

# GRIEF AND LOSS IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

The COVID-19 crisis is impacting each and every one of us differently. It may be impacting your grief of losses that occurred before this crisis. It may be bringing up a whole new set of losses, death and non-death. It may be some combination.

The following pages consider some things that may be impacting you at this difficult time. We wish there was an easy road map we could give you. Alas, grief is far too complex for maps or checklists. People are all different, grief styles are different, and the tools that will work for one person may not work for another. But we hope these articles may help you better understand your grief during this complicated time and consider some tools for coping.



# 8 REASONS YOUR GRIEF FEELS WORSE RIGHT NOW

Though there are no universals in grief, or in the current situation, if your grief feels worse right now, you are not alone. There are a lot of reasons it is totally normal that a crisis can make grief feel worse. Here are just a few things that might be impacting you.

- **Your bandwidth was already low.** Grief can take everything you have, especially in the earliest days. When a crisis hits and you are already depleted, all of a sudden everything becomes more challenging. Things you could have managed before your loss feel insurmountable now. Aspects of your grief that you were managing before the stress or crisis suddenly seem seven times as tricky to manage.
- **The person who died was your ROCK.** You might be grieving a person who took care of you. Maybe it is the person who handled practicalities and logistics. Perhaps who checked in on you to make sure you were okay. Maybe it was the person who made you feel safe. If this is your situation, you're likely feeling even more acutely aware of their absence than ever. With that, your anxiety might be spiking.
- **You're feeling especially alone.** Grief is almost always an insulating experience. Layer on that quarantine and your feelings of loneliness might be skyrocketing. If you are living alone after your loss, no longer having contact with people by getting out of the house can start to feel like a crushing weight (especially for those extroverts out there).
- **You're acutely aware that you're living through this thing your loved one probably never could have imagined.** Hmmm . . . that's clearly a weird one to sum up. But if you get it, you get it. This is a scary and surreal time. Most of us have not lived through anything like this. And there is just this weird thing in grief that happens at moments, like this when you realize the world feels fundamentally changed and it is a world your loved one never lived in. It makes us strangely more aware of the passage of time and that the world keeps turning.
- **You're not thinking about your loved one because of the current crisis.** We have seen some themes people are sharing at this difficult time. One is "I am thinking about my loved one all the time". We'll get to that. The other is "I am so overwhelmed by the current crisis that I am barely thinking of my loved one or my grief". The latter seems to be bringing up a lot of guilt for some people. We won't tell you not to feel guilty, because that's not how guilt works. We will tell you that it is totally normal if your brain doesn't seem to be making space for your grief. Our brains can only handle so much and sometimes, in a self-protective way, they start triaging. They compartmentalize things for us, so we can focus on a pressing matter at hand. If this keeps up long term, it is something worth spending some time with. But give it some time for your acute stress response from this current crisis to settle down.



# 8 REASONS YOUR GRIEF FEELS WORSE RIGHT NOW (CONTINUED)

- **You're annoyed everyone is complaining about stuff that your grief has had you coping with for weeks/months/years.** Are your friends suddenly complaining about isolation, overwhelm, and feelings of uncertainty about the future? Does it sound a lot like what you've been coping with for a long time? Are these things your friends haven't historically been sympathetic about? Hopefully this isn't coming up for you, but we have heard loud and clear that it is coming up for some people. It isn't that you don't empathize with your friends. Quite the opposite, in fact. You empathize deeply. It might just feel a little annoying that it took something like this for them to empathize with you.
- **You're thinking about your loved one. A lot.** Research has shown that we don't just want and miss our loved ones during the good times. We actually really want and miss them in bad times. In times of pain, stress, crisis, and indecision, we often think of and want to be close to the person who died. We imagine what they would have said or done. We find strength in things they taught us. It is actually something that most people find helpful and comforting. But it can also bring up tough, bittersweet feelings.
- **You're relieved your loved one isn't here.** Maybe this is because they were ill and the risk of getting COVID-19 on top of that illness would have been overwhelming. Perhaps it is

because you know this would have negatively impacted their mental health or strained your relationship. Whatever the reason, that relief can bring up guilt. Remember, this feeling likely comes from not wanting to see your loved one suffer, which is a caring, loving instinctive reaction. You can both desperately want your loved one to be here and at the same time be relieved this is not causing them suffering.

