Hi Everyone,

If you are new to my e-mail updates this term then welcome! I'm Jen the Mental Health Lead at college and I send these updates out to students to try to give you access to good resources/ services for well being. It's likely that your tutor will have passed me your name as they feel you will benefit but if you don't want to receive them, please let me know!

Last year, for those of you who received e-mails though 'lockdown 1' you will remember that I upped the frequency to one e-mail per week and I aim to do the same this time around too. If you know of anyone who you think will benefit from the information I share, I'll be copying the e-mails over to the website and updating resource links there so parents, ex-students, anyone really can benefit. Feel free to give them this link: [www.bsfc.ac.uk/mentalhealth](https://mail.bsfc.ac.uk/owa/redir.aspx?REF=pUpFTVkUfI_25cy0gTFzhs9JS-za1nyt6HvXo01qicmFQhYS8b3YCAFodHRwOi8vd3d3LmJzZmMuYWMudWsvbWVudGFsaGVhbHRo)

Ok, so this time round we might be a little more prepared, we might be able to enjoy our online lessons but I know I am getting a little fed up of not seeing friends and family, which can take its toll on our well being. Here's some tried and tested tips for maintaining connections with friends and family, feel free to give them a try!

 1. Set up a group chat with family/ friends and share a pic a day of something good that has happened/ something you did/ your pet/ your lovely face :P, whatever it might be, it's good to share and I know some of my family don't have social media so I keep mine to Whatsapp so everyone can get involved. I have many unflattering photos of my aunty Jill who is yet to master the art of the selfie.

2. Host a quiz! It's not just teachers who can use Kahoot, you can set up an account and find/ create a quiz to send to your mates. Kahoot have a quiz for every occasion so I'm sure you will find something to suit everyone. My friends and I did a quiz a day with the winner being able to pick the next topic. All good and well until your friend who is a Tuberculosis specialist gains the lead...

3. Go big- set up a live quiz with different rounds via Zoom/ Teams and make a fancy PowerPoint. I did this with my roller derby team and sent the winner a card, handmade badge and chocolates but the prize could just be respect if you are short on time/ money ;)

4. Check in with your friends who you don't hear from much and ask people to check in with you if you need it- we are all navigating the same ocean but we are not all in the same boat!

5. Happiness hour- this can be anything you like but make time each day for something just for you. A good book, your favourite childhood film, having a tech free hour, a walk, a run (steady on now) or a nice bath with candles and bubbles etc. However you unwind, do something that makes you happy each day. Maybe you could share this on your friends/ family chat too!

6. Be kind. People are getting fed up and it's easy to take it out on those nearest. Keep communication at home calm and open. Allow everyone their space and share your feelings/ frustrations in a way that helps everyone. If things at home are really hard or if you don't feel safe, please let someone at college know so we can help.

I have attached to this e-mail a COVID specific resource which helps you to try to put worries and anxieties around lockdown into order so that you can feel a little more relaxed and in control (of the things we can control) feel free to use it as you wish. This was sent to me by Anna one of our tutors. If you find any resources, social media accounts for mental health, websites, apps that are useful and you would like me to share with the group, please send them on to me so we can help each other out through this challenging time.

Stay safe and please reach out if you need any further help.

Jen