



HEALTH & WELLBEING IN A CRISIS

Free booklet for homeless people

Created by
the Pavement
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Got Covid-19 symptoms? Dial NHS 111 to speak to someone

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Lockdown life & self-isolation

“At 9pm I called **NHS 111** and waited an hour to speak to someone. A doctor finally called back at 7am [that’s how busy they are]. They listened to the list of symptoms and asked me to put my hand on my chest. My chest was so hot it made my hand feel like it had come straight out a freezer.”

Read more on p24–26

Coping strategies

Hello, the team making this *Health & Wellbeing in a Crisis* booklet usually create *the Pavement*, a magazine for people who are homeless or insecurely housed, which is well-known for its central list of services. Responding to the massive changes triggered by the coronavirus pandemic we've made this one-off booklet to help you cope. It's filled with ideas to support your mental and physical health during lockdown, self-isolation and social distancing. The booklet is going to be shared with our readers in London, Edinburgh and Glasgow as well as Birmingham, Newcastle and Greater Manchester. Please let us know if it's been of some help – or what we left out, that you'd have liked included – by emailing nicola@thepavement.org.uk. There is also the chance to contribute to *the Pavement* mag, see our call for poems and artwork on p28, and to Groundswell's Covid-19 research on p32. A big thank you all our contributors. Stay safe.

The Pavement team

- www.thepavement.org.uk
- twitter.com/thepavementmag
- facebook.com/thepavementmag
- instagram.com/pavement_magazine

Thank you

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Welcome to this *Pavement* one-off, a booklet that helps our homeless readers stay healthy during the Covid-19 pandemic

the Pavement Groundswell

The Pavement is a small charity, founded in London in 2005. Every two months we produce a pocket-sized free mag full of news, views, cartoons and a massive list of places that helps you to access services.

Our magazines are written for and by homeless and insecurely-housed readers in London and Scotland. We've used the same principles to make *Health & Wellbeing in a Crisis*.

We believe that sleeping rough is physically and mentally harmful, but reject the view that a one-size-fits-all approach to getting people off the streets works.

Whatever happens after lockdown, we are always looking for volunteer journalists and photographers to create exclusive content that's written with our readers in mind. We particularly welcome those who've been homeless.

- www.thepavement.org.uk

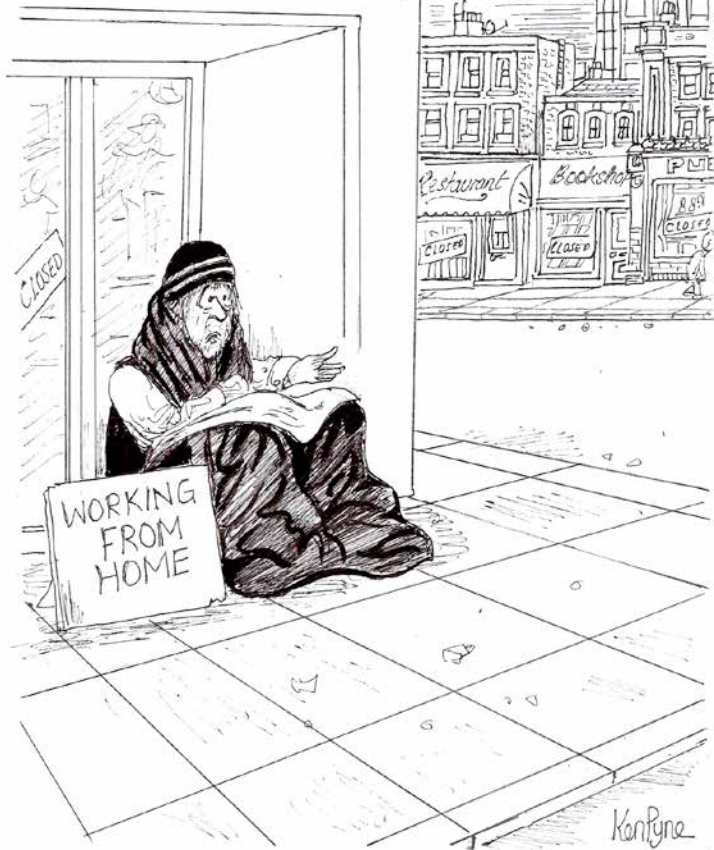
Groundswell aims to create solutions to the causes of homelessness and the impact homelessness has on people's lives. At the core of Groundswell's work is a strong belief in the meaningful involvement of people with lived experience of homelessness in the decision-making process that informs the design, development and delivery of the policies and services that affect their own lives.

Groundswell's current research aims to understand the impact of Covid-19 and the response across the country on people who are homeless. You can help, see p32.

#HealthNow is a campaign to make sure everyone gets the health care they need. It's run by Groundswell, Crisis and Shelter to make a better healthcare system through the input from people who are homeless, and there are opportunities to get involved.

