

Life after lockdown

Being in lockdown has been a challenging experience for many of us. As movements are now being made towards easing restrictions, and people are starting to talk about what things might look like, it is normal to be feeling worried about life after lockdown.

You may be worried about using public transport, seeing people from other households, or going back into work, for example. If you're feeling this way, here are some things that might help:

Take things one step at a time

If you are feeling anxious or are finding the thought of going back to 'normal' life overwhelming, it can be a common response to try to avoid the situations altogether. This can actually be counterproductive, and can heighten your feelings of fear or worry.

To help, try not to go for a big change straight away. Instead, you could do it in small steps to ease yourself back in to the swing of things. If you do find yourself feeling anxious, you could make time for calming breathing techniques, mindfulness or meditation before you leave the house.

Stay connected

One of the most important things you can do for your mental health and wellbeing is to keep connected to those around you. Try not to bottle things up if you're feeling worried; make sure you are talking honestly and openly about how you are feeling. Whether we are in the middle of a crisis or emerging from one, we cope better together.

Make plans to do things you enjoy

Use this opportunity to think about the things that you can start doing again once lockdown is lifted. Make plans to do the things that you love and enjoy. It might help you to make a list of the things you want to do, the places you want to visit and the people you want to see.

Bring back your old routines

Many of us are now used to a new way of life, whether that's working from home or spending more time indoors than we used to. Establishing your old routine and way

of life, such as heading to bed or waking up earlier, as soon as you can will help ease you back into things.

Think about what's important

Being in lockdown has led to a slower pace of life, meaning many of us feel less pressure to act a certain way, such as feeling like we have to attend social gatherings. Use this time to think about what's truly important to you, rather than what you think you should do.

Things take time

Don't forget that we have been living in unprecedented times and the way we used to live our lives has been completely turned upside down. Be kind to yourself as lockdown restrictions begin to lift, and remember that it will take time for things to return to the 'new normal'.

It's OK if you take longer to adjust than others. Everyone responds to situations differently and no one approach is better than the other.