

Coping with Physical Isolation: Go-to activities

- Stay connected – with both friends and family, and your health professionals. If you're having difficulties, reach out and let someone know.
- Set yourself media limits – it's unhelpful to hook into news 24/7, particularly now when much of the news is distressing or stressful. Take time to disconnect from the news and take a break from screens at the same time.
- Keep a flexible schedule – writing a plan for your day helps you manage some of the uncertainty around the pandemic. Don't be too rigid with your schedule though – remember, flexibility and spontaneity contribute to a healthy life!
- Incorporate gentle movement and stretching into your day – but no more than you'd normally do! See our recent [Vodcast](#) for information on exercising safely with an eating disorder. Connect with nature during daily exercise – a short walk in the evening is a great way to get some 'me time,' and connect with the outside.
- As much as possible, eat regular, planned meals, while still being gentle with yourself. You may find the urge to binge or restrict is stronger than usual – don't worry, this is a normal response to the current situation.
- Sleep is an important part of a healthy life. Try to maintain your normal sleep schedule – taking too many daytime naps could increase your fatigue levels over time, making it harder for you to cope.
- Create a coping toolkit for yourself. Write a list of activities that make you feel safe, comfortable, or even distracted. When you can't think of what to do with your time, simply choose an activity from your list!
- Follow EDQ's Social Media for the latest on our virtual groups and events; Peer Support Group, Carer Connect support group and Community Yoga practice,
- Listed below are ideas for various free activities you can do at home.

Activities

Art and creativity are great for emotional and self-regulation – and can also be relaxing and fun! Here's some ways you can tap into your creative side:

- Te Papa Tongarewa (Museum of New Zealand) has created [online jigsaw puzzles](#) from a number of the taonga (treasures) from their collections.
- Many libraries, museums, art galleries, and archives come together each year to create [#ColourOurCollections](#) – free colouring pages and books based on their collections. You can freely download these pages and either print them or use your favourite editing program to digitally colour them.
- Watch some famous operas, concerts, or musicals! Among many others, Sydney Opera House has introduced a new [digital program](#), featuring archival footage, live broadcasts, and premieres. Check other institutes you've heard of to see if they have introduced a similar initiative.
- Search Google's [Arts & Culture](#) page – you can tour museums and research centres, look at specific artworks or collections, and learn more about art movements, musical styles, historical events, or scientific experiments.
- Spending time in nature has a positive impact on our mental health, however, a part of physical distancing restricts how often we can go outdoors. A [2009 study](#) found that watching videos of natural or urban settings increases both our connectedness to nature and our positive emotions. Here are some ways to connect with natural life online:
 1. Take a virtual tour of somewhere you've never been! Use Google Maps to explore, or check out some webcams – we particularly like touring National Parks across the U.S. Here's [Glacier National Park](#) in Montana to start you off on your international 'travels'.
 2. If a guided tour is more your style, check out [artsandculture.withgoogle.com](#) - Google has partnered with National Parks to create some magical experiences, guided by experienced park rangers.
 3. On that note, why not check in on some animals! Lots of zoos and aquariums that have closed to the public, now have webcams, or are filming videos! In Australia, [Sydney Aquarium](#) has been doing some great Facebook Live events, and we also love Cincinnati Zoo's '[Home Safari](#)' series on Youtube. [Explore.org](#) brings together many live nature livestreams – everything from polar bears in their natural habitat, to surfing hotspots!

Books

Reading is a great way to spend some time offline and use your brain in a different way. Queensland libraries are currently offering [temporary digital memberships](#) for those who aren't already members, and you can download the Borrow Box app to access free ebooks, audiobooks, tv shows, and more! Your library membership also provides free access to Kanopy – a movie streaming service.

If you prefer to read hard-copy books, many bookstores now offer free local delivery and online bookclubs!

Podcasts

It's okay if reading sounds like more than you can handle right now. Coping with the trauma of living through a global pandemic can overload the nervous system, leaving you too overloaded to absorb new information or use your imagination. Podcasts can be an easier way to receive information. Below we've listed podcasts related to eating disorder recovery, but there are podcasts available on a wide variety of topics! Have fun exploring.

- *Food Psych* – intuitive eating, Health at Every Size (HAES), and body liberation.
- *Body Kindness* – talks to people from all walks of life about their journey to better wellbeing.
- *Nutrition Matters* – explores health from a nutritional perspective and celebrates the successes of people who have overcome eating disorders, weight struggles, and food issues.
- *The F**K It Diet* – a casual podcast for recovering chronic dieters.
- *The Eating Disorder Recovery Podcast* – a practicing ED Psychologist speaks about the process of recovery from disordered eating.
- *The Peace Meal* – discusses topics related to eating disorders, body image issues, and how society may contribute to disordered thinking about food
- *AnthroDish* – discusses the intersection of food, identity, and culture, by a PhD Anthropologist
- *Getting Curious with Jonathon Van Ness* – explores the things that JVN (of Queer Eye fame) is curious about
- *Unlocking Us* - Brene Brown's new podcast

Music

You might also like to create some playlists to listen to or find some that have already been created!

- Here's a relaxing playlist on [YouTube](#)
- Many themed playlists are on [Spotify](#)
- You can even find the playlists that organizations use! We like working to the relaxing music on the [QAGOMA profile](#).

Instagram

Noticed you've been spending lots of time online, particularly on social media? Us too. Now might be a good time to undertake a digital purge – unfollow all the accounts that don't make you feel good about yourself. These accounts brighten our days:

- [The Happy Broadcast](#) – News without the anxiety!
- [Covid19 Eating Support](#) – This account offers community care meal support via Instagram Live – if you find it hard to eat meals alone, open this account to eat your meal alongside somebody else! Available each hour, 7 days a week, and staffed by volunteer health professionals with a HAES and Social Justice focus.
- [Headspace](#) – Meditation and living mindfully.
- [Smiling Mind](#) – Mindfulness for young people.

Helpful Apps

Eating disorders thrive in isolation, so it's essential you remain connected with your support systems at this time.

- Netflix Party – use this app to watch Netflix with friends – it automatically syncs your screens and opens a chat window for you to discuss what you are watching!
- Houseparty – a face to face social app, that allows you to chat to multiple friends, send videos, and play games together. You could even use this app to eat a meal in the company of others, if that is something that will help you.
- The Mighty – a social network where members are encouraged to openly discuss their struggles with mental illness, including eating disorders. Other users can offer support and empathy, based on their own experiences.