- **You're imagining that everything would just be better if they were still here.** Don't get me wrong, we do this all the time in grief. But we ESPECIALLY do it when the going gets tough. When life is hard, we often go back to the moment our loved one died and we think, "if only they were still here, everything would be so much better". Now, they would be alive, so that would obviously be better. Even if you were trapped at home fighting. Even if it was the same old boring day-to-day. They would be here, and that would mean a whole lot. But the extension that EVERYTHING would be better or easier . . . that's a different proposition. No doubt having them around would make your baseline better – you wouldn't be coping with grief and this crisis. But as for the rest, we really have no way to know what sort of "different" it would be. In philosophy and psychology, they call this counterfactual thinking – constructing a whole, imaginary reality around things that didn't actually happen. We imagine a world if things had gone differently. It might seem harmless enough, but if we're not aware of it, it can double-down our grief emotions. Why? Because now, instead of just coping with the stress of this crisis and desperately missing the person who died, we're also bitter or resentful or grieving this idea of what might have been. I know, this one is a little abstract. But if you've felt it, you probably know what I mean.



Over the last few weeks, like many of you, we've been watching press conferences and reading articles about the-virus-that-shall-not-be-named. We've been consuming copious amounts of information about the severity of the current situation and what it means for the foreseeable future. It's upsetting, to put it mildly.

Some of us feel paralyzed by questions like – “Will things ever go back to normal? What have we lost? What will be lost in the days and weeks to come?”. And, yet, in many ways, our minds won't let me accept some of the harsher realities. Even now, many of us go to bed every night with the feeble hope that the morning headline will read, “Things not as bad as they seemed!” After years supporting people at the time of a loved one's sudden and unexpected death, we've learned that our protective cognitive barriers are far more permeable than our psychological ones. Our brains may grasp truths that our psyches are slower to integrate. My psyche is starting to catch up.

Relatively speaking, my family has been fortunate so far. Which is to say, everyone is currently healthy. Most of our losses take the shape of minor sacrifices, financial hardship, and the despair of knowing the world's turned on its head, people are dying, and much more loss is still to come. But everyone is going

through this. So, like many, I've questioned whether our losses even count. I want to take a second to tell you about things called ambiguous loss and non-finite loss. Ambiguous loss happens when you are grieving someone who is still alive, because you are separated from them. Non-finite loss is when you are grieving things you expected or anticipated to happen, but don't. It's different than the grief you experience when someone you love dies. That kind of loss is finite and certain, and there's no question you should feel pain. Ambiguous grief happens when someone disappears or something profoundly changes or disappears. A person feels torn between hope things will return to normal and the looming sense that life as they knew it is fading away like a Polaroid developing in reverse. Sounds sort of familiar, doesn't it?

## IN A WORLD FILLED WITH LOSS, WHO GETS TO GRIEVE?

Learning about ambiguous loss and non-finite loss have taught me something that I find so helpful. It is that two seemingly opposite things can be true at once. An example that's commonly seen with ambiguous grief is when grieves a change in a person, relationship, or circumstance while also hoping that the relationship or circumstance will get better or be repaired. An example we often see in grief, in general, is when a person feels happy and sad at the exact same time.

I think something many people are struggling with right now is a profound sense of sadness and loss, but also the feeling that it's selfish to grieve. Either because their sacrifices serve a higher purpose or because they know others are suffering much worse. But why can't these things be true at the same time as your grief and loss?

