



Together  
we will end  
homelessness

# Looking After Your Health

In this booklet you'll find some advice and suggestions to help you through this unsettled period due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19). We are all experiencing long periods of isolation, and it is important to look after our mental health and physical health.

There are contact numbers at the end of the booklet that you may find helpful and you can contact your lead worker at Crisis as needed.

**Coronavirus (COVID-19)** is a new illness that can affect your lungs and breathing. **It can be fatal if you have an underlying health condition or weakened immune system.** This might include heart disease, asthma, high blood pressure, COPD or diabetes.

**STAY INSIDE FOR 14 DAYS IF YOU:**



**1. Have a high temperature**  
(you feel hot to touch on your chest/back)



**2. You are repeatedly coughing and/or**

**3. You have recently had close contact with someone who has these symptoms.**



**How to avoid catching or spreading coronavirus:**

**Do:**



• **wash your hands with soap** and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds



- **always wash your hands** with soap when you get home and before you eat ✓
- use **hand sanitiser gel** if soap/water is not available
- **cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you **cough or sneeze**
- **put used tissues in the bin immediately** and wash your hands afterwards ✓
- **avoid close contact with people who are unwell** ✓
- **avoid travelling on public transport** ✓

- Stay inside where possible, only go out for essential journeys such as to buy food or go to a pharmacy, and **avoid groups of people** ✓

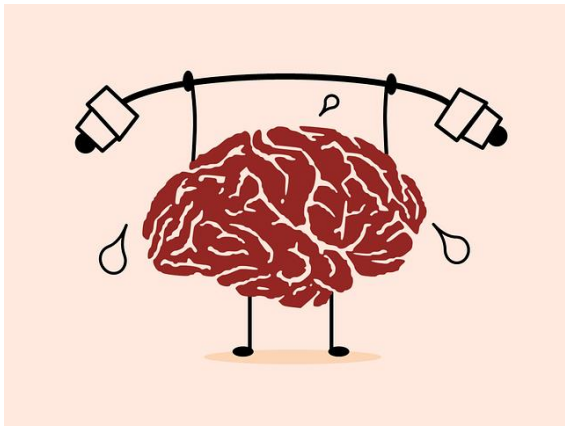
**Don't:** ✗

- **Touch your eyes, nose, mouth** if your hands are not clean ✗
- **Have visitors** to where you are staying ✗
- **Visit elderly or vulnerable people** if you feel unwell ✗
- **Pick up cigarette butts from the floor or ash trays** ✗
- **Share joints, pipes, needles, spoons, or other substance use equipment.** ✗

**If you have symptoms you're unable to manage yourself, call 111** for free medical advice, or go to <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19> for online support

**If you have difficulty breathing – call 999**

# Looking after your mental health while you have to stay inside



The government is now telling us to stay inside unless it is essential to go outside. This will mean that we will be spending a lot of time inside and many of our regular social activities will no longer be available to us.

Create a new daily routine that prioritises looking after yourself. You could try reading more or watching movies, having an exercise routine, trying new relaxation techniques, or finding new knowledge on the internet. There are some suggestions for activities in this booklet.

**Make sure your wider health needs are being looked after such as having enough prescription medicines available to you, speak to your lead worker if you need support with this.**



**Try to avoid unreliable information about the coronavirus and only check reputable sources of information, for example from [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) or [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)**

## Try to stay connected

Try and keep in touch with your social network (including your lead worker at Crisis) by telephone, email or social media, or contact a helpline for emotional support, there are contact numbers in this booklet. However, keep an eye on how much time you may be spending on social media, this could lead to additional anxiety.

### **Try to anticipate distress**

It is OK to feel vulnerable and overwhelmed as we read news about coronavirus, especially if you have experienced trauma or a mental health problem now or in the past, or if you have a long-term physical health condition that makes you more vulnerable to the effects of the coronavirus.

It's important to acknowledge these feelings and remind each other to look after our physical and mental health. We should also be aware of and avoid where possible increasing habits that may not be helpful in the long term, like smoking and drinking.

### **Activities to Try**

#### **Get out and about for a daily walk**

At present, we are still able to go out once a day for exercise provided we keep at least 2 metres away from others. Try noticing the things around you whilst walking. What sounds can you hear? What can you see? Do you see plants/flowers/trees? Do you see any wildlife? What features do the buildings have?