- www.groundswell.org.uk

BIG STORE



Q&A about Covid-19

Groundswell offers a Covid-19 round-up

Q. What are the symptoms?

Coronavirus or Covid-19 is a viral illness that can **affect your lungs and airways**. The symptoms include a **high temperature** – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back and have a **new, continuous cough**.



Q. What is social distancing?

Social distancing helps limit the risk of catching or spreading coronavirus. Social distancing means you should stay 2 metres apart. If you are in a hotel or hostel this includes people you do not share living spaces with. During lockdown it means you should only go outside:

- 1. To shop for essentials** – food and medication.
- 2. To do one form of exercise a day** – alone or with other people you live with.
- 3. For any medical need** – for yourself or to provide care/help to a vulnerable person.

TIP: It can be boring staying indoors. There are ideas to keep yourself busy throughout this booklet.



Q. What is self-isolation?

Self-isolation means you should not leave your accommodation, other than to exercise once a day. You self-isolate if your symptoms are mild for at least 7 days. Anyone who you live with should not leave home for 14 days. If you are self-isolating can someone bring you books, music or a newspaper to entertain you? More ideas on p22 onwards.

© Pavement

Stay safe rough sleeping, in a hostel or in temporary accommodation

Q: How do I stay healthy?

In most areas Local Authorities are providing **hotel accommodation for people rough sleeping**. Services are different so contact your local homelessness services to find out more. Inside or out:

- Use **social distancing**.
- Always **wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds** when you go in or out of your hostel and when you go into and leave any building or public spaces.
- If you are **rough sleeping** carry a bottle of water and soap or gel hand sanitiser. If there's no soap use hot/warm running water.
- **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, toilet paper or your sleeve** (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze. Rough sleepers keep some toilet paper with you.
- **Put used tissues in the bin** and wash your hands again.
- **In hostels** ask staff if supplies of soap or toilet roll run out.
- **Do not have visitors to your hostel room.** Need anything? Get it left by the door.



Social distancing for all. If you have a dog or another pet, keep it away from other people and other pets. © Pavement

- **Do not shake dirty laundry** as this can spread the virus.
- Use your elbows, arms and shoulders to **open doors** instead of your hands.
- **Don't bed down near to people, or share tents with people**, that you have not already been sleeping near. ►



► Q. What if someone I live with has symptoms?

- You must **self-isolate for 14 days** because it can take time for symptoms to appear.
- **Do not have visitors to your room.** Need anything? Get it left by the door.
- If you have a shared bathroom/kitchen **speak to staff about how best to use these spaces.** Could you assign slots to avoid coming into contact with others?
- Make sure the bathrooms/kitchen are **cleaned** after you've used them with normal cleaning products.
- If you are rough sleeping **stay 2 metres away from anyone.** Do not share tents and bedding.
- **Stay in contact** with friends, family and support services by phone or online.
- Can someone bring **food and drink** to you? Could you ask a support worker?
- Do you need **alcohol or drugs**? Can someone bring them to you? See p12-16.
- Can your pharmacy or prescriber make arrangements to get medication or script to you? Could a support worker collect for you?



Follow social distancing. Don't share cigarettes, pipes or drink from the same bottles or cans.

© Marco Verch (bit.ly/2VAcmmmp)

Q. How do I self-isolate in a hostel or rough sleeping?

- Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.
- Let hostel **staff know if you are feeling unwell.** They should make arrangements for you to self-isolate in your accommodation or help you to find alternative arrangements.
- Where possible, stay in a **separate area** behind a closed door, with an open window for ventilation.
- **If you are rough sleeping,** self-isolating will be a challenge. Contact support staff from a day centre, outreach team or local support service and let them know your situation. Do not go in person as this increases risks for you and others. ■

Test time

John Gibbons is a Groundswell case worker who is testing the homeless community for Covid-19. Interview by Sarah Hough

John Gibbons from the Find & Treat team stresses the importance of maintaining social distancing even if you're not showing any symptoms. "We tested 110 people in a hostel in about 4 hours and 4 % were positive but not showing any symptoms. People assume they are fine, but they are really not. When there's one infected in a hotel, there will be more if not properly socially distanced."

He also reflects on the impact that being in isolation is having on people: "I think the challenging thing is the lack of human interaction, we're unable to hug each other, which is massive. There are people in the hostels with mental health issues who are unable to see their friends or their family or go and do the things that they used to. People who drink or take drugs are often quite social beings, so they haven't got that interaction anymore... The consequences of



John Gibbons works across London to test people in hostels or the hotels where people who rough sleep have been temporary accommodated.
© Sarah Hough

this could be serious."

"I think there are a lot of people on the street who just needed a break, and this might be the break they needed. They're in a room, they've got their own TV, they've got 3 meals a day, they haven't got to brave the harsh conditions out there, so this could be a good thing. It gives them a chance to access mental health services, psychotherapists and key workers and really talk about their stuff. If people can get that from being in a hostel that would be incredible."



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Benefits and Homelessness

Who can apply for benefits?