# IN A WORLD FILLED WITH LOSS, WHO GETS TO GRIEVE? (CONTINUED)

Life is seldom as either/or as we think it is; one reality does not take away from or erase the other. You can feel pain, hope, and gratitude all at the same time. Losses can serve a higher purpose and be sad all at the same time. And your grief over a minor loss does not take away from your compassion towards those experiencing more devastating losses. It also doesn't take away from your deeper losses.

It's not wallowing or self-centered to grieve the loss of things like weddings, proms, graduations, sports seasons, parties, religious observance, funerals, togetherness, support, and connection. These things are an extension of individual values like family, friends, intimacy, parenting, spirituality, career, and community. So they are connected to your higher purpose.



Considering the circumstances, you might even see your grief as having a higher purpose.

Right now, people are going through horrible, traumatic, earth-shattering things. And when this is all over, they're going to need to find support in a grieving world. So now, more than ever, we have to maximize our capacity for compassion – and this doesn't mean denying ourselves of it.

As prominent self-compassion researcher and author Kristin Neff has written,

“*If you are continually judging and criticizing yourself while trying to be kind to others, you are drawing artificial boundaries and distinctions that only lead to feelings of separation and isolation.*”

If you show compassion towards your struggles, you may be more likely to show compassion towards others. So rather than minimizing other people's pain and anxiety because “Hey, we're all suffering here. It could be worse.” you might be more inclined to stop and think, “Though I don't know exactly how this person feels, I recognize their pain and I bet they could use some kindness and support.” Things are beyond upsetting.

Let's face the pain.

Let's hold each other up.

Let's grow stronger together.



# PLEASE STOP MINIMIZING THE DEATH OF OLDER ADULTS

As social distancing sets in, there's an undercurrent of conversation happening in group chats, direct messages, and on social media. People wonder whether implemented measures are underreaction, overreaction, or just right. With so much unknown, I'm not sure anyone knows the answer – but there sure are a lot of opinions. One particular opinion, that we've heard several times now, drives me especially crazy.

It's an attempt to downplay the significance of the virus by saying, "...only older people die from it." I don't know why people feel so free to say this. Perhaps because I'm in middle age they think I'll find it reassuring, but I don't. I love quite a few people in their 60s, 70s, and 80s, and it would be devastating to lose any of them. What this statement ultimately implies, whether intended or not, is that we should worry less about the virus because it impacts the old and not the young.

This stance is not surprising. According to the WHO's Global Campaign to Combat Ageism, ageism is both socially normalized and not widely countered. So, in other words, we're so used to the devaluing of older age groups that we hardly see it, let alone cry foul when it happens. These biases extend to how we view the death of older adults and the grief of those who love them. Though the current situation has me unusually heated, the truth is we've been meaning to write about this for a long time. The minimization of death and grief related to older people has been commonplace. Just ask anyone who's received "sympathies" like...

"At least he lived a good long life."  
"Don't be sad; you had 80 good years with her."

"It's the natural order of things."  
"It was her time."

Statements like these are often a misguided attempt to provide comfort to the person who's grieving. But in reality, they can be quite minimizing. If you reread them, don't they all seem like they could be followed with "...and so you shouldn't be sad"? When supporting a grieving person, it's never advisable to try and point out a silver lining. Nor should you ever explain to a grieving person why they should feel any less devastated than they do. Someone they love just died, and they are entitled to all their pain.

# PLEASE STOP MINIMIZING THE DEATH OF OLDER ADULTS (CONTINUED)

## Disenfranchised Loss and the Death of an Elderly Loved One:

If society devalues a person's worth in life, it follows that it would also belittle their death and the inevitable grief of those who survive them. That person who's 65, 70, or 80 might have been someone's parent, grandparent, spouse or partner, best friend, aunt, uncle, caregiver, teacher, religious leader, community member, boss, or employee. And even though the death may be quite earth-shattering to all who knew them, the older a person gets, the more likely others in society are to minimize the impact of their death.

