

**THIS IS FOR THE FRONTLINE.
THE ONES FIGHTING A BLAZING INFERNO
WITH WATER GUNS.
THE ONES WHO HOLD YOUR HAND
WHEN NO-ONE ELSE WILL.
THE ONES WHO FEAR THE ENEMY
BUT RUN AT HIM, SCREAMING.
THE ONES WHO TEND
THE WOUNDED AND THE FALLEN
IN THE DARKEST HOURS.
WE SALUTE YOU.
REAL HEROES WEAR MASKS.**



In these challenging times, it's important to try to maintain your own mental wellbeing. Here is a small collection of ideas that I, or my trusted friends and colleagues, have found useful that might also help you (I don't get commission from any of these, I promise!).

This is a living document and I would love your feedback on ideas and things that have worked for you. I'm on Twitter at [@yvettepyne](https://twitter.com/yvettepyne) and you can reach me by e-mail on yvette@digitalgp.net

Dr Yvette Pyne

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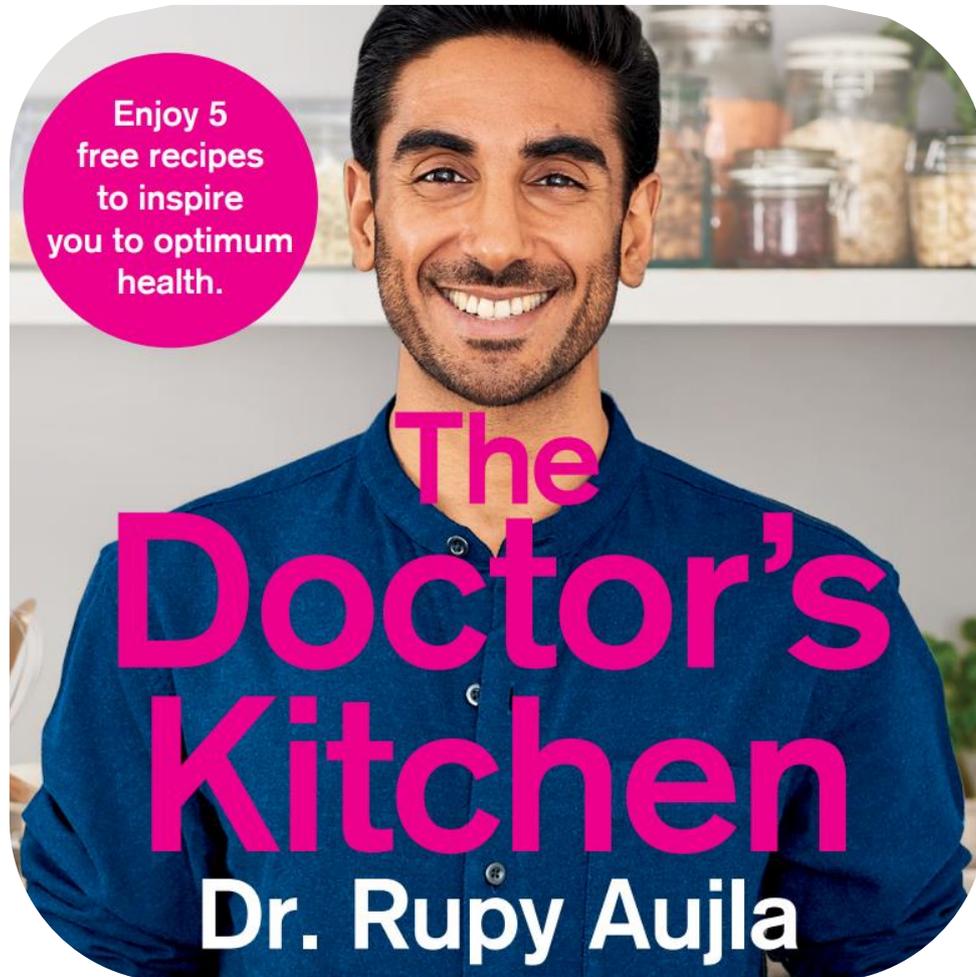
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Eating

Eating healthily is easy in theory but a lot harder in practice especially if you're tired and rundown.

