



Remote Working and Self-Isolation Survival tips

I once heard it said that "liberty is the possibility of isolation". Well, never has the word "possibility" struck me more after days of isolation.

All joking aside - In light of the global pandemic we have become familiar with many terms and concepts. Remote working and self-isolation to name but a few, concepts that up to last week were of little relevance to many of us.

Remote working is not a new concept but for many of us, it is unexpected. It can be a big transition especially when it is unplanned. While we cannot control a lot of what is happening around us, **we can control how we respond.**

Working from home can bring with it a plethora of temptation akin to the Christmas holidays, including waking up later than usual, going to bed later, eating whatever we choose, wearing pyjamas all day or letting the daily routine fall by the wayside.

For some, having others at home brings with it a certain accountability to "keep the show on the road" and stick to the "normal" routine as much as possible. For those more isolated at this time, it can be easier to give in to such temptations, however, it is a good idea to keep your schedule as much on track as you can. As boring as it may seem, having showered, dressed and enjoyed your breakfast by 9am is a good place to start.

So, now that you are ready to tackle the working day at 9am, try and ensure that you have a comfortable, organised work space. I'm sure like me, you sometimes curse the fact that you have to sit at an office desk on a daily basis, at times like this however, it is best to keep the work day environment as similar to what you are used to as possible. Of course you can embrace the added bonus of being able to work in front of a roaring fire or from the warmth of your kitchen but try and establish a designated working space. Avoid working from the comfort of your bed or turning on the TV during the day. For some it is also important to remember to switch off. Maintaining boundaries around where work starts and ends is essential.

Self-isolation

For some of us isolation may already be reality and work may often provide the connection we need. With that in mind, it is only natural that it may take time to adapt but adapt you will. It is important however that we have the resources to do so at such a difficult time. The word COVID can fill us with fear, so let's see it from a positive perspective using an acronym that you can use to stay on track.

Communication - Even when unwell or isolated, connect with colleagues. Remember that now more than ever people are ready to connect and support one another. Also remember connection is a two way thing. If you are aware of a colleague who may live alone or feel

isolated, please reach out and connect with them. It may be a small action but it can have a big impact. Don't leave it to others

Outdoors - Remote working means that Sandra in finance will not be ringing to see if you are ready to go to tea or lunch. Thus, it is important to remember to invite yourself to tea. Try to incorporate fresh air into your breaks, it really is a great way of destressing. So, tomorrow, take your cup of coffee and take a walk in the garden (no matter how big or small) or just sit on a seat and take note of the sights and sounds of nature around you. Be rigid with regard to the time you are on your break - stick to the same breaks you take in work.

Virtual - While social media has received a lot of negative press, in recent weeks it is proving to be a useful resource for us. It provides a platform for information as well as connection. Link in with family, set up chat groups, but don't forget to switch off also. Take control of what you watch and be mindful of what you let into your space. Our space has suddenly have got smaller so be careful what you let in. Don't let it get crowded with uninvited and unwelcome information.

Interests – It may seem that the world has got smaller but wherever you go, you will always be there. Take time to connect, reconnect and become reacquainted with yourself and your passions. Learn new things, try new recipes, read a book, write a book!, learn to draw, take time to meditate, journal, try gardening, take a walk, take a run. Do things that you may once have been interested in but for one reason or another you have left behind.

Declutter – We are all probably guilty at one time or another of putting mundane tasks on hold. 'If only I had time I would clear out the garage or clear a press or a book-shelf'. Take time (not during work hours of course :)) to do these tasks. There may well be plenty of people within your household to help you. Clear surroundings can create clear minds.

The Well-being team are here to support you at this time, so if you have any queries, questions, hints or tips drop us an email at wellbeing@cso.ie We would be happy to share them.