

Be Well Tips

School Closure or Self-isolation: Advice for Teenage Students

There is increasing talk of schools closing due to coronavirus. For some, this has already happened, as has the need to self-isolate. This might make you feel worried, uncertain, nervous – or you might be excited about the possibility of not being at school. All these emotions are totally natural.

Usually, there is a degree of certainty in our lives – we know what time school starts, what will happen if we don't complete our homework, when we will see our friends, who our next football match is against etc. Coronavirus has taken away the predictability and normality of daily life. This is temporary, but you will be surrounded by adults who may naturally be worried about the impact of the virus.

While we don't know the exact measures that Governments will take in the coming weeks, we can use this situation to help us become more resilient. If your school does close or you need to self-isolate, keep the following tips in mind to help you get the most out of a difficult experience.

1. Time: You will have more time – you are not commuting to school, you are not having to go to form period, travel between lessons etc – this could give you big chunks of uninterrupted time.

- Be the master of your time – time is precious. You can either maximise your time or waste it. To get the most out of it, write a list every night of the things you need to and want to achieve the next day – as well as the fun things you want to do. Timetables are very effective!
- *The biggest challenge and threat to your time is your phone/laptop.* Be its master, not its servant. It has the capacity to eat up every waking hour!

2. Pace: Life will inevitably slow down in these changed circumstances.

- Enjoy the slower pace of life. Try to be 'in the moment' and appreciate the small things rather than thinking too far ahead about things that are out of our control.
- Take time to include things typically people say they are too busy to do – exercise, mindfulness, sleep. Make sure that you actively and consciously include the things that we know are beneficial to our physical and mental health.

3. Opportunity: The changed circumstances mean we can do things differently in a positive way.

- This is a unique chance to learn beyond the curriculum – explore topics that interest you, start learning a new language, read widely, listen to different music, learn about inspirational people.
- Think about how this opportunity can help you support others less fortunate in the local community – this might be walking an elderly person's dog, helping with their shopping etc. Giving for the benefit of others is a key part of what makes us human.

4. Trustworthy information:

- It is easy to lose sight of the facts and context in all the coverage of coronavirus across the news and social media sites. Use reputable sources of information to check for updates, such as national news channels and government websites.

Finally, remember that there is no right way to feel but it's good to talk if you have any concerns.

You can still speak to your teacher online if you are worried about anything, in the same way that you might do at school.

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