- **UK citizens** and some migrants.
- Anyone **out of work**, on **low income** or with a **disability or medical condition** which means they cannot work.
- Work out how much you are entitled to at www.entitledto.co.uk



Where can I get advice about benefits?

- Citizens Advice: citizensadvice.org.uk or 03444 111 444
- Turn to Us: turn2us.org.uk or 0808 802 2000

Have benefits increased?

- From 6 April the standard amount on Universal Credit (UC) & the basic element in Working Tax Credit **increased** by £92.07 per month.
- The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) has **increased**. This means you should get more money towards your rent if you get UC housing element or housing benefit. Ask your job coach for details.



What else might help me?

- If you don't have photo ID, a bank account or an address you can still apply for benefits.
- You can claim benefits online www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit or **0800 328 5644**. Tell your job coach about your **housing situation** and they will take this into consideration when you create your claimant commitment.
- Payments can be paid **weekly or every 2 weeks**.
- Your rent can be paid **directly to your landlord**.
- If you need support for **household items** (eg, furniture) or costs for buying clothes for an interview, arranging a funeral or repaying hire purchase loans you may be entitled to a **Budgeting Loan**.
- If you're **struggling with basic needs** ask your work coach to issue you with **food bank** vouchers.
- If you've been **sanctioned and struggle with basic needs** (eg. food & hygiene products) you may be entitled to a **Hardship Loan**

I am already claiming benefits

- You do **not have to attend job centre appointments for three months**, starting 19 March 2020 – you will receive your benefits as normal. You can still make applications online if you are eligible
- If you cannot email or phone you can visit a job centre, but only if you are symptom-free.
- You will **not be required to look for work** during the coronavirus crisis and it is unlikely you will be sanctioned **but you should keep your journal up to date** and keep in touch with your job coach.
- **Face-to-face assessments** for PIP, ESA, UC Limited Capability for Work Element **have been suspended**.

For a full-length version of this advice visit www.groundswell.org.uk



Drug update

General advice from Groundswell

Changes

- If you are being drug tested ask if you can skip appointments and urine testing for at least 3 months.
- Be prepared for services temporarily closing (eg, needle exchanges, drug treatment and detox programs).
- People with compromised immune systems, lung diseases and other pre-existing conditions are more at risk of contracting Covid-19. Help keep them safe by keeping yourself safe, see p6–8.
- Now may be the time for you to consider recovery options, always make sure you seek the advice of a professional. Try:
 - smartrecovery.org.uk: online recovery meetings and call-back service
 - www.wearewithyou.org.uk: speak to drug and alcohol workers online
 - ukna.org/online recovery meetings and Helpline Tel: **0300 999 1212**

Protect yourself

Covid-19 causes flu-like symptoms and affects your lungs and airways. People who use drugs and have weakened immune systems or underlying health issues can be more vulnerable to the effects of this virus.

TIP: Also see contacts, p30–31

Where can I get help?

- If you're staying in a hotel, hostel or other supported accommodation, ask a support worker, staff member or drugs workers for advice.
- If you are rough sleeping, speak to an outreach worker or a worker from a service you access.
- Contact your GP as they may offer you treatment or refer you to your local drug service. You can approach your local drug treatment service yourself (visit Talk to Frank to find your local service: www.talktofrank.com).



Important information

Appointments, pharmacies and scripts

- **Medical appointments.** GP and hospital appointments are now mostly arranged as either a phone or video call.
- **Visits to the pharmacy.** Going to the pharmacy frequently could increase your risk of catching or spreading Covid-19 as they are busy with long queues. If you are on a daily supervised plan ask to move it to a less frequent pick-up plan. Ask if your pharmacist would let someone else collect your script.
- **On a reduction plan?** It might be best to stop for a short time if visits to the service are reduced.
- **Already on a script?** Most people who already receive medication to take away will get a 2-week supply.
- **Supervised scripts?** Most people who are on supervised scripts will move to unsupervised and will get a 2-week supply.
- **Collecting my script?** Carry on going to your usual pharmacy as normal, ensuring you stick to the Government's social distancing guidelines. The pharmacist will tell you when your medicine supply is changing.
- **I can't or don't want to go out to my pharmacy.** Contact the service you use or speak to your GP, they should try to make arrangements. If you are choosing someone else to collect your script, they will need a signed dated letter from you and some form of ID.
- **If you're not on a script but think you should be.** Contact your GP or drug treatment service and ask for an assessment appointment.
- **If you are using opiates and want to come off.** It might be best to get on Methadone or Buprenorphine (Subutex, Suboxone, etc) so seek the advice of a professional.
- **If you are feeling unwell and cannot get medication.** Let someone know as soon as possible. Ask a friend or family member to call if you need to (see real life experience on p26). If it is more urgent call NHS 111 who will discuss your symptoms (please note they will be busier than usual). If it is an emergency call 999.



