



April 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians and EHS Learners,

MESSAGE FROM EHS COUNSELLING DEPARTMENT

The EHS Counselling Department would like to offer you our support during these difficult and confusing times. Nothing in our lifetimes could have prepared us for dealing with the current pandemic within which we find ourselves.

Below we have outlined some coping skills and suggestions for daily living which we hope will aid in supporting your psychological and emotional wellbeing at home. At the end of this document we have also listed some organizations which you may contact for assistance if necessary.

HELPFUL TIPS FOR LOCKDOWN

1. Accept that **some anxiety and fear is normal** – none of us are immune to these feelings. Try to identify and allow all of your feelings rather than deny them. Try to be kind to yourself. This includes being in tune with yourself, acknowledging your feelings and validating them.
2. **Take a few minutes to assess yourself every day.** Check in with yourself in the mornings & evenings, asking yourself how you are. At the end of each day, reflect on your experiences and set your intentions for the following day.
3. If you notice that you are upset or anxious, **sit still for a few moments** and breathe deeply into your body, imagining that you're receiving whatever it is that you need, say peace and calm. You may even use this time to offer yourself kind affirmations such as, may I be happy, may I be healthy, may I be safe, may I live with ease.
4. These self-awareness exercises may be used several times a day during times of extreme stress. (Take some relaxation time after the check-in if your stress levels are very high).
5. Once you've acknowledged them to yourself, **it's helpful to share your thoughts and feelings** with family or friends so that you give them the opportunity to support you.
6. **Try to find a balance.** Now more than ever, make an effort to introduce balance into your daily life and work-space. **Stay on top of things** but know when to take a break (your personal daily check-ins will help with this).

7. The easiest way to bring balance into your life is to set up a **daily routine**. Plan your work and your rest/relaxation around any other activities which you may wish, or need to complete every day. Allocating the same time each day for school work will help you to stay committed and focused.
8. Learners, you must ensure that you **regularly log onto Google classroom and the school Communicator, to see what work has been posted** so that you don't fall behind – different subjects are using different platforms. If you do not have internet access or the financial means to participate online, please ask friends to screen shot the work to you and/or go through your textbooks. *If you are having valid difficulties, please ask your parent/guardian to contact Mrs Hartel on 083 414 9800, so that we may track learners who are at a genuine disadvantage.*
9. **Eat healthily, get enough sleep, exercise regularly.** Stressful times can result in healthy routines being disrupted, or the development of unusual habits such as comfort eating. Try not to fall into any behavior patterns which are unhelpful for you, or your companions at home. Try to eat regular, healthy meals and snacks to keep your energy up. Getting enough sleep is of the utmost importance, however watch out not to sleep too much as this is a form of avoidance and will reduce your motivation levels. Try to exercise more regularly when you are stressed - happy endorphins are released into your body when you exert yourself and your workout will also give you more energy. A minimum of 20 minutes 3 times per week is recommended to get these positive juices flowing.

There are plenty of home exercise routines you can follow online which don't require any equipment, just using your own body weight. *Danie from the school gym (B4C) is kindly posting free videos on YouTube of daily workouts. If you subscribe to the channel you will be notified whenever new exercises are posted. The link is:*

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0R6ICLRzsJvYW-Zb5OoFwA>.
10. **Keep up with social connections.** Do not underestimate the power of meaningful interactions. Use social media intentionally, only to keep up to date and sustain your relationships – it's important to surround yourself with positive vibes and good news.
11. **Steer clear of social media forums which promote fear and panic** – they are harmful for your mental health. Also be careful not to waste too much time on social media as it is often a negative distraction which can become obsessive. (When interacting with others on Whatsapp or any other social platform ask yourself, does this **truly benefit** me or those around me? If not, disengage).
12. It is helpful to allocate only a limited, specific amount of time each day to being on your phone, tablet or laptop for social reasons.

13. Ask for support if you need it! Again, it is normal to feel 'not okay' at times. It's important to ask for help, whether it be from your family, friends or Counsellors (see below for telephonic & online support).

14. Think of others. Every time you wash your hands, perhaps send out prayers/good energy for those who are less fortunate than you, who are experiencing extreme suffering during lockdown. Whilst washing quietly say, may all others be happy, may all others be healthy, may all others be safe, may all others live with ease.

We wish you courage, loving kindness, good health and all the support from your family, friends and community which you may need during this time.

Warm Regards,
The EHS Counselling Department

ACCESS TO EHS SCHOOL COUNSELLORS

Ms Padarath and Mrs Hartel will be available on week days for individual (online) Zoom Counselling sessions, between 09h00-12h00. Please email them to set up an appointment at ipadarath@edenvalehigh.co.za & khartel@edenvalehigh.co.za and state the urgency of the matter at hand. If you are unable to reach either Counsellor per email, you may call Mrs Hartel (phone number listed under 8. above) – only in case of emergency until 17h00 on week days.

TELEPHONIC & ONLINE MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES:

SMS 31393 or 32312 and a counsellor will call you back (available 24/7)

SADAG Helplines free telephonic counselling & information call 0800 21 22 23 or 0800 70 80 90

Suicide Helpline 0800 567 567

Lifeline National Helpline 0861 322 322

Child-line 0800 55 555

Cipla WhatsApp chat line 076 882 2775

The SADAG website, www.sadag.org contains free online videos, reliable resources, coping skills and information on social distancing, self-isolation, etc.