**Maintaining Wellbeing**

There is an understandable amount of worry and anxiety about the current coronavirus outbreak.

Given the situation it is natural to feel stressed, anxious or overwhelmed. Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried, tense or afraid – particularly about things that are about to happen, or which we think could happen in the future. Anxiety is a natural human response when we perceive that we are in danger or under threat. It can be experienced through our thoughts, feelings and physical sensations. The anxiety that many of us are feeling around coronavirus is a valid emotion.

Our thoughts (how we think about things) are interlinked with how we feel emotionally and physically. If our minds are filled with a lot of anxious thoughts (e.g. “I won’t be able to keep my family safe during this outbreak”),then this is likely going to make us feel emotionally distressed and anxious, and in turn, may impact us physically - e.g. sleeping difficulties, poor appetite, difficulty concentrating, tiredness and low energy. Changes in our mental well-being can compromise our physical health and wellbeing, which may make us more vulnerable towards becoming physically unwell (i.e. making us more susceptible to contracting seasonal flu-like symptoms). Most people will feel anxious at times and it’s particularly common to experience some anxiety while coping with stressful events, changes or situations that we have little control over, especially if they could have a big impact on your life. It is therefore really important to be aware of our feelings and to learn to recognise when we, or others around us, are becoming overwhelmed.

**Here are some things you can consider to help:**

These things won’t take away the threat of coronavirus, but may help us to manage our wellbeing through this difficult time. Although they may not make anxiety go away completely, they may improve the way that you are feeling.

**Try to manage overwhelming feelings of anxiety** by recognising and acknowledging your emotions regularly, rather than avoiding them

**Maintain a healthy routine and look after your physical health.** Get enough sleep, eat regular nutritious meals, try to do some physical activity, get outside or go for a walk.

**Keep active/moving**. You can choose a less crowded area or a time when you know there are less people about to minimise your contact with others.

Try to move your body each day, even if you are indoors, as exercise helps to elevate your mood and lower stress. If you are physically fit and healthy, your body will be stronger and better able to fight a virus.

**Connect with others.** Talk to someone you trust and spend time connecting with friends or family who make you happy, but avoid talking only about the coronavirus and the current situation.

**Try to manage feelings of uncertainty.** Try to separate what is in your control and what is out of your control. Try some breathing and mindfulness exercises to help you relax.

We have put together some sources of support should you need it if we are not in college.

* Childline – confidential support 24/7 by phone or text or online ([www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) or call 0800 1111)
* Samaritans – confidential support 24/7 ([www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk) / call 116 123 / email jo@samaritans.org)
* If you are concerned about your health or wellbeing you could contact you doctor or NHS 111 for advice
* Young Minds – information and advice on mental health and wellbeing (youngminds.org.uk )
* You can email counsellor@henleycol.ac.uk to access support from Emma, the college counsellor. Emails will be checked regularly but you may not have an immediate reply.
* Your tutor may also be in touch with you to offer support