Stay safe & minimise harm

Managing drug supplies

- Make sure you have **enough syringes and injecting equipment** to last you for a couple of weeks. Use local needle exchanges at pharmacies.
- If you have managed to build up a stockpile of drugs, try to **ration them**. Do not use more than you normally would.
- Remember buying and selling drugs is illegal and still an arrestable offence during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Hygiene

- **Don't share** pipes, bongs, vapes or joints, nasal tubes or injecting equipment.
- **Wipe down** packages with alcohol-based cleansers (a minimum 60 % alcohol concentration kills the Covid-19 virus).
- **Do not put drug packages in your mouth, vagina or anus**. If you must carry it in your body, clean vigorously with an alcohol-based cleanser before and after.
- **Wash your hands** with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds before and after you come into contact with people, handle money and/or receive drugs.
- **Prepare your drugs yourself**. Don't touch other people's equipment or drugs and don't let them touch your stuff.

Withdrawal

- Getting supplies may be more difficult, which could cause **involuntary withdrawal** – these symptoms can be very difficult to manage.
- Have **back-up plans** and make sure you have all the necessary medication, food, drink and **support systems** in place if you need to detox off drugs you are dependent on.



Drink aware

Symptoms of Covid-19 may be confused with withdrawal symptoms in a dependent drug or alcohol user

Anyone showing symptoms that could be Covid-19 should assume they are infected and act accordingly. If there is an opportunity to get tested then it is worthwhile finding out if you have Covid-19. If you are feeling unwell let your worker know as soon as possible.

- If you have symptoms you should use NHS 111 online or by phone. If you call there may be a long wait, so if you or someone else needs immediate medical attention then call 999.
- Don't be stoic if you feel unwell. Give the first person you talk to an honest description of your symptoms and tell them about your underlying health problems and issues with addiction. You will be not be judged for it.

In a nutshell

- If you drink every day, and are dependent on alcohol, it can be dangerous to stop cold.
- All NHS services for Covid-19 are free for everyone, whatever your immigration status, even if the result is negative. You will not be reported to the Home Office for coronavirus testing or treatment.
- Use the internet for new online resources to help you go sober and look after your mental health.

Alcohol is still on sale, but getting alcohol may be a problem if you're used to getting cash from the public or shoplifting. The more progressive hotels are providing a limited supply of alcohol to those people who are going to suffer serious and dangerous withdrawals.

Symptoms

Alcohol withdrawal might look like the symptoms for Covid-19. Mild physical symptoms can appear as little as 6 hours after your last drink. These include ►

► anxiety, the shakes, headaches, nausea, vomiting, insomnia and sweating. Within the 12 to 24-hour range hallucinations may start and after a few days you may suffer from seizures. The DTs (delirium tremens) usually start between 48 and 72 hours after your last drink. If you've suffered bad withdrawal symptoms in the past, you're more likely to get them again. Apart from the physical dangers of detoxing from alcohol, there are mental health problems that arise when you stop using any intoxicant.

Stay in control

Try not to get yourself in a state where you're out of control, because you may be asked to leave a hostel.

Be aware that isolation can be a massive trigger, leading to feelings of despondency and the temptation to use. Think about ways of dealing with this before they come up. Also see ideas for supporting your mental wellbeing on p17.

2 We are all drinking two more **cups of tea** a day since lockdown began.

Reduction plan

If you are on a reduction plan speak to your worker as it might be best to stop this for now, as visits to the service might be reduced. Your worker and/or prescriber might also be off sick or working from home.

Staying healthy

Trying to get clean and sober when you're street homeless or living in a hostel can be incredibly difficult and as many services are shut it may not be the right time for you to go sober. But it is not impossible, so if you are in a homeless hotel you might want to take advantage of the roof over your head to try. You can get help if you:

- **Ask a GP or alcohol service** about what longer-term support is available.
- **Use AA meetings and Smart Recovery groups which now meet online.**

Alcoholics Anonymous:

alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk
0800 9177650

or email help@aamail.org

Keep calm & carry on

Insecure accommodation and a massive pandemic? There are plenty of reasons to panic, even if we're trying to stay chilled. Everyone deals with stress differently so here are some ideas to keep you calm

Create a routine by planning your day around mealtimes and sleeping. Then try at least one activity from each of the 4 categories every day:

1. Do things you enjoy

Do something you find relaxing. Try reading a book, listen to a podcast, jigsaw puzzle, watching TV, drawing or writing. Swap books. See boredom-busters on p22. If you have internet access:

- National Theatre screens plays for free at www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/nt-at-home
- Want to feel like you're at a gig? Listen to live music at www.livingroom-live.com
- For football fans watch classic games for free at <https://bit.ly/2zmFchC>

2. Keep an active mind

- **Brick phone?** Find a newspaper and try a puzzle or crossword. Try p32.
- Many councils run free courses on their Adult & Community learning websites. Expect to find computer/digital skills, English, ESOL & maths lessons, family learning, preparing for work & personal development.
- You can learn loads of skills online. Use Google to discover whatever you'd like to know more about.
- Learn a new language with just a phone. The Duolingo app needs data or WiFi to download it initially, it's free afterwards: www.duolingo.com

3. Keep an active body

- As long as you don't have Covid-19 symptoms, you are able to go outside once a day to have a walk, run or do other exercise. See p22.
- Seeing trees, flowers and birds helps us feel calm. It's a moment of normality.
- Improvise: don't have a skipping rope? Then replicate the movements!

