

Maintain a healthy, balanced lifestyle

We've always emphasised the importance of maintaining a healthy, balanced lifestyle outside the medical sphere. However, it is a new reality that many of our non-medical interests and pursuits are temporarily off-limits.

Here is an empirical prescription for junior doctors to keep fresh:

TRY SOMETHING CREATIVE

Have you been particularly artistic in your past life, or is it something you've always been meaning to dabble in? Perhaps this could be the time to start some sketches, or rekindle your musical talents with a musical instrument that's been left in your back room.

DECLUTTER TO DESTRESS

Clean and tidy that room or area you've been letting get a bit out of hand, or maybe your desktop files and folders need reorganising. Even tidying up a little can clear your mind and reduce stress more than you may think.

DEBRIEF WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Just because you need to socially isolate yourself doesn't mean that you should verbally isolate yourself. We have demanding responsibilities at the hospital – and even more so now – so make sure you give yourself the opportunity to debrief with others. If you'd prefer to speak to someone confidentially with mental health expertise, this is available to you through DRS4DRS (<https://www.drs4drs.com.au/>).

BE PRODUCTIVE WITH SPARE TIME

You may feel a little off-balance outside the work clock with the increased downtime. Take advantage of this time to accomplish tasks at home that you've been putting off for longer than you go remember; whether it be sorting paper collections at home or even filtering through old pictures and videos. This may be the perfect time to look back on old cherished memories, and find some good ones to frame!

LEARN A NEW SKILL

Challenge your mind in an outlet away from your hospital or clinic of practice. Is there a language you've always been meaning to pick up? Or a few new cooking recipes you've been hoarding from Masterchef? These are great ways to keep your mind ticking at home.

ADVANCE YOUR CAREER

Update that resume and get a headstart on your job applications for next year. Or perhaps you're midway through a research project that needs some invigorating. If you feel you have some energy in the tank, you'll thank yourself later for taking the stress off any last-minute scrambles.



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AVOID OVERWORKING

We know this is easier said than done. Any extra medical commitment to the hospital is fantastic, but it should not be at the expense of your personal health. If you are picking up extra shifts to support the increased healthcare demand, make sure you still have enough time to eat and sleep to function at your best.

KEEP A POSITIVE MINDSET

'Things turn out best for those who make the best of the way things turn out.' Take care of yourself so that you can best take care of others.