Making time for yourself in a pandemic

In this time of a global viral pandemic, we all have an important job to do – to self-isolate. We have to put aside our own desires and agendas, and focus on the bigger picture of keeping ourselves – and those around us – safe. And we don't know for how long we'll have to keep doing it.

This can become difficult, and it will demand its toll from us all. If you're living alone, you will probably struggle with loneliness at some time or another. If you're living with a partner, housemates or your family, you're bound to start feeling claustrophobic – because you're going to struggle to find your regular alone time. Research shows that pervasive loneliness is linked to higher mortality rates and other health complications - so we need to ensure that we stay at optimal health (emotional, mental, spiritual and physical) levels.

One of the ways in which you will better manage feelings of anxiety and frustration is to make time for yourself. If you take care of yourself, you will be more resilient. Here are three easy ideas to help you along the way:

Wake up early

Set your alarm so that you can get up before the rest of the house and enjoy the bit of time that's just yours. Avoid your phone or other screens and enjoy the silence. If you can, try to get outside and watch the sunrise, and use this time to plan your day. Listen to the sounds and watch the movements of nature. Write down your thoughts and your goals.

Communicate your needs respectfully

As mentioned, it's easy to get upset and frustrated with people when we are obligated to be around them 24/7. The last thing you want to do is to damage relationships because of emotions you're struggling to manage. Instead, speak to those with whom you're sharing a house in a way that's respectful, clear, and kind.

Make sure you have their attention, explain that you have something on your mind, and express your needs without demanding that they be met. Depending on the personalities of those involved, you're probably not the only one craving alone time, and you can work together to carve out some of it for those who need it.

For example, ask that you be left completely alone between certain hours. Be reasonable, honest, and considerate, and it's likely that the people around you will return the favour.

Doing household chores will help

During self-isolation, our homes need to be run efficiently, and when our living environments are organised and clean, it promotes good overall health and safety.

Chores are also a great way to take your mind off COVID-19 anxiety and to get your body moving. Designating chores in lockdown will also allow each person in the household to take responsibility for helping the household. Believe it or not, it's also a great way to get some alone time. Put your earphones on, listen to your favourite music and enjoy the exercise. Doing chores will help you feel more capable and responsible and contribute to a better atmosphere all round.

In this digitally-driven time we live in, the unexpected consolation of distance is that some have never felt more connected. The commonly used phrase "we're all in this together" has finally come true.

If you or your loved one needs support during this time, reach out to your ICAS EHWP via your toll-free number or the ICAS On-the-Go App to seek counselling support.

Source: HealthCloud

References:
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