

Step One



LET'S TALK

Wellbeing Toolkit to help support your
Mental Health

Your future starts here

How to use this workbook

It's important to remember that everyone has mental health and can experience good and poor mental health.

This workbook is designed as a simple and practical tool to support you and to identify what keeps you well and support your wellbeing and how to identify and avoid triggers.

Tips for good wellbeing

Keep active

Exercise releases chemicals in your brain that make you feel good.

Exercise can boost your self-esteem, help you concentrate, sleep and feel better. This doesn't just mean going to the gym - gentle exercises like walking, push ups, sit ups and squats can make a difference. Making exercise part of your day will not only help your heart, but also your wellbeing.

Eat & Drink

Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated. Avoid caffeine and sugary drinks where you can.

Try to avoid eating late at night as it will affect your sleep.

Take a break

Take a deep breath... and relax. Taking a break may mean doing nothing, but it could mean doing something active.

Give yourself time to sleep if you need to. Sometimes things can wait.

Sleep

Did you know that an adult needs on average between 7 and 9 hours sleep a night?

Try to get into bed and do some breathing exercises to help you switch off.

What is Depression?

There are many mental health conditions that can affect us all. The most common mental health condition is depression.

Depression affects approximately one in four people in the UK every year and it is common to be diagnosed with depression alongside other mental health conditions.

Life is often difficult, we all have 'down days' but if you experience more bad days than good, and last for a period of two weeks or more, you may be suffering with depression.

Your healthcare professional is likely to use a questionnaire to determine if you are depressed.

Some common signs and symptoms of depression are:

- Feeling sad, dispaired, guilty, upset or numb
- Losing interest in things you usually enjoy
- Crying a lot or unable to cry when a sad event occurs
- Feeling alone even when in company
- Tired and irritable
- Changes in weight, appetite and eating
- Poor memory or concentration
- Putting things off

What does poor mental health look like?



Russell Brand

Bipolar Disorder
Substance misuse
Bulimia



Angelina Jolie

Borderline
Personality
Disorder



Kurt Cobain

ADHD
Bipolar Disorder



David Beckham

Obsessive
Compulsive
Disorder



Charlize Theron

Obsessive
Compulsive
Disorder



Michael Phelps

ADHD



Elton John

Substance misuse
Bulimia

Mental health conditions can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, and background. Above are some famous faces that you may recognise who have spoken out about their own mental health conditions.

Use what you know about good mental health and write down what you think good wellbeing looks like for you.

What does good wellbeing look like?



Self-Care Assessment

Self-care activities are things you do to maintain good mental health and improve your wellbeing. You'll find many of these you do on a daily basis. Think about how frequently, or how well, you do these activities. The goal is to help you learn about your own personal needs and recognise where you may need more attention.

There is no right or wrong answers here – some activities you may not be interested in, or do daily. This serves as a starting point to think about your own needs.

Mark each of these from 1-5. 1 being you don't do well, or not at all; 5 being you do really well, or regularly.

Once you have completed this, think about how you can improve those that you don't do well. Choose one or two to start, don't worry if you struggle you can always restart. You will find ideas further on in this workbook.

Physical	
Eat healthy foods	
Take care of personal hygiene	
Exercise	
Get enough sleep	
Participate in fun activities (e.g. walking, swimming, dancing)	

Emotional/Psychological

Participate in hobbies	
Switch off from technology	
Learn new things unrelated to school or work	
Find reasons to laugh	
Express my feelings in a healthy way (e.g. talking, creating art, journaling)	

Social

Spend time with people who I like	
Call or write to friends or family who are far away	
Have stimulating conversations	
Ask others for help, when needed	
Do enjoyable activities with other people	

Spiritual

Meditate	
Recognise the things that give meaning to my life	
Act in accordance with my morals and values	
Set aside time for thought and reflection	
Appreciate art that is impactful to me (e.g. music, film, literature)	

Professional

Improve my professional skills	
Say "no" to excessive new responsibilities	
Make time to talk and build relationships with colleagues	
Take breaks during work	
Maintain balance between my professional and personal life	

Things I am good at....