#### **Journaling**

Keeping a journal can help you to focus and be in the present. You could journal about your day in general, what you have noticed around you, positive points about you/your day, your achievements, your values, your hopes and dreams, you can journal about whatever you like but try to keep it positive.

## What are you grateful for?

Gratitude allows us to notice the many assets we have and distracts us from the many difficulties that we face.

Use the space below to write down things that you are grateful for. It could be that you're grateful that you have support, grateful that you have goals to work towards, grateful that you have food, anything and everything that you are grateful for.



## Practice some mindful breathing

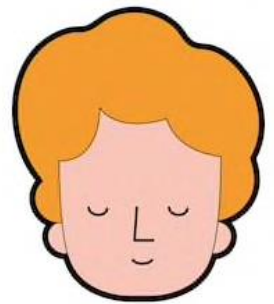
### Step 1: **Relax your body** with 3 deep breaths

Sit on a chair in an upright position with your hands on your knees and your eyes closed. **Breath 1.** Breathe deeply and exhale slowly. As you breathe in deeply notice the air rushing in through your nose. As you breathe out, relax your shoulders, chest and arms. **Breath 2.** Breathe in deeply and notice your chest expanding and shoulders rising. As you breathe out relax your shoulders, chest and arms. **Breath 3.** Breathe in deeply and notice your tummy swelling. As you breathe out relax your shoulders, chest and arms. Notice how calm and relaxed you feel.



### Step 2. **Control your breathing and your thoughts**

Breathe normally and gently through your nose if possible. Notice the air flowing in and out. Now notice that the air in is cooler and the air out is warmer. Place a count at the front of each breath. Count 1 and breathe in and out. Count 2 and breath in and out. Carry on up to 10. You will have thoughts popping up in your head. Notice them and bring your attention back to your breathing. Move your attention to your chest and shoulders swelling and going down for 10 breaths. Then move your attention to your tummy for 10 breaths. Whenever you notice a thought, just bring your attention back to your body and the physical sensations of breathing. Try and notice how calm you feel. As you practise this, you will be increasingly in control of your thoughts. If you feel anxious about anything and want to give yourself a break, you can do this at any time.



### Step 3. **Focus on what you are doing NOW**

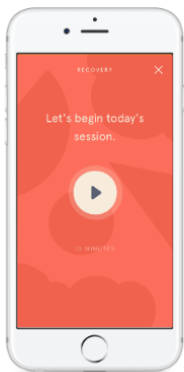
When you are noticing your breathing, you are focussing on your body and the physical sensations. You can only concentrate on one thing at a time so you learn to eventually ignore thoughts that pop into your head. Similarly, you can focus on your feet and the sensations you feel in them as you put pressure on the floor. In fact when you concentrate and engage with your full attention on anything, time passes quickly without you noticing and thoughts of other things seem to disappear for a time. This is called FLOW and it happens when you are reading a book, completing a jigsaw, drawing a diagram, doing a crossword, etc. Find things to do that will engage your attention fully and that you will enjoy.

## Headspace mindfulness app

If you have a smartphone or access to a computer you can use the Headspace mindfulness site. Crisis has a licence you can use to access it for free;



### A personal, pocket-sized meditation guide



#### On-the-go App

- 19 million downloads and counting
- Highest rated, first ever meditation app on the market
- Access to 650+ hours of content



#### Your Journey, Your Headspace

- Clear guidance to teach you key skills
- Hundreds of themed, targeted sessions
- Bite-sized meditations for busy schedules

#### Improving Health & Happiness

- Mindful moments make for a more mindful you
- Build a habit for life
- Spread mindfulness to the world around you

To sign up for your free subscription, visit <https://work.headspace.com/crisis/join>.

You will need an email address to subscribe to this app/website.

You'll need to complete Take10 of the programme (Level 1) before moving on to the wider library. However, you can still access the single sessions from the Singles Collection as well as the Kids Content without having to complete Take10.