These are the makings of a disenfranchised loss. Disenfranchised loss occurs when a person's family, friends, community, or social groups minimize or invalidate their loss. When this happens, the bereaved often feel like they can't grieve their loved one to an extent that feels natural. Further, when other people mandate how a person should be grieving, the bereaved person may (1) internalize these beliefs and feel wrong or embarrassed when their grief looks different than it's "supposed" to and (2) feel like they can't talk about their grief or seek support.

**Know that Your Grief is Valid and Likely Very Normal:** It's normal to feel devastated, and it's normal to struggle with painful emotions after the death of an elderly loved one. There may be factors unique to the death of an older loved one that sometimes brings comfort. For example, you may have previous experience with grief and loss, so you know what to expect, where to find support, and the coping tools that work for you.



Perhaps you knew the person was at peace with dying. Or maybe you find comfort in the many memories you shared.

On the other hand, there are plenty of reasons why the death of older adults is extremely tough. Keep reading for our next article on that topic.

If you are grieving the death of a loved one, regardless of age or relationship, know that your feelings are valid, and your grief is deserving of being acknowledged, supported, and fully processed. Just as important, know that your loved one, no matter how or when they died, is deserving of being fully mourned, honored, and remembered. Grieving, honoring, and remembering means different things to different people. Whatever it means to you – feel free to do it.

# EIGHT REASONS WHY THE DEATH OF AN ELDERLY LOVED ONE IS DIFFICULT

- 1. People minimize your loss.** People often minimize grief experienced after the death of an older loved one with comments and attitudes like: “At least he lived a good long life.” “Don’t be sad; you had 80 good years with her.” “It’s the natural order of things.” “It was her time.” Please know that although a person may feel gratitude for the years of memories they had with their loved one, they may also feel a million other painful emotions. Also, death may be “natural” at the end of life, but for a great many people, it is not desirable. And even if someone finds peace and acceptance in the natural order of things, they may still miss their loved one like crazy.
- 2. The person who died had always been there for you.** Whether the person who died was a parent, grandparent, friend, or partner – there’s a good chance you’ve known them for a long time. Whether they were a part of your day-to-day life, or you kept in touch with them from a distance, they were always there. Now, you have to learn to live without them for the first time in a long time.
- 3. They were your mom or dad.** I don’t care how old you are; it can be devastating to lose a parent. If they were your only parent, you might grapple with what it feels like to be an orphan. In addition to your grief, you may also worry about their grieving grandchildren. Or, if you still have another living parent, you may worry about their welfare now that they’re alone.
- 4. They were your partner and your best friend.** Perhaps the person who died was your partner or spouse, and, for the first time in a long time, you’re facing life without them. For more on grieving the death of a spouse or significant other, visit [whatsyourgrief.com](http://whatsyourgrief.com)
- 5. You’re the same age, dealing with many losses.** It’s logical to expect the number of losses one experiences to increase as they grow older. When a person experiences multiple losses in a certain period, they may experience cumulative grief.
- 6. Your loved one’s physical or mental health may have diminished over time.** It may be the case that as your loved one aged, they experienced upsetting physical or mental changes. It’s hard to see someone you love struggle with things like the loss of vitality, independence, memory, cognitive ability, etc. This occurs while also juggling things like caregiving stress, grieving the loss of the person they used to be, and anticipatory grief for what’s to come.
- 7. They may have been the glue that held everyone together.** Older family members often fill the role of connecting people within the family (aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc). They may host all the family gatherings, or they’re the person who keeps in touch with everyone and always knows the latest. Older family members also often serve as a connection between generations. They link past to present, share stories, and keep memories. So when they die, it can feel like a wealth of history and tradition has disappeared along with them.
- 8. You just really love and miss them.** The bottom line is, the person who died was your family member or friend. They were a unique individual who filled a spot in your life that no one can replace. It’s irrelevant whether they were 25 or 85, they were a special person who you will always love – end of story.