Things that I need to work on...

How can I improve?

Emotional Resilience

Resilience refers to how well you can deal with and bounce back from difficulties in life.

It can mean the difference between handling pressure and losing your cool.

Resilient people tend to maintain a more positive outlook and cope with stress more effectively.

Tips for Resilience

Find a sense of purpose

Get involved in a new activity or involved in community activities. You may find a hidden talent or something that interests you.

Build positive beliefs in your ability

Remove those negative thoughts. Rather than telling yourself you can't, tell yourself "I can do this".

Be optimistic

Understand that setbacks are temporary and that you have the skills and abilities to combat the challenges you face. What you are dealing with may be difficult, but its important to remain hopeful and positive about a brighter future.

Nurture yourself

When feeling down it's really important to remember to eat, drink plenty of water and get some exercise. These simple activities will keep you healthy and strong.

Self-Care Exercises

Strengths exploration

Those who know their strengths and use them frequently tend to have more success in several areas. They feel happier, have better self-esteem, and are more likely to accomplish their goals.

To use your strengths effectively, it's important to have a clear idea of what they are, and how they can be used. Some of your greatest strengths might be easy to recognise, while others go unnoticed because they feel ordinary to you (even if they aren't).

In this worksheet you will identify your strengths and ways in which you are already using them. Additionally, you will explore new ways to use your strengths to your advantage.

Select your strengths from the choices below, or add your own at the bottom

Wisdom	Artistic ability	Curiosity	Leadership
Empathy	Honesty	Open Mindedness	Persistence
Enthusiasm	Kindness	Love	Social Awareness
Fairness	Bravery	Cooperation	Forgiveness
Modesty	Common Sense	Self-Control	Patience
Gratitude	Love of Learning	Humour	Spirituality
Ambition	Creativity	Confidence	Intelligence
Athleticism	Discipline	Assertiveness	Logic
Optimism	Independence	Flexibility	Adventurousness

Relationships

Romantic relationships, friendships, and family

List the strengths you possess that help you in your relationships.

Describe a specific time your strengths were able to help you in a relationship.

Describe two new ways you could use your strengths in relationships.

Profession

Past or present work, school, or other professional endeavours

List the strengths you possess that help you in your profession.

Describe a specific time your strengths were able to help you in your profession.

Describe two new ways you could use your strengths your profession.

Personal fulfilment

Hobbies, interests, and pleasurable activities

List the strengths you possess that help you achieve personal fulfilment.

Describe a specific time your strengths were able to help you with personal fulfilment.

Describe two new ways you could use your strengths for personal fulfilment.

Self-Care Exercises

The Rainy Day Letter

John Henden

It is ironic that the very times when one most needs to remember strengths and resources are often those occasions when it is easiest to forget about them. The rainy day letter is a way to remind us of these strengths and resources at times when they are most needed.

How to

This is a letter from you to you. It should be written not in a moment of despair but in a moment of relative calm and well-being. It is an emotional insurance policy against the inevitability of those darker moments that come at various times in life, a sort of 'emergency roadside repair kit' for the spirit.

The letter should contain but is not limited to the following:

- A list of nurturing activities to do
- A list of nurturing people to call
- Reminders of your positive character traits
- Reminders of spiritual or philosophical beliefs that strengthen you
- Reminders of your dreams and hopes for the future.
- Special advice or other reminders that are important to you.

Once completed put your rainy day letter where you can find it easily whenever needed. Some people like to make several copies so that they are available in different places.

Coping Skills for Anxiety

TherapistAid.com

Deep Breathing

Deep breathing is a simple technique that's excellent for managing emotions. Not only is deep breathing effective, it's also discreet and easy to use at any time or place.

