SELF CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH DURING COVID-19
AND BEYOND

ANXIETY:
Praise for anxiety….!
It is normal and understandable to be experiencing some anxiety at this time. We need anxiety. It is a healthy, natural and normal response to something which is potentially threatening. It is there to help keep ourselves and others safe. It is important to be able to use anxiety in a way where it can serve you and also to learn to identify when it is not helpful.

You do not need to push it away or get rid of it. You also do not need to become taken over by it.

Anxiety at this time helps to make us wash our hands; it helps keep us at a safe and healthy distance from vulnerable people; it helps keep us at a safe distance to protect ourselves.

Without anxiety we would not be so able or so good at doing these things.

Managing anxiety....
If we can assess when our anxiety has become unhelpful we can take steps to re-evaluate and manage our feelings a bit better. At a time where things are uncertain for everybody and there is an understanding that we are all facing something together, it can be useful to acknowledge that our anxiety also has an impact on other people around us. We can try to stay on top of it not just to benefit ourselves but also to benefit others.

When we are too worried or overly anxious, we are less able to think clearly and therefore are more likely to make less sensible choices, we may find we are less productive in our work or we might experience uncomfortable physical symptoms. If we can practice remaining calm, we not only feel better in ourselves, we can also help those more worried than us or perhaps younger siblings and relatives to gain a different perspective and remain calmer.

There are physical health benefits to managing our anxiety - our immune system is stronger when we are calmer. Prolonged levels of stress can have a negative impact on our physical health.

Even if you have not previously been interested in mindfulness or meditation; now might be a very good time to consider introducing some of this to your life.

As much as trying to regulate your breathing can sometimes feel like it doesn’t help, in fact it does. It also helps to stop a few times a day (especially when you are not feeling too anxious) and take a few deep breaths. Becoming more aware and ‘familiar’ with your breathing generally can significantly help you get on top of anxiety.

RESOURCES FOR MANAGING ANXIETY:
If you have space on your phone ‘Headspace’, ‘Calm’ and ‘Waking Up With Sam Harris’ are all brilliant apps that can guide you through mindfulness exercises and provide useful information about how to develop more calm…. (see links below).
This is a great use of your time right now and will benefit you beyond the immediate future too. Calm was originally developed for people with anxiety and Sam Harris offers in depth conversations with renowned professionals for those of you who might be interested in exploring further.

https://www.headspace.com - Headspace
https://www.calm.com - Calm
https://wakingup.com - Waking up with Sam Harris

The following link is specifically about managing staying at home during Corona virus:
https://mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/staying-at-home

The following is a helpful you tube video about managing anxiety during Corona:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMOhYAubXG0

The following websites offer more information and resources on anxiety:
https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/conditions/anxiety/
https://www.mind.org.uk/search-results?q=anxiety