

Covid-19 – Coping with the pressure to be productive during lockdown

Currently, with most of the world online and at home, many are insisting we must use this time to pick up a new hobby, start a creative project, organise our rooms and homes, exercise, rest, seek new work, learn a new language, practise self-care, take long baths, write a book, or two, or three!

Not to suggest that anyone should fall into a slump of complete inactivity, however, what the world is collectively experiencing, is traumatic. The pressure to be productive could end up undoing any productivity, and lead to not only a depressed and anxious population, but a guilty one as well.

Living slower does give us the chance to reassess and re-prioritise what is truly important to us, but that does not mean we all have the opportunity to implement this right now. It is more important than ever to forgo our comparison culture and focus on our own unique situation. We are gripped by a culture that commands we spin many plates, juggle many balls. Are you really living your life to its maximum potential if you aren't constantly close to burn out?

The current workforce works longer hours than any other generation before. For the best part, we also never truly clock-off thanks to modern technology. All of us juggle a multitude of roles: mother/father, worker and partner, with the expectation that we look good, eat healthily and also balance a social life.

We are all in different situations and all need different things for our own mental health. Comparing ourselves to someone online is never going to make us feel good. We have just got to get through this time, do what we have to, and do what makes us happy.

Sometimes putting too much stress and pressure on yourself can actually make you feel less fulfilled, because it's pretty counterproductive to do things when your heart simply is not in it. Pushing yourself too much could lead to lethargy and a different level of burnout that you might find harder to recognise.

Instead, as cliché as it sounds, try to find small things throughout your day that can make you happy. Spend a little longer making a breakfast that you really enjoy, or call a friend who always makes you laugh. Now is the time to indulge in all the things that you enjoy without feeling guilty or like you should be building your business empire. The time for that will come.

Redefine what productivity means to you. Consider it productive if you managed to find matching socks today. Focus on finding the energy to keep learning and the rest will come when you feel like it.

Things are hard without putting too much pressure on yourself. Be gentle on yourself and stay safe.

We will discuss this topic in more detail during the **'Coping with the pressure to be productive during lockdown'** webinar on Friday 29th May 2020 at 11am. You can register to join the webinar at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1663020540159788304> If you are unable to attend the live webinar it will be available to watch afterwards, using the same link.

If you feel you may need some support, Care first is available 24/7 to provide confidential, impartial support. You can contact Care first 24/7 using the Freephone number provided by your Organisation.