

Living in Lockdown



Tips for sharing a house in 'Lockdown' whether you are living with family, housemates or a partner.

- **Establish a sleep routine.** It is very tempting to throw your usual routine out of the window at the moment, but sticking to the same sort of schedule is actually one of the most important things you can do to look after your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. In particular a good night-time routine is important, so avoiding screens or media an hour before bed will help a lot. If you are well rested, and energised it will impact positively on the whole house.
- **Make time to talk.** Maybe agree a 'family chat' once a week to discuss any issues, routines or how things are working out for you all, being mindful to respect everyone's opinions and ideas. If you are all involved in making decisions it is more likely that things will work out. Don't avoid talking about what is happening in regard to coronavirus - although it's easy to become overwhelmed with the sheer amount of information it is still useful to be able to chat about the things you see and hear.
- **Work together.** Some members of the family may still be working or may be working from home so you may all have different timetables. Although it is good to have a routine, acknowledge the need for some flexibility. Perhaps agree to go for a walk or sit down for at least one meal together to chat about your day.
- **Respect each other's space.** If someone is in their bedroom with the door shut it may mean they just want a bit of time on their own, or even just a bit of space from everyone. Agree that you will all knock before entering someone's space.
- **Designate areas of the house for specific things.** If you or family member needs to work from home agree where that will be. It may not be the best idea to work from the sofa for example as this is where important 'down time' should take place. Sticking to designated areas will make it easier for everyone to respect that space and the function.

- **Practice stress management techniques.** Identify the way that works best for you to combat feelings of stress; this could be exercise, mindfulness or the ABC approach,
Accept how you feel
Breathe deeply in through your nose and out through your mouth (when you do something to help your body to relax, it lowers stress levels)
Choose how you are going to respond, rather than react. Take 'Time Out' and talk to your family when you're feeling calm.
- **Have some fun.** Take time to have fun or relax with others for example over a board game, watching a movie together, setting up a restaurant in your kitchen, or linking in with other families to do a virtual quiz.
- **Be kind.** Everyone is going through this and at some point everyone in your family is going to have a moment or feel the strain of the lockdown. Just remember to be kind, be polite and show gratitude towards each other.
- **Acknowledge things are different.** Don't assume you know how anyone else is feeling. This situation is something we have never experienced before, and it will at times test relations. Try to put big arguments on hold and make sure you are available to listen to how someone may be feeling.

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