

# Looking after yourself during the Grenfell anniversary



## **Anniversaries can bring up painful feelings and memories. Strong emotions are normal and there is no right way to think or feel.**

This year is more difficult due to the coronavirus outbreak. This has changed how we live, and some of the advice we share has changed too.

As we are socially isolating we cannot gather together to grieve our losses. However, this does not mean that we are alone in our grief.

We are together in mind, heart and spirit. Although we cannot physically come together, there are things that we can do remotely to keep us connected, while making sure we stay safe.

You may be worried about coronavirus. You may be worried about your own health or the health of a loved one. Many people have also shared on how the current state of affairs reminds them of things that happened before, during and after Grenfell, making it harder for them to cope during the coronavirus lockdown. This can bring further challenges leading up to the anniversary.

There are many places to go to for information about coronavirus, and we have listed the NHS contact information at the end of this leaflet.

Many people are worried about the changes to our lifestyle that the virus has brought about, the social distancing, self-isolating, not being able to go to work or school. Managing new multiple roles at home such as working from home, teaching your children and feeling under equipped. Many people have had to stop or reduce their working hours and may be worried about how they will pay the bills and look after themselves and their family. These social, economic and psychological worries are something that all of us are facing.

Children and young people also have similar worries, and the Grenfell Health and Wellbeing Service have produced a leaflet (Looking after your family during the Grenfell anniversary) that may assist you to help them with their worries.

## Looking after yourself

During unsettling times like these it is normal to experience difficult emotions like anxiety or worry.

Leading up to the anniversary you may see the resurgence of strong emotions or disturbances to normal patterns of living, like eating and sleeping.

In addition to this, following frightening and worrying news, like the news about the spread of coronavirus, it is normal for people to experience emotional difficulties.

**Each person will react differently, but these are some common reactions that you may notice in yourself and in those around you:**

- Constantly feeling alert and tense
- Struggling to relax and/or having difficulty concentrating
- Avoiding difficult feelings or memories associated with Grenfell
- Feeling irritable and/or angry
- Having more arguments than normal
- Feeling very sad and missing those you have lost
- Nightmares and disturbed sleep
- Having lots of worrying thoughts, and feeling like you cannot stop thinking about worries.

During these times, it can be helpful to think about some things that can help you to stay well.



## Helpful things to do

Here are some simple things you can do to make a difference for you and your family:



**Make a schedule.** Keeping a routine can be a really useful way to stay active, and have control over your day. Think about writing up a timetable to put on the wall, and write out what activities you will do throughout the day. It's important to include things that will be enjoyable, calming, as well as productive.



**Taking care of your physical health** will impact positively on your emotional wellbeing. Make sure you and your family have healthy meals, and avoid comfort eating; exercising when you can, even a short walk can help, and have a good sleep routine.



**Try to add something meaningful to your day that you enjoy,** maybe set a task for yourself or start a hobby you enjoy like drawing, cooking, creative writing, and so on, and remind yourself each day of something you did really well/or are grateful for.



**Limit your exposure to news and social media.** There is a lot of fake news circulating at the moment that can really raise your anxiety. Protect your emotional space and limit your news time. Maybe allocate a slot in your day to check the news and not check again until the allocated time the next day.



**Take time out to breathe.** You could integrate calm time into your routine and allocate a time in the day to relax, there are plenty of Apps like Calm Panda, Headspace or relaxing sounds apps that can help you to take some time out.



**Stay connected to friends, families and loved ones.** Self isolating doesn't mean you have to be socially isolated. It is important to keep in touch with friends and family members even when you can't meet so think about scheduling phone time. If you find that COVID-19 is the main topic of conversation at the moment, think about a list of other topics you want to talk about – such as a new activity you've tried at home or a new relaxation tip you've learnt.



**If you live with other people who aren't self-isolating,** it can be fun to do activities together – such as finding great recipes together, reading books out loud, meditation or joining in an online dance class.



### **Finding ways to stay connected to our values, culture and spirituality**

can be soothing at highly stressful times. The way we feel connected can be different for every person – it's more about what feels most meaningful to you. This can include keeping time free for spiritual activities, or making space to connect with your heritage and personal values. You may wish to connect with your local faith leader over the phone or by video call.



**Be gentle with yourself.** Your life has changed significantly. Virtual learning, working from home, worrying and caring for older and vulnerable family members are all difficult things you and your family are having to adjust to. Try not to worry too much about learning new skills, or productivity at work if you feel pressured. Now is a time to connect, stay safe and well.

## Remembering together even when apart

It is important to do what you want and need to mark the occasion. Think about how you can adapt your plans to suit the current restrictions and discuss safe, creative ways of remembering your loved one such as creating a photo collage, swapping stories with family and friends via video, learning a recipe they always liked or each of you planting a small tree.

If you do not have outside space, buying an indoor plant would work just as well. You should also think about things that helped you to cope with previous anniversaries.

Many communities are organising anniversary activities and events. Keep up to date on social media pages for local community groups along with the Silent Walk Facebook page.

## Remember we are here to help

You can call the Grenfell Health and Wellbeing Service on **020 8637 6279** to get some ideas, advice and support on how to manage this difficult time. You can also talk to us about any concerns or worries you have about how you and your loved ones are being affected.

For more detailed information about how people may continue to be affected following Grenfell, and in the context of the virus, please ask us for our new trauma leaflet.



This document is also available in other languages, large print, Braille, and audio format upon request. Please email [communications.cnwl@nhs.net](mailto:communications.cnwl@nhs.net)

هذه الوثيقة متاحة أيضاً بلغات أخرى والأحرف الطباعية الكبيرة وبطريقة برايل للمكفوفين وبصيغة سمعية عند الطلب

## Arabic

این مدرک همچنین بنا به درخواست به زبانهای دیگر، در چاپ درشت و در فرمت صوتی موجود است.

## Farsi

এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায়, বড় প্রিন্ট আকারে, ব্রেল এবং অডিও টেপ আকারেও অনুরোধ পাওয়া যায়

## Bengali

Dokumentigaan waxaa xitaa lagu heli karaa luqado kale, daabacad far waa-wayn, farta indhoolaha (Braille) iyo hab dhegaysi ah markii la soo codsado.

## Somali

Mediante solicitação, este documento encontra-se também disponível noutras línguas, num formato de impressão maior, em Braille e em áudio.

## Portuguese

நீங்கள் கேட்டுக்கொண்டால், இந்த ஆவணம் வேறு மொழிகளிலும், பெரிய எழுத்து அச்சிலும் அல்லது ஒலிநாடா வடிவிலும் அளிக்கப்படும்.

## Tamil

Este documento también está disponible y puede solicitarse en otros idiomas, letra grande, braille y formato de audio.

## Spanish

Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany także w innych wersjach językowych, w dużym druku, w alfabecie Braille'a lub w formacie audio.

## Polish

આ દસ્તાવેજ વિનંતી કરવાથી બીજી ભાષાઓ, મોટા છાપેલા અક્ષરો અથવા ઓડિઓ રચનામાં પણ મળી રહેશે.

## Gujarati

Be belge istenirse, başka dillerde, iri harflerle, Braille ile (görme engelliler için) ve ses kasetinde de temin edilebilir.

## Turkish