

COMING FACE TO FACE WITH MYSELF IN LOCKDOWN

Dealing with me in lockdown

Everyone's writing articles on how to manage your marriage in lockdown , how to keep kids entertained during lockdown, how to support your teens during lockdown. Well it's just me in lockdown.

I live on my own and I'm about to come face to face with myself for 3 solid weeks.

The fears that people face when being totally isolated on their own can be overwhelming! Some people are looking forward to spending a few days on their own... but a 3 week isolation period can become depressing and engulf you in loneliness.

But it doesn't have to....

Firstly, let's set the record straight. It doesn't feel good to feel lonely but it's an absolutely ok reality to live in. We don't have to compare ourselves to the seemingly happy family next door. That is their reality. It's ok to wish it was yours. But being healthy means a certain acceptance of where you are in your life right now.

It might not be first choice. It might not feel ideal. It might not be where you wish you were, But whether we see it in ourselves or not, we have all been built with an ability to get through things.

So the first step is to accept that this is your reality for now. And challenge yourself: who set the bar for what's an ok reality and what's not? And what's a successful reality and what's not? You've got this!

Secondly, set down intentions for how the next 3 weeks are going to be. Is it going to be a time for self pity and wallowing? Or is it going to be a time where you get to experience a whole new you?

Feel free to wallow! It's absolutely healthy! But make sure you get up and carry on your day.

The ALL YOU NEED list to get through and thrive during lockdown:

- 1.** Keep your cadence. That may mean setting your alarm clock to work out in the morning, sitting down to your morning coffee (and video in a friend from work), or putting on your office wear (or something other than your pyjamas). Get fully ready as you normally would to prepare yourself for the day.
- 2.** If you are working, Pretend you are going into the office. Make your workspace one you want to work in - have a great setup that makes you want to get to work.
- 3.** Tap into your entrepreneurial spirit. Working remotely or from home, while having downtime to reflect boosts creativity. You can finally work through your to-do list in peace!
- 4.** Make a list of people that you can connect with. Set up virtual breakfasts, online game nights, live virtual yoga sessions or other fitness classes with instructors via social media, reach out to people who you know are also on their own. Call a senior citizen who is isolated. Give them a call to lift their spirits and your own. Maintaining social contact is an essential!
- 5.** Unwind as you would normally. Unwinding from Zoom calls, screen time, and constant exposure to technology by taking some time away is essential. Meditating, journaling, taking a bath, or cooking alone are all ways to distance oneself from the constant noise.
- 6.** To gain some sense of control over your life, create a routine and stick to it. If you have a set schedule you have targets to move toward. For people who are not used to working at home, a lack of structure can be confusing.
- 7.** It's crucial to feel put together. If you look put together you feel more in control. If you wear jewelry or makeup, put that on each day. Dress in the same clothing you'd be wearing if you went out socially.
- 8.** Do something altruistic. Find a cause that you believe in, spend time researching, get friends involved. You can already start getting involved even if you're not face to face just yet. Doing something meaningful can change your entire perspective.

9. We are creatures of habit in what we eat, when we work, what TV shows we watch. Right now, all those habits have been shoved out of the window. So this is an opportunity to create new habits. So what to try? What's your new routine? It may be fluid and can change, but what do you want to try? Take up something new:

* **GARDENING:** You'll need a sunny windowsill, inside or out. If you're a beginner, grow herbs. They're easy and delicious. The plastic trays that tomatoes come in will do – just make some holes in the bottom for drainage. Fill with compost and work according to the packet instructions: you'll need a fraction of what's in the packet. Keep the soil moist – an old spray bottle is perfect for this – before and after shoots appear.

* Challenge yourself to making, baking or cooking something that the Gordon Ramsay's of the world can make. If it flops, no one has to know! If it works, put it all over social media and inspire others to do the same!

* **PICKLING FOOD:** believe it or not this could be fun, extremely delicious, and very worthwhile once the lockdown is lifted! Pickle onions, mushrooms, or cucumbers. Watch YouTube videos to show you how and give it a whirl.

* **RENOVATE:** use this time to zhuzh up your home, and the best place to start is with paint. If you want your kitchen to give you a little lift each morning, go for light, bright tones. Nothing lifts a person more than painting and creating the perfect space for yourself. And if you mess up, you can always paint over it!

