

Tip sheet

COVID-19 Managing wellbeing

Living alone or feeling lonely

There's plenty of research to suggest our social relationships can be as important to our physical health as our mental one, which is why it's important to stay connected to those you care about during periods of isolation. This is much more difficult when you live alone, or are feeling lonely due to being apart from your family, friends, and other personal networks – particularly if you're working from home or interstate, or are LGBT+. However, there are a number of ways you can manage how you feel about your situation, and support options available should you need them.

Stay grounded

- Adjusting your mindset and expectations is key to avoiding feelings of loneliness. This means accepting things that are beyond your control, and that being away from the people and things you love is only temporary.
- Limit the amount of time you spend reading the news, and stick to credible and factual sources when you do.
- Build a routine into each day. Having some structure with a few manageable goals, including regular social contact and exercise, can help keep you regulated, and have a positive impact on your sleeping and eating patterns too.
- Keeping a gratitude diary of things you're grateful for (family, friends, pets, a book you've enjoyed or new recipe you've tried out), can help remind you of the good things in life. Self-compassion or gratitude towards others can really help improve your wellbeing and happiness levels too.
- Similarly, keeping a diary of how you're feeling can also help make you more aware of your emotions. Make a note of the things that make you feel happy or have accomplished throughout the day.

Stay connected

- Make time for regular telephone or video catch ups with family, friends and colleagues.
- Set daily virtual challenges with those closest to you. For example, a creative pursuit, a mindful practice or a quiz. Be creative!
- Tap into the many informal Yammer groups at work, such as Jasper and Carol, and others you may be a member of in our personal life, to chat or listen to others who may be in a similar position as you.
- Or, go back to more traditional methods of communication, and write letters and cards to friends and loved ones, especially those who live alone or are feeling isolated and lonely too. This not only gives you something to focus on, but also helps put a smile on the face of others.

Useful resources

- The wellbeing page on [bhp.com](#) ([English](#) | [Spanish](#)) provides support on a range of valuable mental health and wellbeing information for work and life, including a range of tools, tips and coping mechanisms for common conditions. These materials also include a COVID-19 personal action plan to help you acknowledge how you feel, and get you thinking about your own wellbeing.
- Meditating is also a great way to help you relax and clear your mind. There are free apps available to help you do this at a time that suits you, such as [Headspace](#) and [Smiling Mind](#).
- The [Sleep Health Foundation](#) has a range of helpful fact sheets.
- [Beyond Blue COVID-19 resources](#).

Reach out

- If you need further support, speak to your leader or a trusted colleague, family member or friend.
- The [Employee Assistance Program](#) offers free, confidential counselling services to you and your immediate family members.