► 4. Connect (at a distance)

- You can call, text or write to friends and family. If you've got WiFi then video calls can be great.

To look after yourself you will also need to sleep and eat sensibly, avoid alcohol and aim to be considerate to staff you meet – who are also facing massive changes. Here's a bit more detail:

1. Sleep

- A regular sleeping pattern is key to physical and mental wellbeing.
- Try to sleep during the night and be awake during the day to keep a routine.

2. Eat regular meals and keep hydrated

- Hunger and dehydration can cause us to feel anxious and agitated. Water is a great drink choice because it doesn't damage teeth.
- If you are in a hotel, they will be providing food. It is difficult when you get something which isn't what you'd normally choose, but as time goes on the choice of food on offer is likely to improve.

- If you are struggling to get food, ask a key worker or outreach worker for support. Also contact your local food bank www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank. Ask for support on a local Covid-19 Mutual Aid Facebook group, or contact Citizens Advice:
03444 111 444 (England)
0800 028 1456 (Scotland)

3. Avoid too much alcohol and/or drugs

- Alcohol and drugs will affect your physical and mental health. It may also cause you to not be able to adhere to social distancing, putting you and others at risk of infection. See p12-16.
- Being in active addiction or recovery may be difficult at this time. There are loads of online groups and forums phone numbers to call:
– **Smart Recovery**
www.smartrecovery.org.uk
– **AA: 0800 917 7650**
– **NA: 0300 999 1212**

4. Be considerate to staff

- It's nice to be nice.

Recovery skills

One in 4 people will suffer from a mental health problem at some time in their life.

Even though Recovery Colleges have cancelled face-to-face meetings some are offering downloadable courses, with phone support, such as *Managing stress, Understanding anxiety, 5 ways to wellbeing, Maintaining healthy routines, Managing my health during isolation, Managing sleep and Introduction to recovery.*

In London, for summer 2020, St Mungo's Recovery College is running a remote learning timetable, using Google Hangouts, see www.mungos.org/our-services/recovery-college. For support you can call **0203 239 5918** or email: recoverycollege@mungos.org They also plan to have a supplies drop for writing materials (notebook and pens); art (paints, paper & brushes) and craft (knitting, crochet, origami). ■



Focusing on your breath can help you relax. Do this while listening to music or in silence with no background noise. If you can download, then try the free *Weathering the Storm* meditation at headspace.com © Maddy Ross

Missing

Vendors on edge

"I'm bored and starving," says Kris. "I used to sell the *Big Issue* 7 days a week and have human interaction. Now I'm not able to work. At the hotel where I'm staying I've been told I can't do a temporary key worker job because of Covid-19. If I'm honest I'm struggling: it's borderline like a prison. I'm in a standard hotel room with an ensuite and a TV. I got a kettle from St Mungo's, but that's it. I've asked for newspapers, it's the *Sun* I want. The hotel has WiFi but with that many people using it for video chatting, it doesn't always work, and premium WiFi is £10 a week!"

Kris relies on food deliveries to the hotel. "I'm supposed to avoid dairy, but the food that's sent in is expecting me to live like a vegan, but I eat meat. I've got no cash, but I get vouchers off the *Big Issue* of about £25 a week. As the food is pants, you try living off £5 a day with no cooking facilities."

Even having a quick socially-distanced chat is discouraged. "The hotel has a private garden,

How to make pasta in an electric kettle

1. Cover a cup of dried pasta with 2 cups of water.
2. Switch kettle on until the water boils.
3. Stir down with a wooden spoon.
4. When the water tries to boil over, switch off the kettle, stir.
5. Switch kettle back on and repeat the boiling/stirring three or four times.
6. Drain and put into a bowl.
7. You can use kettles to heat up sweet corn and even pasta sauce for a speedy way to get a hot meal.

but police are in and out ready to give dispersal orders. When two guests are having a smoke please leave us alone," says Kris. "Even a 5-minute conversation can make someone's day at the moment."

Big Issue vendors' only income came from selling this fab weekly mag. Since the pandemic Big Issue is trying to increase its online sales.



Kris misses his customers © Big Issue



Dave has more time to create abstract art, but is missing customers
© Louise Haywood-Schiefer



Rich had to stop volunteering when day centres shut. He still has a special way with birds © Heidi Burton

You've got a friend

Ideas for lockdown life with and without WiFi from *the Pavement* writers

McGinlay's most recent column in *the Pavement* was about taking control of life, even on a small level. She says:

"Be clever about what you do. If you are going for your shopping near a place which has free WiFi, then do 2 things at once. I've been making short walking trips to the shopping centre to buy food. I then stroll slowly using the mall's WiFi to email and download what I need. Even when the shops are shut, you can find WiFi at shopping malls and town centres, outside betting shops and chains like Nando's."

