Coronavirus:
How to protect your mental health

Coronavirus has plunged the world into uncertainty and the constant news about the pandemic can feel relentless. All of this is taking its toll on people's mental health, particularly those already living with conditions like anxiety and OCD.

So how can we protect our mental health?

• Limit the amount of time you spend reading or watching things which aren't making you feel better.

• There is a lot of misinformation swirling around – stay informed by sticking to trusted sources of information such as government and NHS websites.

• Mute key words which might be triggering on Twitter and unfollow or mute accounts. Mute WhatsApp groups and hide Facebook posts and feeds if you find them too overwhelming

• Wash your hands – but not excessively

• For people with OCD and some types of anxiety, being constantly told to wash your hands can be especially difficult to hear.

• 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"?

• Stay connected with people

• Increasing numbers will join those already in self-isolation so now might be a good time to make sure you have the right phone numbers and email addresses of the people you care about.

• Avoid burnout

• With weeks and months of the coronavirus pandemic ahead, it is important to have down time. Mind recommends continuing to access nature and sunlight wherever possible. Do exercise, eat well and stay hydrated. Distract yourself with the things you enjoy

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