[“The Doctor’s Kitchen” \(@doctors_kitchen\)](#) is run by a working GP and has some easy recipes and lots of beautiful pictures to inspire you. He’s apparently just released the ‘immunity’ section of his book for free when you sign up to his newsletter.



Sleeping

Sleeping is another activity that's easier said than done. Apart from trying to get outside in the fresh air at least once every day and swapping to decaf (I know – heresy! – I find the Lavazza one quite palatable), I've found that two of the big meditation apps also have great sections to help aid sleep.



[Headspace](#) is an app I use a lot for meditation and when I'm woken by racing thoughts at 3am. Andy Puddicombe ([@andypuddicombe](#)) has a very soothing (English) voice.

[Calm](#) is another meditation app that's very popular, both it and Headspace have free trials for you to see if either of them will help you get to sleep (and also meditate!)



Exercise

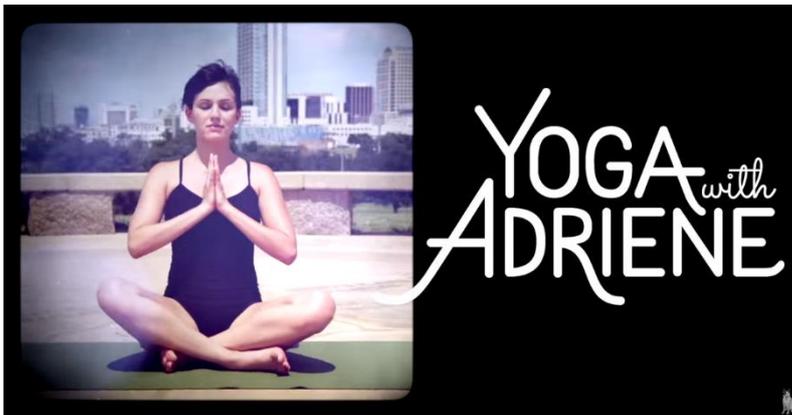
The [National Trust](#) are hoping to open up their parks for free, so head to their wide open spaces (fine even if you are in self-isolation as long as you can get there safely) for some walking (which is apparently just as good for you as running)



We're aiming to open many of our gardens and parks for free during this difficult time, so the nation can use open spaces to relax and refresh, while following the government's social distancing guidance. We will be closing our houses, cafés and shops this week.



4:59 PM · Mar 17, 2020 · [Hootsuite Inc.](#)

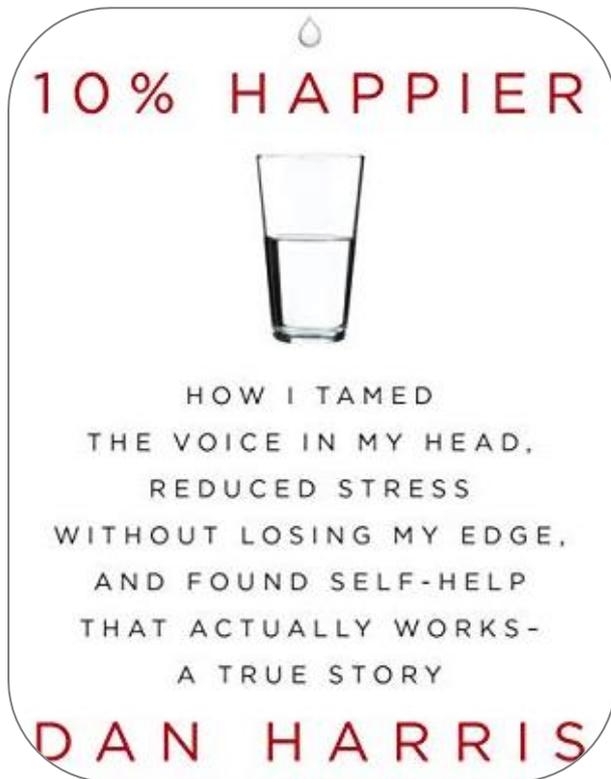


A colleague is enjoying “[Yoga with Adriene](#)” at home. Another option is the “Down Dog” suite of apps that are currently offering a few months free subscription for those struggling in self-isolation.