TIP: Try to be productive when you do get access online, don't spend hours on Facebook or Tik-Tok.

Ian Kalman is an ex rough sleeper and regular contributor to *the Pavement*. He jokes: "I am now part of a National Advisory Panel which reports to the government. I am a human being. I got the certificate finally." His tips:

"We all go stir crazy. Things that have helped me are **YouTube** and **Netflix**. I downloaded a mag app called gb.readly.com which is free for two months and has all the mags I want to read. If you don't have the internet you can do puzzles. Cardboard Citizens are doing a workshop on **Zoom**. We meet to read Daniel Defoe's book *A Journal of the Plague Year*, published in 1722. It's interesting as Defoe was a

Inspiration

Pilates was invented by the German-born Joseph Pilates who'd come to England as an acrobat and bodybuilder, but during World War 1 (1914-18) was interned on the Isle of Man. While shut up he developed his famous mat exercises.

TIP: Try pilates for muscle strength, flexibility and posture.

tradesman, writer and spy and writers do like to write about what they know! I've got to learn 2 sections for a performance. Learning a part is a good way to pass time.

TIP: Join Cardboard Citizens and do theatre and games workshops on line: cardboardcitizens.org.uk/whats-on

Jake Cudsi collates our news stories. His tips:

1. **Meditation** is good – a chance to be a human being, not a human doing. For me the best thing to stave off boredom and depression is the same remedy as it always was - the consumption, study, and practice of art and creativity. I've taken up drawing again, writing and reading.

TIP: Classics and detective stories are good page-turners.

2. In a crisis **friends** are important, but helplines can save lives, see p30-31.

3. The **news** is depressing, but I still use the *Guardian* which is free. For me **Twitter** and **Instagram** are the same hell-holes they were before lockdown, littered with the occasional

funny meme. Have a look at **#irunathome**

4. Play **boardgames** with housemates or even via **Zoom**, which is free for 40 minutes.

Ready, steady, run

Try an exercise app like **Strava** or the running app **NHS Couch to 5km**. Loads of people like **Joe Wicks PE** at 9am on YouTube. Try Joe's 5 favourite exercises: do each for 30 seconds, rest for 30 secs and repeat 3 times.

- **Running on the spot** – lift the knees up, pump the arms.
- **Jumping Jacks** – star jumps with hands on the head.
- **Squats** for the lower body – sit down as if there's a chair behind you then stand up tall.
- **Punches** – fast punches, stretch and reach.
- **Lunge** is great for the legs. Feet together, step back, step forward. Make it tougher by jumping.

TIP: Joe Wicks says: "It lifts your mood, gives you energy, makes you fit and strong."

Is anyone out there?

***Pavement's* Deputy Editor Mat Amp had to self-isolate after a friend caught Covid-19. Not long after he got ill. Now recovering he's pondering the big question – who am I if no one else is around?**

Your identity – the knowledge of who you are – is forged over your entire life and it is reinforced by the numerous interactions that take place day after day. The nod to your neighbour as you leave the hostel, the cyclist who shouts at you as you walk out in front of them or that chilled soul on the tube who flashes you a genuine smile.

There are also the practical relationships that are part of survival. This might be people at work, the mates you go shoplifting with or the dealers you score off, and if you're lucky there may be deeper relationships with kids, friends or lovers.

Every look, glance and word are part of the process through which we tell ourselves who we are. This is particularly true in recovery, at least it has been for me, as the struggle to rebuild my identity has developed.

It's not just the work at

Groundswell that keeps me busy or doing my thing with *the Pavement* mag, it's the belief in my role as a researcher and a journalist that helps me to know who I am. It gives me a purpose that makes me want to get out of bed and do shit, rather than just riding the chaos wave to Whatever Beach.

Life has been so much more balanced for me since I got clean and there's no burning pyrotechnic desire to blow it all up... Then this shit kicked off.

Welcome to Corona World, an empty theme park of vast nothingness. There is no one on the street to engage with and those myriad interactions that make up the day and tell you who you are have vanished.

In the beginning of the lockdown I battled with a deep rooted, primal fear of having nobody to tell me who I was and what I should do. It rocked me to my core.

50% of humanity is under social distancing curbs. That's **4.5 billion** people.

Source: BBC 18.04.20

But then it dawned on me, there may be nobody to interact with and not a lot to do but there is also less noise, no pressure and very little of being pulled in different directions by the needs and demands of others.

And of course, this empty Corona World will soon be over, and I bet ya when it is, that there will be times when we yearn for this silence and space, the room to breathe that we rarely ever get in this modern post-industrial, high-tech world.

