Brooke Weston Trust

Last Updated: 17/03/2020

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Supporting your Mental Health during the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic

Coronavirus is causing a lot of uncertainty, and news about the pandemic can feel relentless. This can take its toll on people's mental health, particularly those already living with conditions like anxiety or OCD. We have included information below from the World Health Organisation on how you can protect your mental health and psychological well-being, and we would like to remind you of some of the resources available to you.

Avoid watching, reading or listening to news that causes you to feel anxious or distressed. Seek information mainly to take practical steps to prepare your plans and protected yourself and loved ones

Seek information updates at specific times during the day, one or twice. The sudden and near-constant stream of news reports about an outbreak can be overwhelming and can cause anyone to feel worried

Get the facts. Gather information at regular intervals from the World Health Organisation, Public Health England or the NHS, in order to help you distinguish facts from fiction

Find opportunities to amplify the voices or positive stories of people who have experienced the new coronavirus (COVID-19) and have recovered or who have supported a loved one through recovery

Maintain familiar routines in your daily life as much as possible, especially if you have children and are confined to home

Stay connected and maintain your social networks. If health authorities have recommended limiting your physical social contact to contain the outbreak, you can stay connected via e-mail, social media, video conference and telephone

Wash your hands - but not excessively. Charity OCD Action says the issue to look out for is the function - for example, is the washing being carried out for the recommended amount of time to reduce the risk of spreading of the virus - or is it being done ritualistically in a specific order to feel "just right"?

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Sources of support for employees

https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus - World Health Organisation for up to date and factual information on the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england - Public Health England for up to date and factual information on the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and how public health in England are responding to this

https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/ - Education Support, the charity who are dedicated to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of education staff in schools. You can call their free confidential helpline on 08000 562 561 if you are feeling overwhelmed, stressed, anxious or depressed

https://ocdaction.org.uk/ - The UKs largest charity focusing on Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). They provide support and information to anybody affected by OCD and be contacted by phone on 0845 390 6263 or via email on support@ocdaction.org.uk

https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/ - Mind is the leading mental health charity. This link will take you to their guidance on how to cope with feelings of anxiety if you are worried about coronavirus.