



***Psychology for Positive Change***



## **MAINTAINING WELLBEING DURING CORONAVIRUS**

A brief guide to support maintenance of wellbeing during self-isolation, quarantine or lockdown

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**INTRODUCTION**

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This brief guide aims to support people to maintain wellbeing during periods of self-isolation, quarantine or lockdown. It is informed by a strand of psychology known as *positive psychology*.

Positive psychology is a strand of modern psychology that involves the scientific study of **optimal human functioning**. It focuses on the **enhancement of life satisfaction** and the study of positive traits and qualities such as **strengths, confidence, hope, resilience, and happiness** (see e.g. Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Snyder & Lopez, 2005; Green & Palmer, 2019).

A central focus of positive psychology is the concept of *wellbeing*.

According to Seligman (2011), our sense of wellbeing is contributed to by positive actions in five areas, represented by the acronym PERMA:

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Contributory actions</b>
<b>Positive emotion</b>	Spending time on healthy, positive experiences.  Viewing one's past and future from an optimistic perspective.
<b>Engagement</b>	Becoming immersed in worthwhile pursuits. Applying our strengths in the pursuit of a goal.  Being absorbed so that 'time flies' (see also Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi's concept of 'Flow').
<b>Relationships</b>	Connecting positively with others
<b>Meaning</b>	Acting with purpose.  Having a sense that one's actions contribute to a greater goal or something greater than oneself (e.g. community).
<b>Accomplishment</b>	Achieving goals, managing setbacks, growing, learning and developing.

This pack presents a range of questions that can be used to plan actions or reflect on your experience in each of these domains. Each of the questions is just a possibility, and you certainly don't have to do them all. Take what you want from this and leave the rest.

I wish you all the best with your wellbeing-maintaining endeavours at this time.


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**QUESTIONS FOR PLANNING ACTIONS IN THE 5 PERMA DOMAINS OF WELLBEING**

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**Positive emotion**

What's going well at present?

What positive/healthy experiences can you plan to do today? (e.g. reading, music, food, games, exercise, mediation, learning, gardening etc etc).

What can you be grateful for today?

What small act of kindness can you do for someone else today? This week?

Who or what inspires you?

What can you do for amusement today?

How can you achieve a moment of calm?

Who do you feel love for? How can that inform your behaviour today?

What experience/activity/food/drink can you *savour* today?

Do you have a pet you can spend time with?

**Engagement**

What absorbs you?

What are your strengths?

How can you use one or more of your strengths today?

What can you achieve today through the exercise of one or more of your strengths?

What can you explore with curiosity today?

What gives you enjoyment?

**Relationships**

Who can you connect with today (in reality, over the telephone, online)?

In what way could you make a small, positive difference to someone else?

How can you show interest in another person or their work/hobbies/family etc?

How can you show kindness to, or simply *be* with, an animal?

## **Meaning**

What do you see as your *purpose*? (this doesn't always come readily to mind for people, so don't worry if it doesn't!)

How can you pursue this purpose today?

What small part can you play in contributing towards something bigger (e.g. community)?

What is the one thing that you can do today that the world needs?

What are your values (e.g. kindness, consideration, honesty, respect, contribution)?

What goals can you set for today that are informed by your values?

## **Accomplishment**

What goal or goals, no matter how small, can you achieve today?

What challenge can you take on today?

How can you invest in your development today?

How might you go about it? What possible options can you think of?

What will you do?

**REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING**

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