

WELL-BEING *with Heart*

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JOURNALING

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This time in your life is rather bonkers. Times like this don't come around very often; thankfully pandemics don't come around often! Unexpected.

Unpredictable.

People talking about a 'new normal'.

Remember back to when this all first came about? We were all so hesitant - surely this wouldn't impact Australia?

And yet it well and truly has.

But COVID19 has changed us. We've shown ourselves to be truly adaptable and innovative in how we behave and talk, in the language we now use every day. Just a couple of months ago we'd never heard the phrase 'social distancing'. Today, rarely-used words have become part of everyday conversation: isolation / lockdown / COVID19 / Coronavirus / pandemic / PPE / home learning / hand washing / community transmission / stop the spread / flatten the curve / essential travel... This is now our language; along with TikTok, Minecraft, Zoom and Streaks, this has become our 'everyday'.

Soon this will change again. Once this pandemic time is over, our isolation days will become a key moment in time, a 'Where were you when...?' time. We oldies ask each other, "Where were you when Princess Diana died? Where were you on 9/11?" Your generation's question will be, "Where were you during that virus time? Where did all the toilet paper go?" And for younger generations to come, not immersed as we all are now, this is just a time in history. But that's not so helpful for you right now!

In isolation we're unable to do what we were doing before, unable to do what we'd planned or hoped to do, and now that we can't do very much at all we find ourselves thinking wistfully about all the things we'd do if we could. It can begin to feel like Groundhog Day - every day is the same. Monday...Thursday... the days blur, now they're all just 'day'. Soon, once everything gets back to normal, you're not going to remember this time in much detail. So how are you meant to get through this?



Read on for 5 tips to getting through - and also remembering - COVID19...

FIVE TIPS FOR GETTING THROUGH - AND ALSO REMEMBERING - COVID19



1. JOURNALING

Journaling is a great way to help you make sense of this time and also track how you as a person have changed over time. Studies show that journaling can have a really positive impact on our wellbeing; it gives us a sense of control in uncertain times, reduces our stress, helps us resolve disagreements and become better problem solvers, and even improves our physical health.

Make it easy. You don't need to do it every day, just jot things down as you think of them. When you look back at this time and re-read what you wrote, you'll be able to recall how it really felt and see what headspace you were in. You can find some prompts to help you get started [here](#).

2. EXPRESSIVE WRITING

For 20 mins each day just write and write... Write about how you're feeling, what emotions come up for you, what's going on and how it's making you feel in yourself. Writing like this can really help process your emotions and clarify your thoughts, and it clears your mind leaving you feeling calmer. Some people make this a morning habit, others like to end their day with it. Do whatever works for you. For some people this can be a really powerful experience.

And remember, if you're struggling with very strong emotions, speak to a trusted adult.



3. TIME CAPSULE - HISTORY IN THE MAKING

What if writing's not your thing? A time capsule is a fantastic way to record what you get up to through other means - some university subjects have switched to 'time capsuling' to make sure they capture this important moment in history.

Record what's happening in your own style: a film, artwork, a blog, an e-portfolio, a short story, poems or haikus, photos, lists of hobbies or music... Imagine future generations opening it up to discover a snapshot of your life right now. Don't let the string of Tik Toks be your only record of this period of time!

4. POST-ISOLATION / COVID19 BUCKET LIST

Write down all the things that you'll do once this is all over and life 'gets back to normal'. This process makes you **look forward with hope**. Make it a double bucket list: your 'back to normal' bucket list, and also the 'ultimate' bucket list! Just like having short- and long-term goals.



5. SLOOOWWW DOWN...

Walk more slowly, amble along. Have longer conversations. Read more. Take time to cook something. Stop to notice the little things. Stare at the sunset. Smell the crisp morning air. Crunch the autumn leaves. Just be.

We human beings spend a lot of time being human *doings* – always busy doing something! Use this time to slow down and absorb everything that's going on.



“There is more to life than increasing its speed.” Mohandas Gandhi