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## **Top Tips for Improving Wellbeing During Isolation**

### **The Jar of Wishes**

You can do this task individually, with family who are isolated at home with you, or you can use social media, facetime etc to involve other extended members of your family and/or friends.

#### **Resources needed:**

A jar or container

Pens

Post- it Notes or paper which has been cut into smaller pieces.

#### **Instructions:**

Whilst we are spending time staying at home in isolation it will be normal for us to wish that we could do the things that we normally take for granted. These wishes might include going out with friends, inviting someone to visit us, sleepovers, going to the gym, going to our favourite restaurant, visiting family etc. At the moment we can't do these things but we can collect these wishes in our jars.

Next time a similar wish pops into your head write it down on a Post- it Note, and place it into your jar or container. When we are no longer asked to stay at home, we can open our jars and start to do each thing that we wished for. We can then notice how grateful and lucky we are to have these wonderful things in our lives again. Until then we can enjoy writing them down, putting them into our jars and watching the jar fill up with exciting things for us to do in the future.

#### **Extension activity for greater wellbeing**

If you want to put a little more time/effort into this activity to experience an even greater sense of wellbeing then try the following:

The latest research in the area of neuroscience (the study of the brain nervous system) tells us that our brains can't actually tell the difference between imagination and reality.

So why am I telling you this to help you through your time in isolation?

If you write down/visualise your wishes in as much detail as you possibly can, your brain will think that it is actually happening to you. So, next to your wish write down the following; what you can see, what you can hear, what you can smell, what you can taste, what you can touch and what positive feelings you are having from visualising this activity (remember that releasing serotonin is key to our ability to cope and be happy).

Then find somewhere comfortable to lie or sit, close your eyes, place your right hand on top of the area around your heart, breathe in for a count of 3 and out for a count of 5, now visualise yourself engaging in this wish. Do this for a 3-5 minutes or for as long as you can pay attention to it. Really connect with your chosen activity and notice how you feel. Do you feel happy and relaxed now?

Whenever you practice positive visualisation it helps you to shape your brain circuits and create new neural pathways, this is called neuroplasticity. This will have a positive impact on the overall health of your body and mind.

To find out more about neuroplasticity click on the following 2-minute video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELpfYCZa87g>