When all is said and done who needs other people, or a job, to define them? I love the stuff I do; I love the people I know, they're part of my experience, but they shouldn't tell me who I am. It's something I should know, no matter what.

Wherever you are or whatever you're doing right now just know that you're not the only one. We may be on our own but we're in this together. ■

Music will get us through

What songs give you comfort, motivation or an ear worm? Mat Amp finds his Corona World has a Green Day *Boulevard of Broken Dreams* feel:

I'm walking down the line

That divides me somewhere in my mind

On the borderline

Of the edge and where I walk alone

Mat Amp writes a regular column for the Pavement magazine. Insta: [@matamp67](#)

Feel good films with a homeless star

The Pursuit of Happyness: true story starring Will Smith. 5/5

A Street Cat Named Bob: how a cat rescues *Big Issue* seller James Bowen. 4/5

The Lady in the Van: Maggie Smith excels in grunge and backchat. 4/5

Share your top 3 movies on Facebook/*thePavement*

Tips for dealing with Corona World

By Mat Amp

CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) played a massive part in helping me to get clean, so as soon as I started feeling blue, I decided to revisit some of the lessons I learnt. The NHS has a good intro www.nhs.uk/conditions/cognitive-behavioural-therapy-cbt/how-it-works

- A good starting point is to introduce structure and routine.
- Re-evaluate the things that make you feel negative (see p24–25).
- Write a diary dealing with your issues one-by-one. It stops you getting overwhelmed.
- Focus on your current problems and find the issues you can do something about.

Don't be scared to ask for help When I got the virus I ended up in a pretty bad way. Someone I spoke to on the phone could hear this and put pressure on me to call NHS 111. By the next morning I had been prescribed antibiotics that soon cured my underlying infection and turned things around.

Running is a great way to connect to the city and the endorphin rush is a bit like taking drugs without the ill health, incarceration & overdoses. Don't like running? Try cycling, walking or weights.

Meds Prescribers are changing the way that scripts are being done at the moment. The chemist allowed me to get someone to pick up my prescription whilst I was on lockdown. I had to arrange this with my drug worker and provide a letter for the friend who picked up for me. She also picked up my antibiotics.

Yoga isn't just for posh yogurt-eating hippies, it works for anyone. Last year I nagged a couple of mates into trying it out and now they do it regularly. Google **Yoga with Adriene** – she'll get you started. ■



Lockdown can be really boring so here are some ideas to keep your body and mind active from Leigh Andrews, a Speech and Language Therapist working for Change Communication at www.chgcomm.org

If you have online access...

- Like brain teasers? Free online puzzles at <https://games.mirror.co.uk>
- Stay in your room and still see art around the globe at www.timeout.com/travel/virtual-museum-tours
- The NHS has great exercise tips, from running to stretching and breathing to calm the mind, see www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/5-minute-wake-up-workout/?tabname=fitness-guides

Hotel & hostel staff may be able to help...

- If you are in a hotel there may be maps of the local area. As part of your daily exercise use the map to go to a place you haven't seen before.
- Ask staff if they can print the NHS exercise programmes mentioned above.

Use a radio or TV...

- Agree with others to watch or listen to a film or play and chat about it after by phone. Who was your favourite character? Was the end a surprise?
- Sing along to your favourites on the radio.
- Find a music channel and dance to the songs that mean something to you.

Pen and paper ideas...

- Write a letter to someone. Post Offices are open for stamps, so you can send it.
- Things on your mind? Try drawing it! This can help to ease your worries.
- Plan your day. Think about what needs to be done each day, put a regular time next to each task and then tick it off when you've finished.

Change Communication helps people talk and listen to each other and achieve their goals. ■

Poetry challenge

Please share your lockdown and self-isolation creativity – poems, raps, art – with *the Pavement*

There are some great instagram accounts by people who know what it's like to be homeless such as @neanderthalbard and @hymn648. If you'd like to see your work published (although we don't pay for contributions) please email to nicola@thepavement.org.uk. Or you can tag us #pavementpix on insta. Enjoy our little selection of positive poems here:

All stuck inside

by Chris Bird

All stuck inside
While time slides
Empty silent streets
With no chance to meet
The days soon merge
Creating boredom surge
Social media and TV
Come to define you and me
A fragile sense of doubt
Until we see this out
Collective hope becomes a part
Of our music and art
We need to reclaim our vision
And together make the decision
To distribute power and wealth
To trust in hope and health

Chris Bird has a history of mental illness and was previously homeless.

Four letters, one word

by Oscar Smith (extract)

But four letters, one word
Keeps me going
A word so small
So simple
So human
A word easy to forget
When plagued with regret
So, when I'm struggling to cope
I sit down, remind myself
The word is hope

Oscar is 20-years-old and a keen writer who has been homeless since November.

From bard to verse

Here are some tips on how to write poetry from Neanderthal Bard, who has the best pen name for a poet ever. He's also Crisis's poet in residence.

