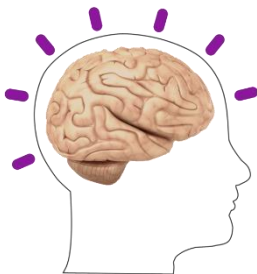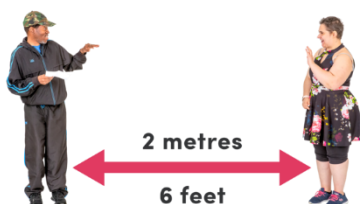Hello everyone.

There is lots of information in the news about coronavirus (COVID-19).

Lots of people are worried.

Disability Equality Scotland want to remind you to look after your mental health as well as your physical health.

Looking after your mental health can help you cope if you are staying inside on your own and staying away from people.

Here are some things to help:

Look for information that is true.

Only look at information from places you can trust like the World Health Organisation (WHO), the European Commission or national news like the BBC, ITV or Channel 4.

Remember there is a lot of fake news out there, and don't believe everything you read.

Don't read too much news

Take a break from the news.

Don't read, watch or listen to the news all day.

Think about turning off notifications on your phone.

Look after yourself

Try to keep to a routine every day.

Do things that you enjoy.

Do things that help you look after your mental health and keep you comfortable, safe and happy.

Try to eat healthy meals

Try to get enough sleep.

Go for a walk to get some exercise.

Try meditating or listening to music to help you relax.

Think positive

Try and focus on the good things in your life.

If you are watching or listening to the news or looking at social media, try to find information about things that are going well.

Find the stories about people who have had the virus and recovered.

Find the stories about people who are doing good things to help other people.

Look at the funny video clips and jokes that people are putting online, to make us all feel happier and to take our mind off things.

Ask for support

Look after yourself and follow the ways to protect yourself from the virus.
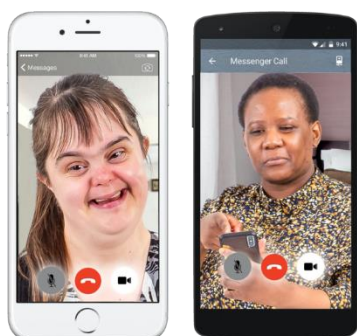
You can find easy read information here:

https://www.nhsinform.scot/media/3019/19-20-coronavirus-latest-advice-easy-read-final-18-mar-2020.pdf

https://www.nhsinform.scot/media/3018/19-20-coronavirus-isolation-poster-easy-read-final-18-mar-2020.pdf

You can look for peer support.

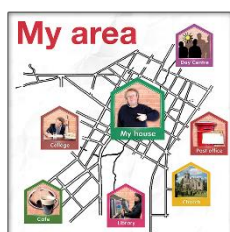This is when you are helped by someone who has experienced the same issues as you.

You can search online for 'peer support for mental ill health' or 'mental health service user organisations'

The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations have made a Community Assistance Directory.

It is online at: www.covid-19.scvo.org.uk/

You can type in your postcode to see what support is in your area.

You can also find ways you can support other people in your area.

Here are some free phone lines to call for advice, or just to have a chat.

Click on the blue writing to go to their website.

o Breathing Space: www.breathingspace.scot or call 0800 83 85 87

o Samaritans: www.samaritans.org, call 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org

o Age Scotland: www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/ or call 0800 12 44 222 For older people, their carers and families.

Look at this webpage from the mental health charity Mind:
https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/

It gives a lot of information for when you are staying indoors but need to look after your mental health.

Best wishes from everyone at Disability Equality Scotland.

Copyright images © Photosymbols. Prepared by Disability Equality Scotland