BBC video

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/video_and_audio/headlines/52257781/coronavirus-what-s-it-like-being-a-teenager-during-lockdown

Childline – 10 tips to cope with lockdown

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/#lockdown>

Julia Samuels – teenagers and families in lockdown – how to survive podcast

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=209158977017215>

How to celebrate special occasions during lockdown

<https://parentinfo.org/article/how-to-celebrate-special-occasions-during-lockdown>

Mental health advice – general and young people

How to look after your family's mental health when you are stuck indoors

<https://parentinfo.org/article/how-to-look-after-your-family-s-mental-health-when-you-re-stuck-indoors>

Supporting your child's health and wellbeing during COVID-19

<https://parentinfo.org/articles/health-and-wellbeing/all>

Coronavirus: supporting yourself and your children during this difficult time

https://www.caba.org.uk/help-and-guides?field_subject_tid=2915&sort_by=created&sort_order=DESC

How to stop anxiety spiralling out of control:

https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-how-to-stop-the-anxiety-spiralling-out-of-control-133166?mc_cid=f3fe177ded&mc_eid=0cdf62e2f8

Emerging Minds advice for parents

https://emergingminds.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID19_advice-for-parents-and-carers_20.3_.pdf

Tips for starting difficult conversations about coronavirus with children

<https://parentinfo.org/article/three-tips-for-starting-a-difficult-conversation-with-your-child>

Youngminds – looking after yourself during coronavirus

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/looking-after-yourself/coronavirus-and-mental-health/>

Action for Happiness – how to keep mentally healthy during uncertain times

<https://www.actionforhappiness.org/news/how-to-keep-mentally-healthy-during-uncertain-times>

Staying mentally well during COVID-19 – an online 9 module course:

<https://elearning.creativeeducation.co.uk/courses/covid19-staying-mentally-well/>

Managing fear and anxiety around coronavirus

<https://bunny.drcatherinesykes.com/2020/03/health-anxiety-links-covid19.pdf>

Redwhale – emotional and psychological survival guide

[https://www.gp-update.co.uk/SM4/Mutable/Uploads/pdf_file/PEARL-Emotional-and-Psychological-wellbeing\[2\]-EDITED.pdf](https://www.gp-update.co.uk/SM4/Mutable/Uploads/pdf_file/PEARL-Emotional-and-Psychological-wellbeing[2]-EDITED.pdf)

NSPCC tips – whole range of advice

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/coronavirus-advice-support-children-families-parents/?utm_source=Adestra&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Coronavirus%20%28COVID-19%29%20advice%20and%20support%20for%20parents%20and%20carers&utm_campaign=CASPAR-2020-04-06

Supporting mental health and wellbeing – Government guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Anxiety UK – How to help with “Coronxiety” including many useful webinars

<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/coronxiety-support-resources/>

Mental Health First Aid England – really good range of resources

https://mhfaengland.org/remote-working-resources/everyone/#helpful-links?_cldee=ZGFsQHdlbGxpbmd0b25jb2xsZWdlMm9yZy51aw%3d%3d&recipientid=contact-0188ac8d0223e911a95e000d3ab5a84e-cfe6fd45682849dbe7dfc99e9db548e&esid=72773b18-ef77-ea11-a811-000d3ab82d69

A guide to living with anxiety and worry during global uncertainty

https://www.dropbox.com/s/7wpk1sqnns7lktu/guide_to_living_with_worry_and_anxiety_amidst_global_uncertainty_en-gb%20%281%29.pdf?dl=0&mc_cid=b9bfaeac45&mc_eid=0cdf62e2f8

Child in Mind podcasts helping parents understand and manage child and family mental health issues

https://www.annafreud.org/childinmind/?mc_cid=b9bfaeac45&mc_eid=0cdf62e2f8

Delyth Lynch and Cress Henderson

January 2021