Sit comfortably and place one hand on your abdomen. Breathe in through your nose, deeply enough that the hand on your abdomen rises. Hold the air in your lungs, and then exhale slowly through your mouth, with your lips puckered as if you are blowing through a straw. The secret is to go slow: Time the inhalation (4s), pause (4s), and exhalation (6s). Practice for 3 to 5 minutes.

4s
Inhale



4s
Hold



6s
Exhale



Challenging Irrational Thoughts

Anxiety can be magnified by irrational thoughts. For example, the thoughts that "something bad will happen" or "I will make a mistake" might lack evidence, but still have an impact on how you feel. By examining the evidence and challenging these thoughts, you can reduce anxiety.

Put thoughts on trial. Choose a thought that has contributed to your anxiety. Gather evidence in support of your thought (*verifiable facts only*), and against your thought. Compare the evidence and determine whether your thought is accurate or not.

Use Socratic questioning. Question the thoughts that contribute to your anxiety. Ask yourself:

"Is my thought based on facts or feelings?"

"How would my best friend see this situation?"

"How likely is it that my fear will come true?"

"What's *most likely* to happen?"

"If my fear comes true, will it still matter in a week? A month? A year?"

Self-Care Exercises

Coping Skills for Anxiety

TherapistAid.com

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

By tensing and relaxing the muscles throughout your body, you can achieve a powerful feeling of relaxation. Additionally, progressive muscle relaxation will help you spot anxiety by teaching you to recognise feelings of muscle tension.

Sit back or lie down in a comfortable position. For each area of the body listed below, you will tense your muscles tightly, but not to the point of strain. Hold the tension for 10 seconds, and pay close attention to how it feels. Then, release the tension, and notice how the feeling of relaxation differs from the feeling of tension.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Feet | Curl your toes tightly into your feet, then release them. |
| Calves | Point or flex your feet, then let them relax. |
| Thighs | Squeeze your thighs together tightly, then let them relax. |
| Torso | Suck in your abdomen, then release the tension and let it fall. |
| Back | Squeeze your shoulder blades together, then release them. |
| Shoulders | Lift and squeeze your shoulders toward your ears, then let them drop. |
| Arms | Make fists and squeeze them toward your shoulders, then let them drop. |
| Hands | Make a fist by curling your fingers into your palm, then relax your fingers. |
| Face | Scrunch your facial features to the center of your face, then relax. |
| Full Body | Squeeze all muscles together, then release all tension. |



1



2



3

Over to you... Use this space to think about what you can do to maintain good wellbeing and build emotional resilience. Try to list three things for now - we have left space on the next few pages for more ideas. It's a good idea to share this with your case manager, so they can discuss your strategy with you.

My Personal Strategy

1

Is the person at significant risk of suicide or harm?

If you notice someone who may be suffering with their mental health, is there any immediate risk?

2

Listen to what they have to say with your undivided attention

Even if what they are saying doesn't make sense to you, listen with no judgement.

3

Reassure and provide information

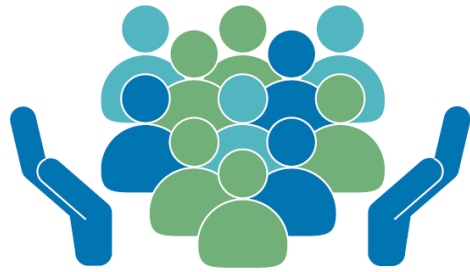
Let them know it's OK to talk about their feelings.


4

Encourage professional support

Encourage them to seek professional support through their case manager or staff.

Supporting others'
wellbeing



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My Notes



Step One

NEXT STEPS...



We hope that this toolkit helps you think about and maintain your wellbeing, as well as support others if they need.

If you are having a particularly hard day then refer to your strategies and share this with someone you trust so they can support you aswell.

If you would like to learn more about mental health then the Mental Health First Aid course will give you in-depth knowledge about mental health conditions and how to support yourself and others around you. Contact Step One for more information and course dates.



Your future starts here

Step One Charity, Beaufort House, 51 New North Road, Exeter, EX4 4EP
01392 255248

Info@steponecharity.co.uk