

DEALING WITH MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING IN COVID-19 TIMES

CONNECT
TALK & LISTEN,
BE THERE,
FEEL CONNECTED

BE ACTIVE
DO WHAT YOU CAN,
ENJOY WHAT YOU DO,
MOVE YOUR MOOD

TAKE NOTICE
REMEMBER
THE SIMPLE
THINGS THAT
GIVE YOU JOY

KEEP LEARNING
EMBRACE NEW
EXPERIENCES,
SEE OPPORTUNITIES,
SURPRISE YOURSELF

Give
Your time,
your words,
your presence

Rotary
District 9675

Rotary
CONNECTS
THE WORLD

Cheryl Deguara

*District Wellbeing Officer
Mental Health First Aid Facilitator*

Email: cdd@maxi.net.au **Mobile:** 0419 465 962

WORKING FROM HOME

In these times of the Coronavirus and COVID-19, working from home is becoming more common and there are advantages, and some real challenges to working from home.

ESTABLISH YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Although it may not be possible to have a home office, it is important to set up a dedicated space to work and, that the set-up is ergonomically sound. Working from the couch or bed can negatively impact your body physically.

ESTABLISH BOUNDARIES

Establishing boundaries is important across all areas of life and working from home is no different. If others are home as well, be clear with them that you are working and cannot be disturbed. This can be tricky with school closures as children don't always understand this. If possible consider working reduced hours and spend time engaging meaningfully with your kids. Unusual times call for unusual measures, calling on Netflix to 'babysit' is okay if this works for you and your family. Your furkids may be even trickier as they are less engaged by TV. You may need to shut them out of the room if they insist on helping you type.

Establish boundaries with yourself as well. Shower, dress and brush your teeth every day before sitting down to your workspace. It is also important to take regular breaks to stretch, move around and eat. Move away from your work space for meals.

ENGAGING WITH YOUR TEAM MATES

Set up times to meet with your teammates regularly. Using video conferencing software is a great way to do this. With many of these programs you can share screens and it can almost seem like you are in the same room. A daily check-in is a great way to stay connected and help motivate everyone to stay on task.

Your daily contact should not be all business, if you were in the office you would likely check in with your colleagues about their weekend or the movie they saw last night, so continue to do this. Some ways to do this include setting up lunch dates using video conferencing (this is not a working lunch but a social lunch), share photos of your workspace/pets/garden/kids.

ENCOURAGE AND PRACTICE SELF-CARE

Now more than ever it is important to look after yourself. Eat healthy snacks/meals, drink plenty of water, get enough sleep and practice good sleep hygiene, exercise, meditate, be mindful, be kind. Speak up if you need support or if you think someone else might need support. If you are struggling and need help, ask for it.



STAYING MOTIVATED AND FOCUSED

For some of us, this can be the most challenging part of working from home. Here are a few ideas:

- Use noise-cancelling headphones to block out background noises (people, animals, neighbour's renovations).
- Play 'background' music, eg classical or 'elevator' music.
- Set a timer for a period of time and work solidly for that time, then take a 5-minute break, get a cuppa. Then set the timer again.

The Pomodoro technique involves cycles of working for 25 minutes and taking a 5-minute break (a Pomodoro) then after 4 Pomodoros taking a 15-20 minute break. During the longer breaks take a walk (if you are not self-isolating) or do some home-based exercise, make yourself a healthy snack.

24/7 MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Beyond Blue (Anyone feeling anxious or depressed)
www.beyondblue.org.au 1300 22 4636

MensLine Australia (Men with emotional concerns)
mensline.org.au 1300 78 9978

Kids Helpline (Counselling for young people aged 5-25)
kidshelpline.com.au 1300 55 1800

Open Arms (Veterans and families counselling)
openarms.gov.au 1800 01 1046

Lifeline (Anyone having a personal crisis)
lifeline.org.au 13 11 14