

SCIENTIST WITHOUT A LAB? A PHD RESEARCHER GUIDE TO COVID-19

In these unprecedented times, many of us are finding ourselves without the ability to perform lab work and are having to self-isolate. This poster explores some of the options for PhD researchers in these uncertain period to help alleviate pressure, guide productivity and maintain mental wellness.



WRITE YOUR INTRO

Take this opportunity to review your field, understand seminal work and write your thesis introduction. Consider writing a review article - this often can be used as an introduction!



BUILD YOUR EXPERIMENTAL

You know roughly what techniques you will use. Write about how the techniques work and detail your procedures from your lab books. If your lab books are, well, lacking - time to fix that!



MAKE BEAUTIFUL FIGURES

Often neglected - make some great figures to go in your thesis. Use the time to get to grips with graphical software - a skillset useful beyond the PhD.



CONNECT WITH COLLEAGUES

Use online tools to speak to colleagues such as Zoom/Skype. Consider team coffee breaks or lunches too! Use this time to connect with collaborators across the globe.



CREATE A SCHEDULE

Think about creating a schedule to stick to, as well as using tools like the pomodoro method to manage your time. Remember no one works solidly all day - take breaks!



LEARN TO CODE

Automating data processing by investing in your ability to code will ultimately make your lab work faster and smoother when you return to the lab.



CREATE TEST PLANS

Plan out your experiments so that when you get back in the lab you can be super efficient with your remaining time. Don't underestimate the importance of thinking time!



WORK ON PAPERS

Use this time to write up papers for publication. Not enough data? No problem! Write about what you expect to see and collect the data/modify the draft when you return.



LET GO OF THE GUILT

Remember, everyone is in the same position and productivity will drop. COVID-19 is *not* your fault. Doing what you can is good enough.



TAKE TIME FOR YOU

Isolation can take its toll. Make sure to take time for you, doing other things you enjoy. Most importantly, look after your health. Family and your wellness comes first!

STRUGGLING WITH ISOLATION? NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO? CALL SAMARITANS NOW ON 116-123

Part of the #mentalhealth series by Dr Zoe Ayres (@zjayres). Free to distribute.