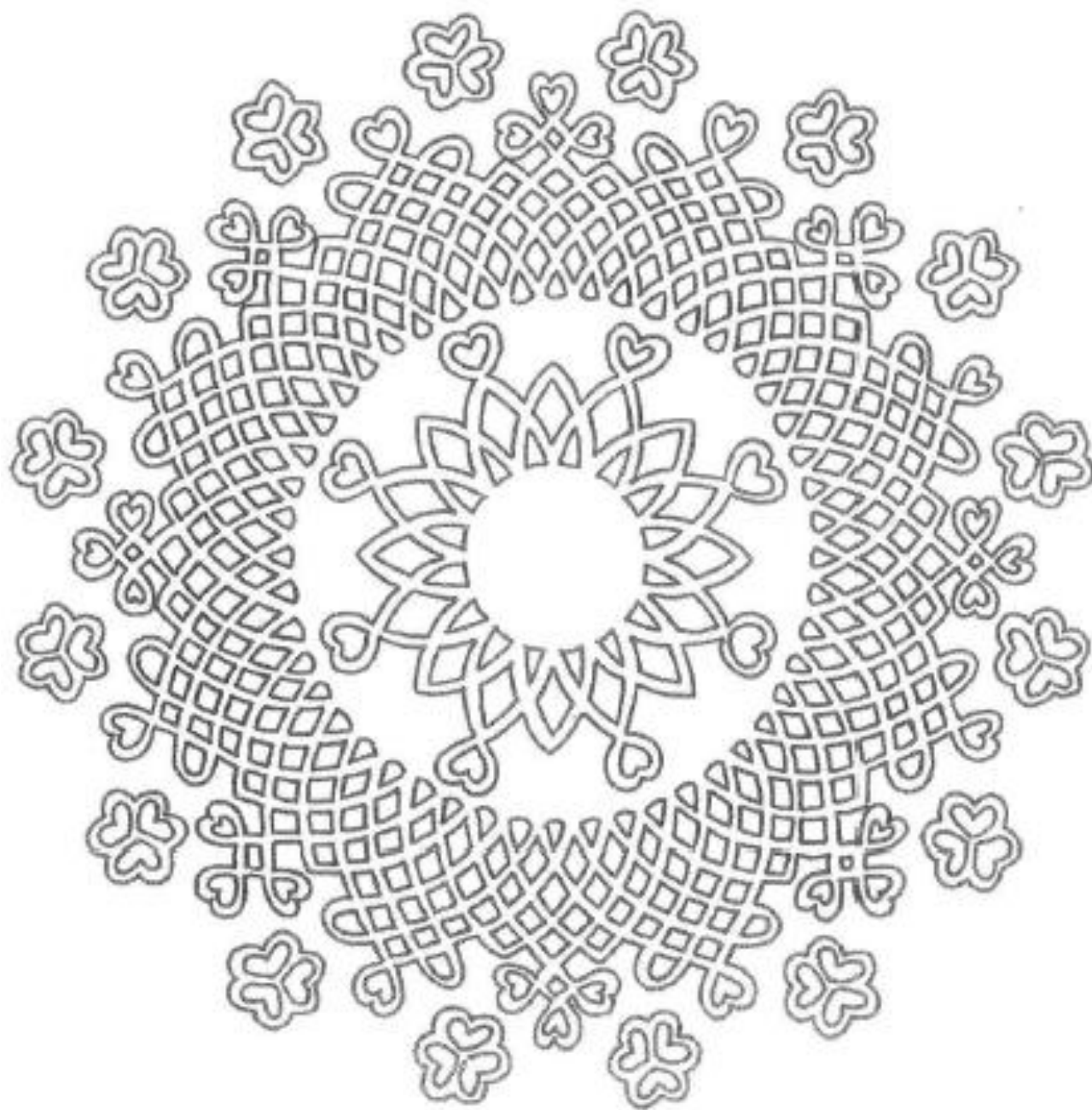
If you have any questions about the app, get in touch at [help@headspace.com](mailto:help@headspace.com) or ask your lead worker for help.



## Mindful Colouring

Have a go at some colouring on the next pages. Use this time to switch off and just relax into the patterns and the colours.