# When You Can't Be With A Dying Family Member

What do we do now, when we can't be together physically with loved ones who are ill? How can we still feel connected? What does it look like to express love and care when can't be in the same room, give a hug, or take someone's hand? How can we feel close? What options are there for sharing memories, storytelling, and grieving together?

How many times have we typed "there are no easy answers"? There are no easy answers. What works for one person won't work for another. Something that works for one family will be all wrong for another. But we asked people who have dealt with this what they have done or are doing to be close when they couldn't be together with someone who was dying. The responses were overwhelming.

- Move your phone calls to video calls. If the person you love is still well enough to take calls, take advantage of FaceTime, Skype, or any number of other video-chat services. For those who grew up in a smartphone world, this might be obvious. But if you grew up on a landline (or your loved one did) this might not be your go-to. Give it a try – it is amazing the added closeness that can be there, even through a screen.
- Hold video family-meals. If your loved one is still able to eat, set up a Zoom or other group video chat to all eat "together" at the time that they are eating. It won't be the same as all being around one table, but you can still all break bread and share the usual dinner updates, stories, and memories.
- Kick it up a notch by all making a family recipe or eating something the person who is sick loves. If you are going to eat together (and assuming at least one person is still allowed to visit and bring food), you can increase the connection by all deciding on the same recipe to make. A great choice is something the person who is ill loves or a traditional family recipe that you would be sharing if you were together.
- Find out what you can send or drop off. If your loved one is in a hospital, hospice, or nursing home, give a call and find out exactly what you are allowed to bring/send. Even if you can't visit, you can still make their space more comfortable. Whether it is big fuzzy socks, photos, books, items from their home, cards and letters, or anything else that might bring some comfort. Stuffed animals aren't just for kids! Things, big and small, can go a long way. Consider all five senses – can you send things that stimulates each of them?

# When You Can't Be With A Dying Family Member (Continued)

- **Create a playlist (or a family playlist).** Use Spotify or any one of the many other music services out there to make a playlist of music the person loves. You can do this on your own, or you can create a shared playlist and invite others to add songs. This is wonderful to do for the person who is ill, but it can also be a great thing to just connect as a family. It can help with boosting mood and increasing connection.
- **Sing and play music together (in real-time).** Now, this would neeeever work for my family, as singing and playing music is not our thing. But for those of you who are musically inclined, sing! Just because you are in different places it doesn't mean you can't all sing together from wherever you are – using Zoom, Facetime, etc. Just make sure you use earbuds or headsets, so the mic on your computer/phone isn't picking up other people singing at the same time.
- **Record a song as a family for the person who is ill (or with your loved one who is ill).** Now, this requires a family with some musical talent and a little time. But you can put together some pretty impressive songs and videos if you have people each record separately and then edit them together. This won't be for everyone. But, if you have some musically talented folks with some editing know how this can be really meaningful. Search virtual choir tutorials on YouTube for lots of ideas.
- **Read to the person.** Whether this is by phone or by sending an audio file, read a book to the person. Whether they are conscious or unconscious, this can allow a way to show them some care even if you are far away.
- **Read a book as a family.** Maybe it is just you who reads to the person who is sick. Or maybe you have multiple people record audio files of different chapters of the book. If you plan this by phone instead, you can rotate each day calling and reading chapters.
- **Create an “ethical will” for the person.** This is a concept from Judaism. We learned about from neurologist Lisa Barnes, who wrote a book on grieving her husband's death. The idea is simple. Everyone shares something that they learned from the person that will stay with them forever. This could be anything from small things to large things. It could be anything from “be a generous tipper” to “how to make the best stuffed peppers” to “how to be open and accepting of others”. You could each record video or audio clips to be spliced together, or share them on a service like Marco Polo or Facebook.
- **Have a Netflix party.** You might not be able to physically sit with your sick loved one to watch a movie, but you can still watch a movie “together”. Netflix Party lets people in multiple locations all join to watch a movie and use a real-time chat thread to talk about the movie as you watch. Visit [netflixparty.com](http://netflixparty.com) for details.
- **Check out Marco Polo.** Okay, I'll admit, as someone who doesn't like social media, I love Marco Polo. It has been a lifeline for me in some dark times. It has helped me keep in touch with friends all over the world in a way that feels meaningful. Imagine if FaceTime and texting had a baby. You can create a thread with a group or just one other person, just like texting. But instead of texting you send each other video messages that you record. They can be short or long. You can record and send your video whenever you have time and they can watch it whenever they have time. The app saves your threads, so you can go back and watch and rewatch.
- **Create an oral history.** If your friend or family member is still able to talk (and is open to it) use any video or audio service that allows you to record. We often use Zoom, but I am sure there are other options. Visit [www.whatsyourgrief.com/grief-and-oral-history](http://www.whatsyourgrief.com/grief-and-oral-history) for a step by step on how to do this.

