

ABC life support

First aid training for all

Wellbeing survey

Introduction

We are living through extraordinary times, 2020 and the beginning of 2021 has been a really challenging time for all of us.

ABC Life Support has now conducted three surveys to gauge how everyone is feeling as with live through the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns. Thank you to everyone who completed the surveys, the honesty and responses really laid bare how this past year has impacted on all of us.

We really wanted to find out how the lockdown, restrictions, health implications, work issues and general worry had affected you. What struck us with this last survey was the change in outlook and how the implications of the lockdowns had on people. We were also surprised that even with the difficulties faced, how so many people were positive and staying optimistic.

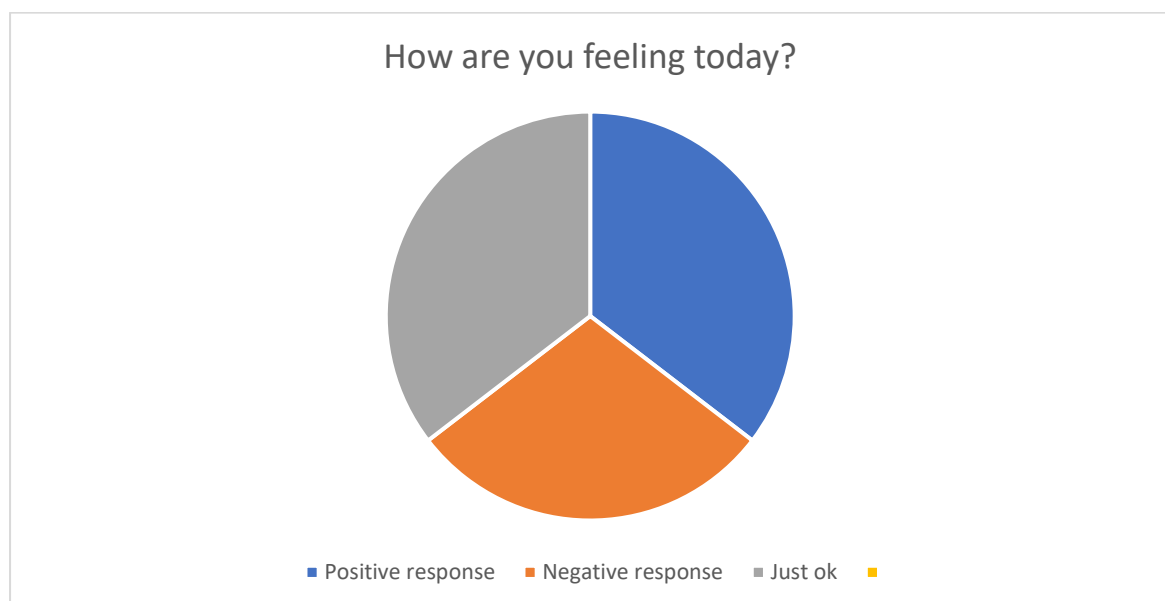
From the loss of jobs, loss of freedom, concern for family members, the sense of isolation and the pressure of money worries. All of these can affect your mental health and how you deal with each issue or problem. The impact of the pandemic cannot be underestimated nor can the long-term implications on the wellbeing of each of us.

We asked:

How are you feeling?

Back in June during the first lockdown we ran a similar survey, the first question was “how are you feeling today?”. 70% of responses faired as OK with 30% responding negatively. We asked the same question again in October and the response was quite different. 37% of people said they were feeling good, 24% of people responded negatively, 35% said they felt ok.

In this survey we asked the same question with 28% responding negatively, 34% responding positively with 34% responding that they were just ok.



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This initial question was then expanded on in question two where we asked for a wider description.

In three words, please can you describe how the current situation makes you feel.

The words that came across the strongest were:

*Anxious, frustrated, lonely, fearful, frightened, sad, angry, bored, worried,
disconnected, withdrawn, demotivated, flat, lethargic.*

The positive viewpoint was not quite as prevalent:

Optimistic, safe at home and Grateful

We are programmed to say we are fine! When we did deeper, the real feelings come through, it was clear that people are feeling very unsettled by this lockdown. This is reflected in the nature of the responses.

How was your Christmas and how much did the changes in the 5-day window affect you?

When we asked how people felt about the changes to the plans at Christmas, surprisingly most people were unaffected by the change. 75% of those who responded were unaffected with many stating it was a stress-free Christmas and nice to have it paired back and a simpler time for their families.

What we found interesting was when, in our last survey, we asked what people were most looking forward to, Christmas came out as a clear favourite.

