



tips to get back into life during COVID-19

for family and friends

Life has changed for all of us due to COVID-19 restrictions. Some people have enjoyed these changes, others have found it challenging and many of us will have experienced a mixture of these things.

Your household might have had to transition to online school, study and working from home without much warning, and your contact with close friends and other social groups may have changed. Members of the household might have had their work hours reduced or cut altogether, adding huge financial pressure on rent or bills. Spending more time at home may have put additional pressure on already strained family or household relationships, making it challenging for you to find space to look after your wellbeing.



Common responses

As a result of COVID-19 challenges you, your family or household members might find yourselves:

- struggling to find motivation or keep a routine
- not keeping up with day to day chores
- being less interested in things usually enjoy
- sleeping a lot more or less
- increasing the use of alcohol and other drugs
- struggling to exercise
- making comparisons with others and feeling inadequate
- feeling worried about the future.

People manage their feelings differently and isolation might have meant that you or the people close to you have had to find new ways to look after themselves.

Some might have taken more breaks, stayed in bed or relaxed more often. Others may have tried to change their expectations and be kinder to themselves. Others might have connected with others online, or played online challenges and games. Some may have avoided difficult conversations or activities.



Our 7 tips for a healthy headspace can help build new ways of coping during these unusual times



Preparing for change

Many people are starting to think about how life will change when restrictions ease.

While some people are looking forward to this, it doesn't mean the next few weeks or months will be smooth sailing for everyone.

People in your household might be:

- thinking that returning to life before COVID-19 seems like a huge task
 - finding things that used to be easy becoming difficult, worrying or scary
 - finding it hard to get going
 - concerned about catching the virus
 - realising they want to make changes to the way they live their lives
 - wondering if their friendships will be the same
 - thinking about how to re-establish intimate relationships
 - worrying about their alcohol and other drugs use.
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So what can you do?

Prepare yourself by thinking about how your lives have changed, and what you want your lives to look like.

You might find that some things are easier to return to than others. This will be different for everyone, and that's OK.

Taking some time to come together to talk about how you've felt during the restrictions, and what your household might look like when things go back to normal may help to ease some of those concerns.

It can be tricky to know where to begin.

Here are a few ideas to help your household get started:

- think about the fun things you all would like to do once restrictions ease
- write out a plan to help motivate yourselves
- take it slow. Gradually try new things. You don't need to do everything straight away
- start with something that seems easier, before moving to difficult things
- if members are worried about catching the virus, remember to practise hand hygiene and physical distancing
- be mindful of the use of alcohol and other drugs
- keep in mind that things may change and restrictions could start again

The easing of restrictions might be an exciting, fun, and enjoyable time for many. For others, it might be scary, uncertain or overwhelming. Remember that how you're seeing someone else respond might not actually be what they're feeling.

Take time to have conversations with your family or household and consider using side-by-side communication and "I statements" to help everyone feel more comfortable. For more tips on communication, check out the headspace *Responding to Family Conflict*.

It's normal to feel anything and everything, so remember to be kind to yourself and to the people in your household. Consider that people may be affected, and may respond in very different ways.

Where do I go for help?

If you or a young person needs support, the following services could be of assistance.

headspace

headspace: visit [headspace.org.au](https://www.headspace.org.au) to find your nearest centre or call eheadspace on 1800 650 890

If you ever feel unable to cope because of overwhelming or intense emotions, or if you or someone you know has any thoughts of harming themselves, then ask for help immediately.

National 24/7 crisis services

If you are in an emergency situation or need immediate assistance, contact mental health services or emergency services on 000.

- **Lifeline:** 13 11 14 or [lifeline.org.au](https://www.lifeline.org.au)
- **Suicide Call Back Service:** 1300 659 467 or [suicidecallbackservice.org.au](https://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)
- **Beyond Blue:** 1300 224 636 or [beyondblue.org.au](https://www.beyondblue.org.au)

Additional youth services

- **Kids Helpline:** 1800 55 1800 or [kidshelpline.com.au](https://www.kidshelpline.com.au)
 - **ReachOut:** [reachout.com](https://www.reachout.com)
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