And for those with a treadmill or a stationary bike, there's a [free BitGym subscription](#) available at the moment.

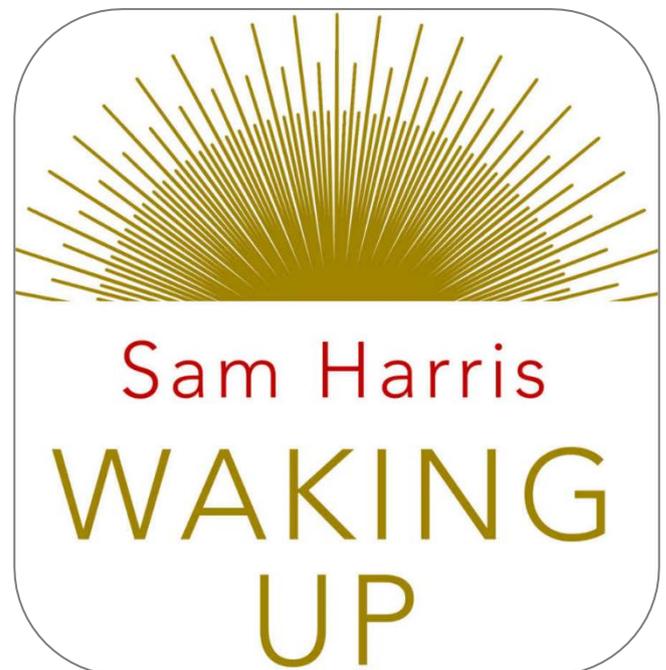
Mindfulness

I've already covered off a few mindfulness apps. A couple of books that I've found have inspired and encouraged me to meditate include the following (they also have accompanying apps that I haven't tried but are likely good).



[10% Happier by Dan Harris](#): This is a book by an American news anchor who found meditation slowly and sceptically that is an easy read to turn you on to the benefits of mindful meditation. He is currently offering his app with a [free six month subscription](#) to healthcare workers.

[Waking Up by Sam Harris](#): no relation to Dan (!) – this is a book about meditation from a well-known atheist who wanted to find spirituality without religion.



Self-isolation

Here is a massive list of things to consider doing while in isolation:

Seize the Opportunity of Home Quarantine

Instead of lamenting the hardship and boredom of this weird time in history, assume it is a blessing in disguise. Use it to rejuvenate, discover new passions and do those things you never have time for. Tick the ideas you're willing to try and share this list.