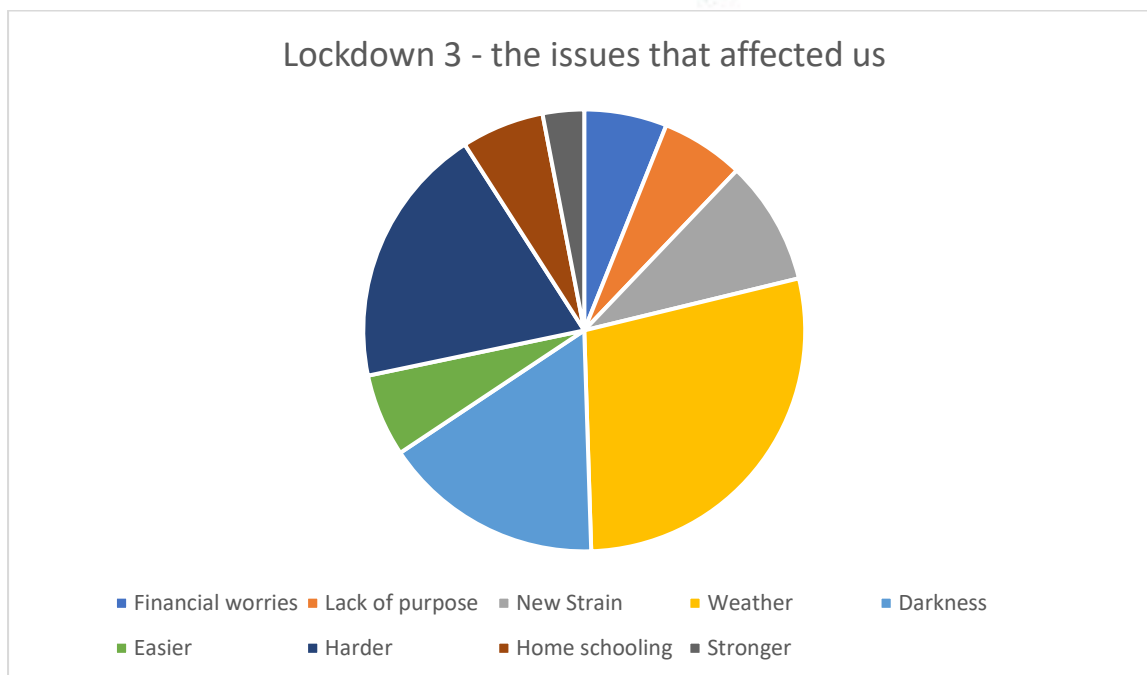
Lockdown 1 v Lockdown 2

We asked how the two lockdowns compared, in the first lockdown those who responded cited money worries and fear of the unknown and uncertainty were the primary concerns. The novelty of the lockdown and time spent in the garden were the positives.

This time around the feelings were slightly more negative. The weather was one of the main difficulties with 28% of responses mentioning this along with shorter days and it being darker (16%). The fear of the new strain 9% and feeling a lack of purpose 6% were also raised. While some stated they found this lockdown easier (6%), more people found it harder (19%).

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What we learnt from lockdown 1 that we have been able to use in the last lockdown

The suggestions here were so wide ranging It is hard to quantify the results. It is fair to say that the impact of this past year has been seismic.

The comments around the first lockdown dealt with all areas of our lives from increasing the amount of exercise to clearing the clutter to watching TV. One area which seems to come up throughout both lockdowns is being kind, not judging and being grateful.

The second lockdown obviously hit many people much harder, with these comments really striking a chord:

“take it slowly”.

“Let go of the guilt”.

“be in the moment”.

“enjoy the small things”.

“keep in touch”.

“take time to connect”.

“ask for help”.

The sense of kindness, thoughtfulness and a gentler approach to this lockdown is striking.

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What were the positives of this lockdown?

While this lockdown has been tough on all of us, we did want to find out what positives people have found during the past 2 months.

Time with children – 46% of those who responded felt that having this time together was a positive, while home schooling has no doubt put pressure on families, the additional time together has been a good thing. A time we will never get back.

- 9% of people mentioned having more time for reading being a positive.
- Gratitude / realising whats important.
- Being at home
- The pace of life and being able to rest.
- Fitness
- Neighbours
- TV
- Cooking
- Not travelling or spending money on petrol

What are you looking forward to ?

The overriding answer to this was to see people, friends and family with 68% of those who responded saying this was their priority.

Other areas which were key to people were:

- holidays
- having a cuddle with grandchildren
- improving weather
- shopping
- going out,
- schools returning
- Having a freedom of choice

It would seem that normal life revolves around being with people. The freedoms that we have taken from granted in the past and that have been taken away are about having time with those we love and have missed over the past year.

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Conclusion

The results of the survey showed a mixed response and whilst we understand that this is primarily based upon the individual set of conditions that a person is living under and therefore perspectives.

As we slowly emerge from this lockdown and we look to the future, the impact of this lockdown is not to be underestimated. The beginning of 2021 has been a much tougher experience for many, the weather, the time of year and the feeling of disconnection and loneliness cannot be underestimated.

Acknowledging and recognising how one is feeling in terms of the challenges that the current climate poses is key in terms of processing and although the experiences have been negative for some, by having the conversations, we hope that people understand and appreciate that they are not alone, and that support is available.

We had all been through lockdowns before, we knew what to expect but the weather, short days and the early darkness and fear of new strains and growing anxiety about the situation were still a contributing factor to the wellbeing of people.

What have we learnt? As some of us reflect on this time, what are the key things we can take from this extraordinary time? From this survey, we can find so many takeaways, whether it be keeping in touch, making the most of the time we have had, how we connect with others and enjoying the small things in life.

If you feel you need to seek Mental Health advice, there are people there to help you.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Crisis Line	111 Option 2
Samaritans	116123
Calm (for men)	0800 585 855
Papyrus Hope line (for young people)	0800 068 4141
	07786 209 697