# 10 IDEAS FOR FUNERALS AND MEMORIALS WHEN YOU CAN'T BE TOGETHER

With families limited to small, private services, normal funeral rituals are changing. The circle of support at the service is smaller. Extended family and friends are left at home, wanting to be there, but with no way to do so physically.

In addition to “normal grief”, people are left grieving the funeral rituals they thought they would have. There is a sense of loss around not having the expected rituals. For anyone who has lost a loved one, you know that what is meaningful about a funeral is rarely people saying the “right” thing. It is more often about people just being there – seeing the impact our loved ones had in the world and seeing people we love. So what do we do when we can't physically gather?

- **Have a cremation or burial and small service now and have an in-person event later.** Though these are tips for having a service, keep in mind that you don't have to rush to have a service. Even in the best of circumstances, many families later say they wish they had taken more time before having a service. There is no reason you need to do something immediately. You can plan now for when people are able to come together again, or you could plan it for your loved one's birthday or another significant date.
- **Stream the service.** This is probably the most obvious. If people can't be with you, you can at least bring the service or burial to them. Some funerals already offer this service and you can also check out our article on how to live-stream a funeral or memorial at [whatsyourgrief.com](http://whatsyourgrief.com) and search "stream funeral". Even if you're a FaceTime pro, doing this in a way that ensures people at home can see, hear, and maybe even get involved, requires some prework. So make sure you plan.



- **Include people in the service even if they aren't AT the service.** Just because people aren't at the service, that doesn't mean they can't do a reading, sing a song, or give a eulogy. With the right preparation, you can allow participation through platforms like Zoom. You can also have people send in pre-recorded video to watch and stream as part of the service.
- **Crowd-source a virtual photo slideshow.** So many of our photos are now digital anyway, many of these slideshows would be on-screen even if you were all together in the funeral home or church. Whether just the immediate family, or by extending the invitation to extended family and friends, put together a digital slideshow that can be shared during the service/streaming service.
- **Create a slideshow of memories or other words of remembrance.** So many fond memories and amazing stories are shared informally at services. And these days, many of those stories are shared in the comments on social media as well. Create a combination of this sharing by inviting people in advance, either by email or on social media, to share a memory or any other words of remembrance. Compile these into their own slideshow, or include them in the photo slide show. You can use the screen share feature to share the slideshow with people at home during the service.

