



Guiseley School

How are You?

Hello all. I'm writing this on the morning after the government's announcement on easing the lockdown, but only slightly, and how this means for many of us, life will remain the same for quite some time. For some families, lives are going to rapidly change and many parents will be trying to navigate going back to work suddenly. There is naturally a lot of confusion about what is allowed and what isn't, but I hope by the time you receive this we will all have much more clarification. With all this going on I would like to focus this week on us taking a breath, pausing for a moment and having a bit of a reboot.



Self-Care: Recharge and Reboot!

If some of you felt like me yesterday, you may feel a bit flat and that's understandable. At the start of all this we were naturally fully aware that we were at the beginning of this journey and put a lot of energy into making it work. Now most of you are facing more time at home and it almost feels like we've hit a hurdle that we need to find the energy to jump over. However you felt last week, it's ok, I know I say that a lot, but it genuinely is. This week let's try and push forwards with the same energy we have already been doing the last two months, but this time I hope you remember to take care of yourself from the get-go.

Reflect - This is the perfect time to ask yourselves, what's worked for you so far and what hasn't?

If we start with the first main thing - schoolwork! Have you got yourself into a daily routine yet? Do you find working solidly in the normal school working hours works for you best? Or do you prefer to break your days up into chunks of time, so it's spread out a little? There is no right or wrong way and you will have your own rhythm. All I'm asking is, if things aren't working for you, have a think about what the reasons could be and what changes you could make to feel more on top of your days.

Have the conversations you need to - If you're really struggling or feel you're really behind on a particular subject, email your teachers. Please don't think of this as something you shouldn't do. It's always best to be honest and then they know how best to



support you. Also, right now your teachers have never been more accessible to you and they genuinely want to help but they need you to let them know. Talk to your parents and carers about anything else you're worrying about, get these conversations going - now is the perfect time.

Make a list of all the things you wish you had done differently if lockdown had suddenly been lifted. Now make that list a priority for you to try, incorporate some of these things into the next few weeks. For me it is quality time with my children. I want to bake with my year 7 daughter, talk to my sons more. What about you? Do you wish you had got out more? Spent more time with your family? Talked to your friends more? Learnt a new skill? Whatever you would have regretted if it had all suddenly been lifted last week, now is your chance to start.

Mood Boosters - Yes, needing a lot of these right now! Everyone's mood boosters will be different but a few that work for many and are easy to access are:

Choose your viewing wisely - Stay away from the news channels that run 24 hours a day, this will drain your energy massively. Choose something that will make you smile

and laugh. I think we all need as much comedy as we can get right now.

Music - Make different playlists on your phones or other devices for different moods such as when you wake up, when you want to motivate yourself and when you want to relax.

Clothing - It sounds shallow, but it isn't. Putting on a favourite outfit, putting minimal make up on or using hair products can make a huge difference to your mood and motivation levels. If we look in the mirror and feel we look like our old selves our functioning and mood will rise.

Savouring - Enjoy the moments where you're absolutely belly laughing with your friends online or when your family spend time together and you don't argue with your siblings. Take a second to really feel it.

Gratitude - At the end of every day think of one thing the day has brought that you are grateful for. It highlights the good stuff, even if the day has felt pretty rubbish.

I wish I had all the answers for how you're all feeling right now, naturally I don't but I can say; look after yourselves and make the changes you need to, find the energy to push yourself over this hurdle - you've got this!



Light in The Lockdown!

Remaining with the theme of this week I would like to highlight kindness. There have been so many acts of kindness over the last two months you could easily write a book on them. For this week I would love it if you could focus your acts of kindness on those within your own household. Now don't get me wrong, I'm not saying there isn't already loads of kindness in your home but I think it would be lovely if you could reach out to your parents or carers and write them a thank you letter. Have a really long think about just what your parents have been doing since the lockdown began. Many of you out there will have witnessed the adults in your household suddenly having to work from home which is most likely just as stressful as you guys suddenly having to learn from home. Then there's the fact that they also all have to keep an eye on you and your schoolwork, make sure you're getting lunch and keeping on top of all the household tasks. As a parent myself it would make my day if one of my children wrote me a thank you letter for all the things

that I've been managing since we've been at home. Go on... make their day... it really will.

The next task is for those of you that have siblings. I imagine being stuck at home with each other has been stressful to say the least. I'd like however for you to take a minute to think about the last time you said something nice to them. This could be anything from "I like it when we play on the computer together" to "You're always really kind to me when I'm upset" If that feels too much to say out of the blue you could also write a letter to them if you wish. At the very least make sure your kindness level towards your siblings is something you keep in mind. Also, if you start the trend of being kinder to each other, they are likely to follow.

The kindness across this nation is astounding but for this week, let's give it a little extra push at home. I know it may feel strange, but it will benefit you all so much if you can start showing kindness more often within your house, it'll also make life a lot less stressful for you all!



Spotlight on: Families Under Pressure

As the current times are feeling more pressured, I want to mention again [Guiseley Schools. Wellbeing support and services](#) section. New resources are being updated regularly, so it is well worth checking it out as we are discovering great new ones that really do help.

I have highlighted several apps and websites to you guys before, but I thought this week would be a good time to remind you of the apps that really do work

The first being Headspace. I cannot praise this app enough. It really encourages mindfulness, which is something I will be going into deeper over the next few weeks. It teaches you the basic skills all in a few mere minutes that will lower your stress levels, leaving you feeling calmer and much less anxious. Currently they are offering most of the services for free under their 'weathering the storm' campaign. Please give it a go, and click on this link to see just how much it offers:

<https://www.headspace.com/covid-19>

Young Minds is another great website which gives great advice and information, if you're struggling with how you're feeling and need more information on what you can do to support yourself at the moment:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

Another fantastic online resource is Kooth. They are a mental wellbeing website and offer loads of things such as an online supportive community, magazine articles, blogs and much more:

<https://www.kooth.com/>

Teen connect is one of my all-time favourites as I have heard loads of positive feedback from students I have worked with in the past. It's a Leeds based counselling service for 13-18-year olds. They have a website and more importantly a helpline. This organisation is able to help you with so many emotional issues, they really are fantastic. I have highlighted the main homepage in this link that gives you information of the services they offer and opening times of their helpline::

<https://www.lslcs.org.uk/services/connect-helpline/teen-connect/>

The first few weeks after half term I am going to be looking at specific issues in more detail such as low mood, anxiety, stress, mindfulness and bereavement. I know a lot of you won't need this sort of information, but I think it's really important as a school that we get this information out there.

I hope you all have a lovely half term and I'll be popping up in your inbox first day back!

