

Looking after your mental wellbeing

Caring for your mind means making space for your thoughts and feelings. Simple, regular habits can boost mood, ease stress, and build resilience for life's challenges.

5 Ways to Mental Wellbeing

Simple, everyday activities that everyone can do to boost mental health, often described as the wellbeing equivalent of 'five fruit and veg a day.'

- 1 **Connect:**
Build relationships with others.
- 2 **Be active**
Move your body every day.
- 3 **Take notice**
Be mindful and appreciate the moment.
- 4 **Keep learning**
Try new things and stay curious.
- 5 **Give**
Do something kind for others.

Source: NEF Five Ways to Wellbeing 2008

Suggestions or ideas

- Use a short breathing exercise when stress builds.
- Be kind to yourself: notice self-critical thoughts and gently reframe them.
- Journalling: write down worries, gratitude, or small wins.
- Use creativity: colouring, music, or crafts can soothe and distract.
- Try mindful moments: focus on the present (a hot drink, the sound of birds, your breath).
- Grounding techniques: help stay present by focusing on your senses.
- Reflect on how spending time on digital devices affects your mood.

Try the
Stress Bucket
tool over
the page

PAUSE & REFLECT

THE EVIDENCE

- Self-compassion is linked with fewer depressive symptoms and greater resilience (MacBeth & Gumley, 2012).
- Regular journalling or expressive writing can reduce distress and depressive symptoms for some people (Sohal et al., 2022).
- Creative activities such as art or music are associated with improved mood and reduced depression symptoms (Fancourt & Finn, 2019).

STRESS BUCKET TOOL

The stress bucket is a simple way to picture how stress builds up. Every worry or stressful event adds more 'water' to your bucket. If the bucket gets too full, it can overflow, leading to overwhelm. The aim is to keep the bucket from filling up by finding ways to 'let water out'.



Things that make me feel worried or stressed and add 'water' to my bucket.



Things that help me feel better and let the 'water' out of my stress bucket.

WHERE TO START

You could start by filling in 'My plan' and looking at the tools on the next page or try any of the following:

- For general information, apps, videos and tips, visit NHS Every Mind Matters: nhs.uk/every-mind-matters
- Create your own Mind Plan and free 4-week email programme: nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/your-mind-plan-quiz/
- Sign up for a 7-week email programme to ease anxiety: anxiety.ecrm-registration.nhs.uk/
- For in-person support, join a healthier lifestyles 6-week programme through Health Connections Mendip: healthconnectionsmentip.org/healthy-lifestyles-programme/
- For wider groups, services and resources, explore: healthconnectionsmentip.org/mendip-directory/



NHS Every Mind Matters



NHS Every Mind Matters Mind Plan