- Sort and tag your [digital photos](#)
- Write a [poem or story](#)
- Join an [online community](#) of likeminded people
- Make into a [collage or poster](#)
- Start a [Journal](#) or [Blog](#)
- Reach out** to someone who lives alone or is feeling anxious
- Research your **next holiday**
- Read [the books](#) you never have time for
- Host a Skype / Zoom [dinner party](#)
- Do a [photography project](#)
- [Yoga](#) or [exercise](#) class
- Or a [virtual support group](#)
- Attend a [Twitter Conference](#)
- [Spruce up your CV](#)
- Get [some positivity](#) into your social media feed
- [Declutter](#). Baby steps.
- Start your [novel](#)
- Try [positive psychology](#) activities
- Research [a charity](#) to support
- Try an [art project](#)
- Cook an [amazing breakfast](#)
- Prep and [freeze some meals](#) for when you're sick or back at work
- Binge on [iView](#)
- Create an amazing [treasure hunt](#) or clue-trail for a family member
- Create a [digital](#) scrapbook
- Revamp your [garden](#)
- Get familiar with [online grocery shopping](#): create favourites lists
- Start a [gratitude journal](#)
- Practice [mindfulness](#)
- Or [virtual dance party](#): You dress up and groove to the same music
- Write **letters of love or thanks** to your people. Post them.
- Try an [eLearning course](#)
- Organise your [music playlist](#)
- Research **something** you have always wondered about
- Make a [cook book](#)
- Reorganise your [wardrobe](#)
- Have a [scented bubble bath](#) with candles and music
- Create [homemade gifts](#)
- Delete all the apps you don't use and [discover some new ones](#)
- Write an advice letter to the **teenager you were**. Write another to **yourself in 20 years**.
- Phone [old friends](#)
- Hold a family or street [singalong](#)
- Learn a [heritage skill](#) like: baking, woodwork, preserving, mosaic, ceramics, cheese making, fermenting, foraging, quilting, slow cooking, soap + candle making, crochet, permaculture, knots, fire building, home remedies.
- Play [parlour games](#)
- Try some [science experiments](#)
- Draw an apple using a different [style](#) each day, for a week.
- [Fix broken stuff](#)
- Deliver supplies to **those in need**
- Attend a [virtual symphony](#)
- Design a [dream home](#)
- Rediscover** a dusty appliance, instrument or boardgame
- Catch up on [great movies](#)
- Practice [forgiveness](#)
- Research [training opportunities](#) for when the world reopens
- Learn to say a favourite phrase or quote in **7 different languages**
- Plan your [next party](#)
- Build something amazing with [Lego](#) (You know you want to)
- Try [Creatively Visualising](#) goals
- Kick a [bad habit](#)
- Brainstorm **marketing ideas** for your business, club or charity
- Create a detailed spreadsheet of **how you would spend \$10 million**
- Try [adult colouring in](#)
- [Write to your MP](#) about an issue
- Binge TED Talks
- Create a list of ["Things to be Happy About"](#): add to it each day

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Volunteering/Community

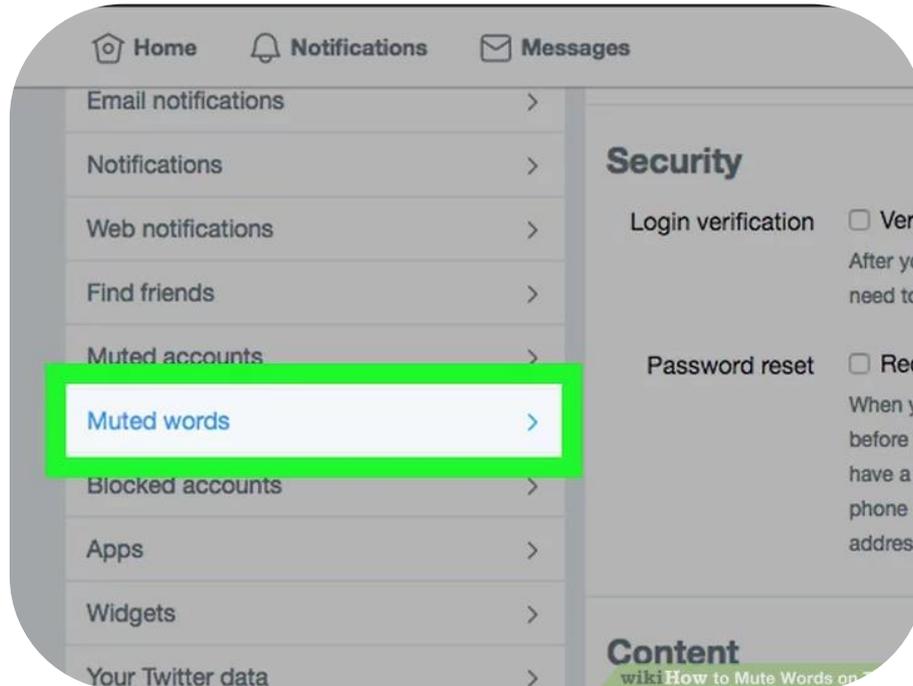
While just doing your 'day job' - whether it's seeing patients, manning the phones, or keeping things clean - is doing plenty for your community, some people find that they can battle feelings of being overwhelmed with helping others.

