

Making the most of your free time

Picture this, life has returned to normal after weeks of social distancing at home with your family and you are finally able to go to the university, college, apprenticeship or job interview that you've been preparing for. You feel confident, but then the interviewer throws in a curveball question that you're not prepared for

'What did you do during the coronavirus outbreak?'

You panic. Saying that you watched Netflix and ate snacks every day might not make you look like the best candidate?

Here are some ideas of activities that you could do, that may impress interviewers in the future.

Volunteering

There are a number of things to you can do to help people in your local community during this time. Research shows that doing something positive, like helping others, increases happiness.

- Check out NHS Volunteers www.goodsamapp.org/NHS and/or Red Cross Volunteers <https://reserves.redcross.org.uk> - you need to be aged 18+ for both.
- Phone or write to people who are self-isolating, for example elderly people or vulnerable people living alone. Just having a chat with someone can help.
- Look at local volunteering opportunities related to COVID-19 - local councils are coordinating many activities look at <https://volunteeringkirklees.org.uk> and www.calderdale.gov.uk/v2/coronavirus/community-support
- If you have parents or carers who are working from home, or as keyworkers, you could take on their role within the household for a few days - doing the cooking, cleaning and washing while they work.

Learn something new

This time is the perfect opportunity to learn a new skill, gain new experiences or find out more around a topic you have always been interested in.

- Try a free online course. These websites have thousands to choose from:
www.futurelearn.com/courses
www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue

- Sign up for some virtual work experience, for example:
<https://barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-virtual-work-experience/school/virtual-work-experience>
- Watch documentaries to expand your knowledge of specific subject areas relating to your interests.
- Learn a new skill. There are lots of ideas on The StudyTube Project:
www.youtube.com/channel/UCggGpYjhnWvhE5-QrmXLkoQ
- Learn a new language. Check out Apps such as **DuoLingo** and **Babbel**.
- Learn to cook new recipes for people at home.
- Get creative. Discover your artistic talents - follow **@isolationartsschool** on Instagram for easy tutorials.

Focus on your mental and physical wellbeing

There are lots of resources and information available to help you look after your mind and body.

- Look at Couch to 5k - www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/couch-to-5k-week-by-week
- Joe Wicks uploads a daily PE lesson to his YouTube channel, it's aimed at people of all ages - www.youtube.com/channel/UCAxW1XT0iEJo0TYIRfn6rYQ
- Look at the NHS Every Mind Matters action pack - expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental health www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters
- Reflect on your short and long term goals - what do you aim to get out of life/work? Maybe start a journal where you can write your ideas down.
- Walk, jog or cycle daily. Getting out in the fresh air can help with your mental and physical health.
- Try a home workout. There are home workout guides on YouTube and social media. HIIT workouts will leave you feeling energised. Challenge yourself - for example, do 10 pushups a day for 30 days!
- Check out some of these tips for good mental health during isolation
<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/young-peoples-self-care-tips-for-self-isolation>



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