

5 TIPS FOR SUPPORTING EACH OTHER'S WELLBEING DURING LOCKDOWN



1. Be flexible and compassionate

These are unique and extraordinary times which will be challenging for all of us in different ways. Examples such as having children who would ordinarily be at school or elderly relatives who require assistance will add to the stresses and strains of everyday life. Encouraging virtual café's, talking with family, friends, others within your scouting family, online scout activities to name but a few.

2. Encourage best practice for anyone working from home or home learning

Not everyone will be used to being at home whether furloughed, remote working and especially not home learning. Simple things like properly setting up a workspace that is separate from 'home' space, taking regular screen breaks and learning breaks, and clearing away at the end of the day can help people switch off their 'work and learning mode'. Exercise, eating well, and practicing self-care can also have a big impact on mental and physical wellbeing.

3. Connect authentically

Remember that with most of us working remotely being furloughed from work or home learning, there is less room to bump into each other, chat organically, or discuss concerns we might have. At MHFA England they have started collaborative music playlists, virtual yoga sessions, and a company radio station to get to know each other better and maintain our culture of support and collaboration. Locally there are virtual pub quizzes, gym sessions and music sessions going on around Gloucestershire.

4. Make time for supportive conversations

As a Mental Health First Aider we need to think about ways to adapt giving support for people who may be struggling with their mental health in a remote setting. Start by applying the same principles of having a supportive conversation as you would in person – set enough time aside, minimise distractions around you (you may need to move to another room), and give the person your full focus by turning off your notifications and other devices. Whether you're a Mental Health First Aider or just someone who wants to ensure they are supporting colleagues effectively during this period, anyone struggling will be thankful for that contact with the outside world with a friendly face/voice.

5. Don't pour from an empty cup

When supporting any colleague's wellbeing it's important to remember to prioritise your own wellbeing. This will give you the best possible chance of providing effective support. Consider the support measures you have around you, whether that's a peer support network, your line manager in Scouting or Mental Health First Aiders and encourage others to do the same.