

A photograph of a young woman with voluminous curly brown hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a red and white striped t-shirt and holding a light-colored ceramic mug with both hands. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be an outdoor setting with greenery.

Surviving the new normal

What's the secret?

Perhaps it's time to take a lesson from history. Did you know that the Keep Calm and Carry On poster was produced in 1939? The British government used it to raise public morale during World War II, suggesting that the British public go about their "normalities" as much as possible. So, as we go to war on Covid-19, why not do the same?

Although life with no routine and no set hours sounds kinda fun; a life without structure will end up in a stressful mess. A day without a plan will lead to procrastination, nothing will get done and everything will fall apart.

So, if you're feeling as if nothing will be accomplished during this period of lockdown ... Enter: Routine. A study published in The Lancet Psychiatry found that people who favour a structured routine are associated with better mental health. Don't underestimate the importance of being in control of some aspects of your life. The more conscious we are in facing the day, the more tools we have to weather a storm.

Start by creating a time-wise schedule.

Fix your wake-up time, bed-time and meal times. Build your immunity by taking adequate rest and eating healthily. Also, make time to exercise. Both you and your family members need to be physically active to help you to maintain your calm and give you the strength to pass through the lockdown. Look at online workout sessions; get your friends to work out with you through Skype. Even a few moves to your favourite song can be a great way to get that endorphin rush.

Shower, get dressed and do your makeup, every day! And, very important, fix your "Work From Home" hours. Try to keep your WFH timings similar to your conventional office timings. This will help you to work in a disciplined way even when you are housebound.

Stay in contact with friends; start a cocktail hour on a video conferencing site, sending a few friends an invitation to drinks in front of their laptop or on their phone.

We don't know what the next couple of months could bring, so let's not speculate. Instead come up with a contingency plan to suit you and your family that will make you feel happy, healthy and grounded.

The great thing about following a set schedule is that you'll have the opportunity to make free time a priority as well. Consider what anchors and relaxes you - whether it's meditating, listening to music, or pottering around the garden - enjoy what you have rather than what you're being denied.

Think about it, when everything is over, it will be beautiful to do again what we took for granted.

In the meanwhile, treat everyone with kindness and stay safe.

Source: eae.es, capitecbank.co.za, huffingtonpsot.co.za, theguardian.com, un.org, news.columbia.edu, bustle.com, architecturaldigest.in, economictimes.indiatimes.com, psychologytoday.com