- You can complete a very short SurveyMonkey link for Darren Jones (our local MP) to offer local help during the COVID-19 issues: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/COVID19help>
- And there is an option to sign up to volunteer in Bristol more generally through the main council website: <https://candobristol.co.uk/>



Media

While following the news especially via **social media** can make you feel connected, it can also become very overwhelming. Don't be afraid to switch off your phone (or at least put it in flight mode for a while). Remember, you can also mute words in Twitter ("covid", "coronavirus"):



You can also choose to follow Twitter people with positive messages such as:

- Dr Rangan Chatterjee ([@drchatterjeeuk](#))
- Simon Fleming ([@OrthopodReg](#))
- Matt Haig ([@matthaig1](#))
- Susan Calman ([@SusanCalman](#))
- Sarah Millican ([@SarahMillican75](#))

If it's all just too much, switching on to some feel-good **television**, listening to **podcasts**, or reading some **books** can be a good way to escape and calm the mind for a while. Some of my favourites include:

[The Good Place](#) is a fun, and surprisingly deep twenty minute episodic sitcom on Netflix about what's important in life and why what we do matters.



Podcasts I find particularly soothing and/or fun include:

- [Desert Island Discs](#)
- [The Minimalists](#)
- [The Infinite Monkey Cage](#)
- [Feel Better, Live More](#)



Books to try:

- [Why We Sleep by Matthew Walker](#): A fascinating insight into how sleep works and why we need it – don't know if it's a good or a bad thing that this could probably count for training CPD credits (if you're a doctor) as well!
- [Reasons to Stay Alive by Matt Haig](#): all of Matt Haig's books (both fiction and non-fiction) can be uplifting – this is probably one of his better-known ones

And perhaps just find joy in unexpected places on the web:

- Watch wildlife on live webcams: <https://therevelator.org/covid-19-wildlife-livecams/>

Free stuff!

As of today (18th March 2020) – there are free (and cheaper) stuff being offered to NHS workers if you like:

Therefore, we are increasing our discount to all NHS workers to 50% and supporting people who work in hospitals near to Leon restaurants with free food deliveries.

Please contact us if you work in the administration teams of these hospitals.

LEON

FREE PIZZA FRIDAY
Domino's
A FREE PIZZA FOR ALL NHS STAFF
Friday 20th March 2020
NHS
DS Group stores only. See post for locations

RUSH
Not All Super Heroes Wear Capes
As a thank you for all your hard work, Rush are offering a complimentary wash, blow-dry & style for all NHS Staff!
TICKET REFRY

Thank you
to our emergency services,
health and social care workers
Have a drink on us

Dear NHS Workers
Your hot drinks are on the house from today, and we'll take 50% off everything else. Thank you for everything you are doing. We look forward to serving you.
With love,
Everyone at Pret

Edit (20th March): Café Nero is also now offering free hot drinks for NHS workers.

NHS & BNSSG Links

Finally, here are some general links that cover a lot of topics that could be useful:

- The NHS has a website which tries to cover off a lot of useful information in one place:
<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/>
- BNSSG Wellbeing Toolkit (<http://bit.ly/wellbeingtk>)
- For Doctors
 - If you are struggling, the BMA Wellbeing service is available by phone on 0330 123 1245 (you don't have to be a member of the BMA to access it and it's also available to families of doctors.
 - There is also <https://www.practitionerhealth.nhs.uk/> where you can self-refer for mental health or addiction problems.