# 10 IDEAS FOR FUNERALS AND MEMORIALS WHEN YOU CAN'T BE TOGETHER (CONTINUED)

- **Sing and play music together (in real-time).** Just because you are in different places it doesn't mean you can't all sing together from wherever you are – using Zoom, FaceTime, etc. Just make sure you use earbuds or headsets, so the mic on your computer/phone isn't picking up other people singing at the same time!
- **Record a song as a family to play at the service.** Now, this requires a family with some musical talent and a little time. But you can put together some pretty impressive songs and videos if you have people each record separately and then edit them together. This won't be for everyone. But, if you have some musically talented folks with some editing know how this can be really meaningful. Search virtual choir tutorials on YouTube for lots of ideas.
- **Create a virtual-memorial book.** Disappointed you won't have a physical guest book, to know who attended? If you use Zoom or any other streaming platform that has a chat feature, this can be easily accomplished. Ask people to type their answers to some specific questions in the chat. Certainly their name, so you know who was there, just like a regular guest book. But in the chat you can also ask people to write anything else you want. You can ask them to share how they met the person. You could ask a favorite memory, their favorite thing about them, something the person taught them, etc. Make sure someone is in charge of downloading the chat at the end. And check in advance to make sure you use a system that allows for a download!
- **Have family members and friends all do their own small ritual at the same day/time.** Even without sharing these by screen, just knowing everyone is doing something at the same time can bring connection. It could be as simple as all doing a toast, saying a specific prayer, or listening to a song they loved.
- **Create a small memorial in your home or garden.** Plant a tree, make a small display of photos, or create some other small space of remembrance in your home. The process of putting this together can be meaningful and symbolic. It is something you can do by yourself, or together others in your home. Set aside a specific time to do this. Especially with children, this is a great opportunity to share memories and say goodbyes. They may wish to draw pictures, write a letter, or make other artistic items to add to the shrine.

Whatever you do, remember that it doesn't have to be perfect. Grief, honoring, and remembering is not a one-time event. It is something you will do many times, in many ways as life moves forward. Even if this does not come together in exactly the way you imagined, you will have other opportunities in the future.



# SOME GENERAL COPING AND SELF-CARE REMINDERS



We love this simple list from [mind.co.uk](http://mind.co.uk) of things to consider if you are physically distancing at home.

Remember, this is a difficult time for everyone. When you add grief on top of it, it is especially important to make added efforts to cope. Keep it simple.

- **Be gentle with yourself.** Be generous with yourself and remember that it is okay to slow down, rest, take care of yourself, and be 'unproductive'.
- **Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage of COVID-19.** Grief is tough enough and too much media exposure can be depleting.
- **Take care of your body.** This doesn't need to be big stuff - take breathers, stretch or meditate. Try to eat regular, healthy meal, and move around some. Try to go to bed and get up at around the same time each day.
- **Try to do at least one activity you enjoy every day.** This sounds small, but it can feel huge. It is easy to say, "oh, I will do that when I feel better". What we often forget is that doing "that" will help us to feel better!
- **Connect with others.** Share your concerns and how you are feeling with a friend or family member. Use video chat technologies to feel more connected.

- **Food:** do you have a way to get food delivered?
- **Cleaning:** are your cleaning supplies stocked up?
- **Money:** can you budget for any higher bills or expenses? Will you save money from lower transport costs that you could spend elsewhere?
- **Work:** can you work from home or not? If not, what are your rights to payment or benefits?
- **Medication:** do you have enough medication, or a way to get more?
- **Health:** can you reorganize any planned therapy or treatments?
- **Commitments:** can someone else help you care for any dependents, walk your dog, or take care of any other commitments?
- **Connectivity:** have you checked the contact details of the people you see regularly, like their phone numbers or email addresses? Routine: can you create a routine or timetable for yourself? And if you live with other people, should you create a household schedule? Do you need to agree how the household will run with everyone at home all day?
- **Exercise:** is there any physical activity you can do inside your home, such as going up and down the stairs, using bean tins as weights, or exercises you can do in your chair?
- **Nature:** have you thought how you could access nature? Can you get some seeds and planting equipment, houseplants or living herbs?
- **Entertainment:** have you thought about things to do, books to read or TV shows to watch?
- **Relax:** have you got materials so you can do something creative, such as paper and colouring pencils?