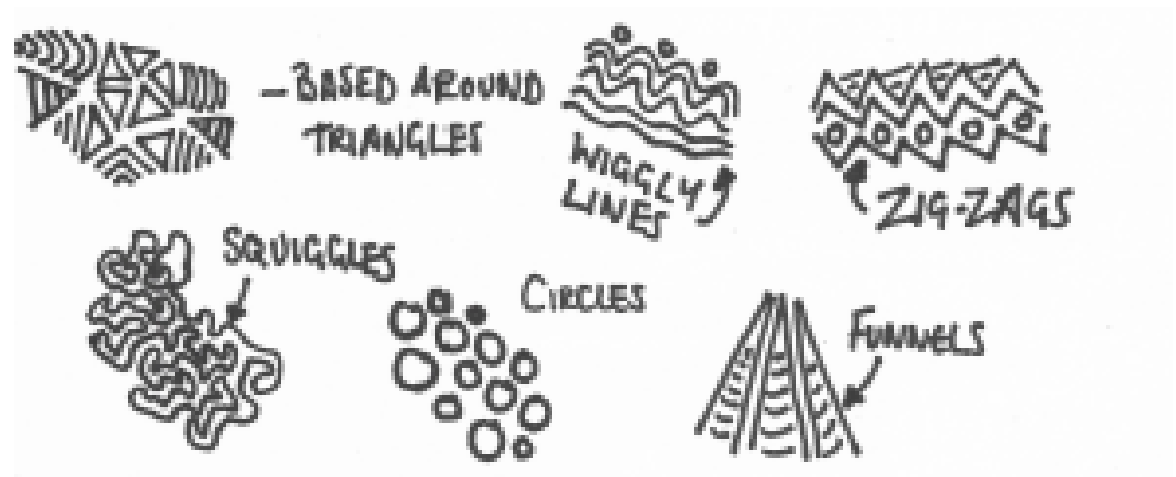


## Hev's Home Art Hacks

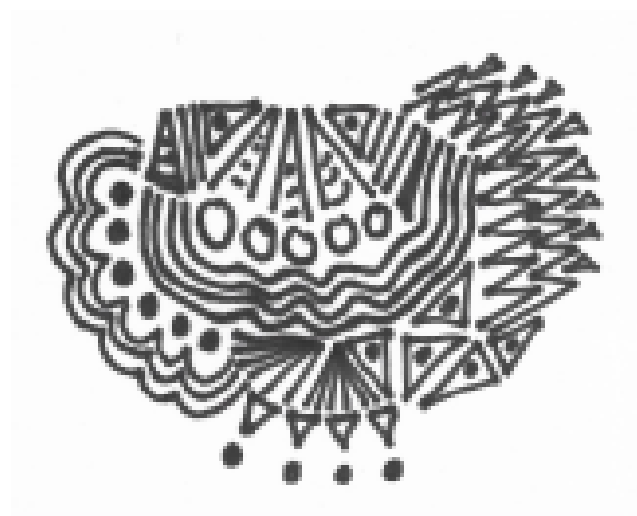
### How To Doodle 101

- Any type of pen or pencil with do to doodle with.
- Any paper can be used- even the corner of a newspaper.
- Good for relaxing, for focussing your attention and looks good too.

Here are some shapes to start you off:



See how many different shapes you can come up with and how you can fit them together without them touching each other.





A thinner pen (like a biro) will mean you can draw your lines closer together, but you can also shade with a biro pen.



Use different colours to make different parts stand out, or colour in areas.

Draw areas with a pencil and fill them in with doodles. You could make a picture with the pencil and fill it with doodle shapes.

**Online tutorial;** <https://youtu.be/U8Aq6422MZE>

# Creative Writing

**Quick Plot Generator examples – Create a plot/story using these sentences as a starting point.**

A woman in her late twenties, who is very rebellious.

A man in his early thirties, who can be quite generous.

The story begins in a remote cottage.

A sudden storm blows up.

It's a story about freedom.

A man in his early forties, who is very decisive.

A man in his eighties, who can be quite stubborn.

The story begins in a church.

Someone telling the truth isn't believed.

It's a story about justice.

Your character is determined to get to the truth

## Physical Exercise

There are lots of online videos and tutorials for people to follow at home if you want to keep fit whilst staying at home – these can be done in small spaces with no equipment.

Sport England have a link with lots of online videos and resources -

[https://www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout#get\\_active\\_at\\_home](https://www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout#get_active_at_home)

# Contacts

If you require urgent support, you might find the following contacts useful;

**In an emergency** call 999

**NHS Helpline** (medical advice) 111 (free)

**SLAM** (mental health crisis line) **0800 731 2864**

**Samaritans** (Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair) 116 123 (free) or email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

**Shout** (free text service for anyone in mental health crisis) Text Shout to 85258

**Mind Infoline** (confidential mental health information, 9am-6pm Monday to Friday) 0300 123 3393 or text 86463

<https://www.prevent-suicide.org.uk/find-help-now/stay-alive-app/> - information about an application that can be downloaded to support people who are at risk of suicide and anyone supporting people at risk of suicide.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/#collapse793b6> – information from MIND about how to manage wellbeing during this time.

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/> - website about wellbeing in general, and specific tips related to coronavirus.

We hope you have found these hints and tips useful, if you want more information about anything in this booklet then please speak to your lead worker.