



Rest and reconnect

As challenging as these times have been, perhaps they've also generated some needed space for reflection and mindfulness, as well as inspired different methods for connecting with ourselves and others. From soothing the mind, body and soul, to coping with stress, to simply brightening someone else's day, a few simple actions can help you stay centred.

BREATHE BETTER

Stress and shallow breathing are two sides of the same coin. If your breaths seem to be coming from your throat, you're likely stressed. Take a moment to push all the air out, breathe in as deeply and slowly as you can, then repeat. Drawing breath below the belly is the magic spot for producing calm.

CLEVER TOUCHES

When distance has us apart, creativity can keep us together. For example, how beautiful was it to see nationwide clapping for the NHS and other essential workers? For someone you know and love, especially if they are down, you can make the same loving impact. Handwritten note? Video applause? Artwork or music? Think outside the box and they'll remember it forever.

KEEP BRAINS ACTIVE

If you're used to being on the go, staying put can be a drag. But that doesn't mean you can't stay busy above the shoulders. Has there ever been a better time to dive into a great novel? How about a personal project that's been on the back burner? Or recipe you haven't tried yet? And don't forget about movies, crossword puzzles or anything else you might enjoy during such a pause.

EMBRACE THE PRESENT

Nothing fuels anxiety quite like mulling over the past or future. Silence the noise by focusing on your immediate surroundings and what you're doing. Then, finish the thought, "At this very moment..." over and over for as long as you can. With practice, you'll learn to stay in the moment.

CORE VALUES

Tried, true and beneficial, self-care is always worthy of attention. From eating a balanced diet, to sleeping well (and enough), to drinking plenty of water, tending to your body's basic needs will improve your overall health and well-being. And when things settle, who says you can't treat yourself? Personal training session or visit to the day spa, anyone?

OUT OF MIND, ONTO PAPER

If you're human, you might have a few lingering fears or regrets. Perhaps an apology or two to make. Try journaling to help process complicated feelings, then talk about them with someone you trust. If an apology is owed and appropriate, make it. While not easy, this endeavour will bear lasting fruits.