

Cope with stress by creating routine and adding structure to your day

Directorate:
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and Career
Development
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THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

During this pandemic we have experienced a sudden change to our daily lives leaving us stressed, anxious and dwelling in uncertainty.

Trying to figure out how to get back to daily routine from the confines of our homes becomes a major struggle. We are left juggling family life and other responsibilities as well as work and study situations all under one roof.

Despite having to deal with a stressful pandemic, our daily lives have not come to a standstill.

Homes need cleaning, families need care and support, work and meetings have to continue remotely from home or out in the field.

Amidst all of this chaos and stress, as a student you are expected to meet submission deadlines, study, prepare for exams and adhere to studying from home.

IMPACT OF LOCKDOWN REGULATIONS ON STUDENTS...

- Lockdown regulations means that several resources are now limited.
- You may have had access to campus facilities, study groups/tutorials, libraries and internet cafes.
- During the lockdown, you may now be limited to what you can access from home and you feel pressurised.
- Structure and routine become necessary ingredients to coping with the academic workload.

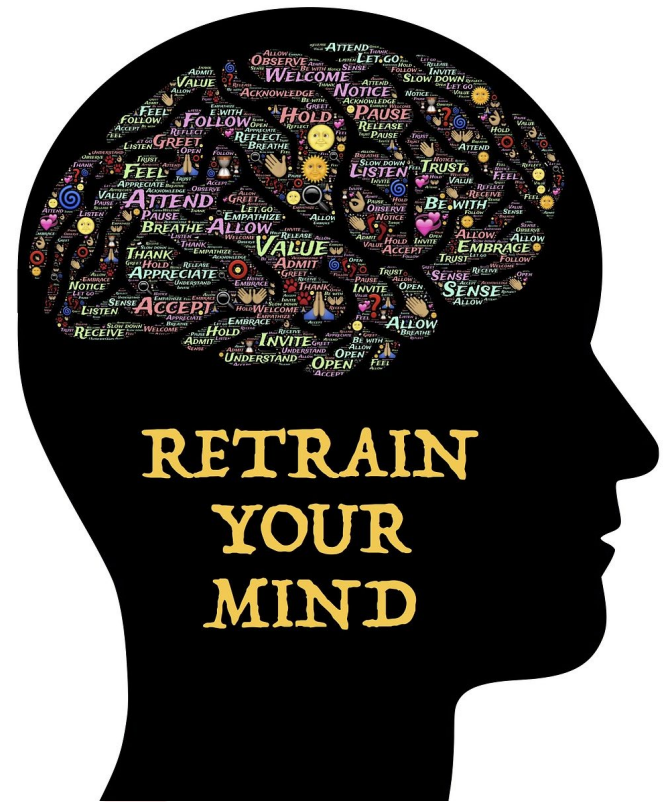
...AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO COPE

- Plan your day and allocate time to specific tasks according to priority.
- Create a TO-DO list.
- The beauty of this concept is that there is no “one size fits all” approach. You will create and adapt your own structure according to your own lifestyle and needs.
- This is our new norm! We need to get used to it and not resist it.
- Students are increasingly isolated from others despite studying at an ODeL institution and learning online.
- Student need be mindful of online activity becoming addictive which can result in procrastination and getting very little or nothing done.

A POSITIVE MIND = A POSITIVE OUTLOOK

“Train your mind to see the good in everything. Positivity is a choice. The happiness of your life depends on the quality of your thoughts.”

~ Marcandangel



HOW DO I START???

CREATE A TO DO-LIST

- Create a to-do list ranking tasks from **MOST** to **LEAST** important
- Create a general list or a categorized list.
- Do your TO-DO LIST the night before, your day or week begins.
- Once you enter your day/week this means going straight into your routine
- Do not waste time planning it out on the day.
- What you do not get accomplished move over to the next day



SOME KEY ASPECTS TO CONSIDER:

- Household chores/Family responsibilities.
- Work/study expectations.
- Fitness activities/Health/beauty regimes.
- Self-care, relaxation and pampering.
- Religious prayer or meditation dedication.

LETS GET SPECIFIC!

Add time frames to your tasks – consider how long you would need to spend on each task, what time of day you work best or are most productive.

Give your self a deadline, long before the actual due date of your tasks. Keep in mind no two days are the same – youu might have a perfectly productive day and the next you might it difficult to get started

Routine and structure usually helps with this!

Keep working, even if you do small chunks of work or studying at a time.

As you go along you will find the perfect fit and balance to suit you.

HOW DO I STICK TO MY SCHEDULE?

Use a punishment and rewards system

Set a goal of what you would like to accomplish and use your distraction as a reward after accomplishing your goal.

For example:

- **GOAL/TASK** work or study deadlines to be met.
- **DISTRACTION** social media.
- **REWARD** once the activity is complete or goal is achieved reward yourself with the allowance of social media.
- **PUNISHMENT** if your goal or activity is not achieved a punishment of no social media should be implemented.

HOW DO I STICK TO MY SCHEDULE?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

To cope with your workload, use your to-do list and ask yourself the following questions. These may vary according your personal lifestyle:

When do I concentrate best (morning, afternoon or night, or when I am alone?)	Should I start my day with household chores or end my day with household chores?	Can my family activities and responsibilities be merged with my daily activities?	What routines did I have in place before going into quarantine and can I implement these at home?	What are my restrictions, difficulties or distractions ?	Who else in the house should take on responsibilities and chores?
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REMEMBER

We often tend to think, “There's just not enough time in the day”.

Those with family responsibilities and those who live alone can benefit from these tips during quarantine

Routine will help ensure that adequate time is given to all your responsibilities and to make time for yourself because

Maintaining a positive frame of mind is important too.

Make sure that tasks are completed as you go along. With having a plan in place can help reduce our levels of stress, anxiety and feelings of uncertainty.

Further resources

- Unisa Covid-19 resources and messages: [https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/myunisa/default/Announcements/Coronavirus-\(COVID%E2%80%9319\)-update](https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/myunisa/default/Announcements/Coronavirus-(COVID%E2%80%9319)-update)
- Emergency Hotline: 0800 029 999
- WhatsApp Support Line: 0600 123 456
- COVID-19 Corona Virus South African Resource Portal: <https://sacoronavirus.co.za/>
- The *SA Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG)* offers online resources related to your mental health and COVID-19. Learn more about managing stress and anxiety as well as living with a mental illness on their website at <http://www.sadag.org/>.
- The Psychological Society of South Africa General Public Information Resource contains useful links related to COVID-19 and working from home: <http://psytalk.psyssa.com/general-public/>.
- Find information about reporting and receiving assistance related to gender-based violence here: <http://gbv.org.za/>.

Contact us

We are available by e-mail:

- Send an e-mail to counselling@unisa.ac.za should you need to discuss any needs you may have in terms of further support.
- Contact Counselling and Career Development at a [regional centre closest to you](#).

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