

Taking Time to Relax

Take some time for yourself this week, just 20 minutes (or more if you can) to do something you find relaxing e.g. take a bath, go for a walk, read a book, listen to some music, do mindful meditation or take some time to just rest. Taking time to relax is vital to help your mind and body switch off from the everyday stresses and pressures of life. It aids positive thinking and decision making and reduces blood pressure and relieves tension. Taking this time out can re-energise us to face what's next. Enjoy!

Pause and Breathe

When you notice you are feeling stressed, overwhelmed or worried, take a moment to pause and breathe. Deep breathing calms our nervous system and increases oxygen flow to the brain. This helps us to think more clearly and enables us to problem-solve. Next time you are stressed, try breathing in through the nose, holding it for 5 seconds and breathing out through the mouth for 7 seconds. Repeat this at least 5 times and see if that helps you to feel a bit calmer.

Quality time with family or friends

Try to find some time to do an activity as a family or household, such as, going to the park (keeping to Covid restrictions), playing a board game, cooking together, or making arts and crafts. Spending quality time together can strengthen our relationships, help us to reconnect with others and encourages positive communication. Bonding with loved ones increases dopamine levels which help us to feel good and promotes positive wellbeing.

TAKE CARE



OF YOURSELF



Gaining a sense of control - In this time of uncertainty, where we can't predict what's going to happen next, it can feel like we have little control. This can be damaging for our mental wellbeing. So, what can we do to regain that sense of control amongst the chaos? Try to create structure in your day by establishing a routine, find things around the house that you can tidy up or re-organise, take on a project that you can do at home, e.g. growing some vegetables. Having control over our life circumstances can reduce chronic stress and improve our physical health.

Attitude for Gratitude

Finding time in your day to reflect on the things that you are grateful for, however small, can be good for your mental health. Try to think about 3 things that made you smile, that you appreciate or even acts of kindness that you noticed. Research has shown that actively practicing gratitude can train the brain to pick up on positive thoughts and emotions more frequently, which helps to reduce anxiety and feelings of worry. You could try this as a personal exercise, or with family over dinner or with friends.



Reach out for help It is not always easy to ask for help or to reach out to others in times of need. However, asking for support can help us to put things into perspective and gives us time to explore and process some of our feelings. Having a supportive ear also promotes a sense of belonging during challenging times and reminds us that we are not alone. Try to find someone you feel comfortable with, who you know can give you the support you need and be honest with them about what's going on for you. As hard as it may seem at first, you'll feel great once it's off your chest. Remember, people love to help others! Where to get information and support:

- Lorraine Watkins, our school ELSA— at wellbeing@emmanuel.camden.sch.uk
- Every Mind Matters - <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters>
- Camden parent and carer counselling service— www.camden.gov.uk/parent-and-carer-counselling-service
- Camden Mental Health and Wellbeing service— www.camden.gov.uk/mental-health-and-wellbeing