1. Make your poem a journey.
2. Show your feelings.
3. Just do it.
4. Try reading it out. Poems should sound good.
5. Send a copy of your poem to *the Pavement* by email to: nicola@thepavement.org.uk so we can share with readers in the mag and on Facebook.



Good advice: "You have to smile at the mirror 4 the mirror to smile back." © @hymn648

My poem...

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

0800 917 7650

alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

CAMPAIGN AGAINST LIVING MISERABLY (CALM)

0800 58 58 58; thecalmzone.net

Helpline open 5pm–midnight. If shut you can speak to the Samaritans.

CITIZENS ADVICE

03444 111 444 (England)

0800 028 1456 (Scotland)

citizensadvice.org.uk

COVID-19 MUTUAL AID

Search "covid mutual aid" on Facebook to find your local group who may be able to offer you food and other supplies. Find your nearest food bank at www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank

FRANK

0300 123 6600; talktofrank.com

Find local drug treatment centres

GOOGLE TRANSLATE

translate.google.com

Need help understanding Polish, Romanian, or any of 100 languages?

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS (NA)

0300 999 1212; ukna.org

Helpline open 10am–midnight.

Online meetings available

NHS 111

Call 111 (open 24/7)

All NHS services for Covid-19 are free for everyone – whatever your

immigration status. You will **not be reported to the Home Office** for coronavirus testing or treatment. Dial 999 for urgent emergencies.

ST MUNGO'S

www.stmungos.org/our-services

SAMARITANS

116 123 (24/7); samaritans.org

Provides support to anyone in emotional distress or at risk of suicide

SHOUT

85258 (text helpline – 24/7)

www.giveusashout.org

Text service for people in crisis.

SMART RECOVERY

smartrecovery.org.uk/online-meetings

Online meeting at the times listed on their website.

Use their call-back service between 9am–5pm: request by emailing your name & number to:

support@smartrecovery.org.uk

SURE RECOVERY APP

This app was co-developed with and for people who are using, in recovery, or thinking about reducing their substance use. Search 'SURE Recovery' on App Store or GooglePlay.

WE ARE WITH YOU

www.wearewithyou.org.uk/help-and-advice/about-our-online-chat

Speak online to trained drug and alcohol workers.

1001

Bonkers ideas and scams are online. Double-check with trusted sources of info (eg, BBC, gov.uk). Avoid sharing, opening or downloading dodgy info – check scambusters.org if you are in doubt. There is also a lot of misinformation about Covid-19 that can make us more anxious. For trusted info go to www.fullfact.org/health/coronavirus

Stay connected



Join LGBTIQ+ people via video link to dance along to DJs and watch favourite performers from London's cabaret scene, plus other events at the Virtual Community Centre, email: campaigns@lgbtiqoutside.org or visit sites.google.com/view/lgbtiqvirtual/home?authuser=0

Main Space Daily Community Socials:

12pm–1pm & 6–7pm for members to check in with each other for a chat.

- **Monday:** Outside In Camden Hub, 6–9pm. This community hub used to meet in real life at Castlehaven Community Centre in Camden. You do not have to be a Camden resident to attend.

Cafe Queero:

- **Tuesday:** 4–5pm Homelessness Recovery Group is a peer support group for LGBTIQ+ who have experienced homelessness <https://sites.google.com/view/lgbtiqvirtual/home/cafe-queero>
- **Wednesday social:** 6–9pm <https://sites.google.com/view/lgbtiqvirtual/home/cafe-queero>

Party Space:

- **Friday:** 9pm–1am Queer House Party in the Party Space. A weekly online party hosted by your favourite DJ Harry Gay. Special guests and performers.

Answers to the True/False quiz on p32

Jump.

3 Grand National races which include jumps. The Derby is a flat race with no jumps. (1) TRUE (2) FALSE It was Rick from the film *Casablanca* played by Humphrey Bogart (3) TRUE (4) FALSE It only got to No. 2. (5) FALSE It's called The Serpentine. (6) TRUE (7) FALSE It's in Leicester Square. (8) FALSE Red Rum won

Try this true/false quiz (answers on p31)

1. America's money is called dollars and cents.
2. Boris Johnson, Prime Minister said: "The problems of 3 little people don't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world."
3. Nigel Benn, the boxer, was nicknamed The Dark Destroyer.
4. The song *Vienna* reached No. 1 in the UK Top 40.
5. The large lake in Hyde Park is called "Snake Lake".
6. The UK official lockdown began on 23 March 2020.
7. A statue of Charlie Chaplin stands in Parliament Square.
8. The horse Red Rum won 3 Derby races.

From Change Communication: www.chgcomm.org

Share your Covid-19 response

Groundswell are undertaking research to understand the impact of Covid-19 on the lives of people who are homeless. If you would like to participate in the research and share your story, please contact Mat on **07595 602 324** or email mat.amp@groundswell.org.uk. Please note that we are not able to provide support or advice through this number.



My notepad...

Make sure you read...

thePavement

