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Supporting Your Wellbeing; self-help pack

Preprint · April 2020

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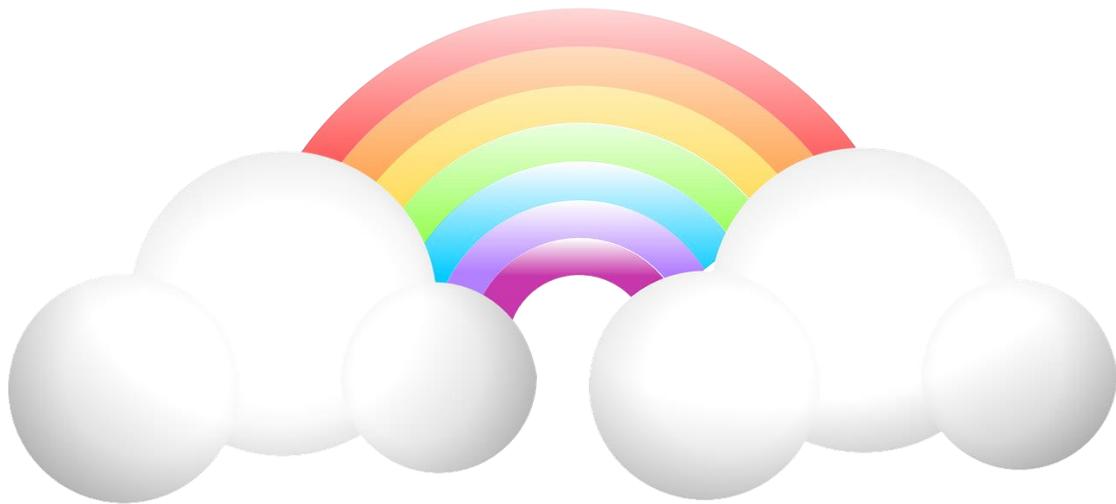


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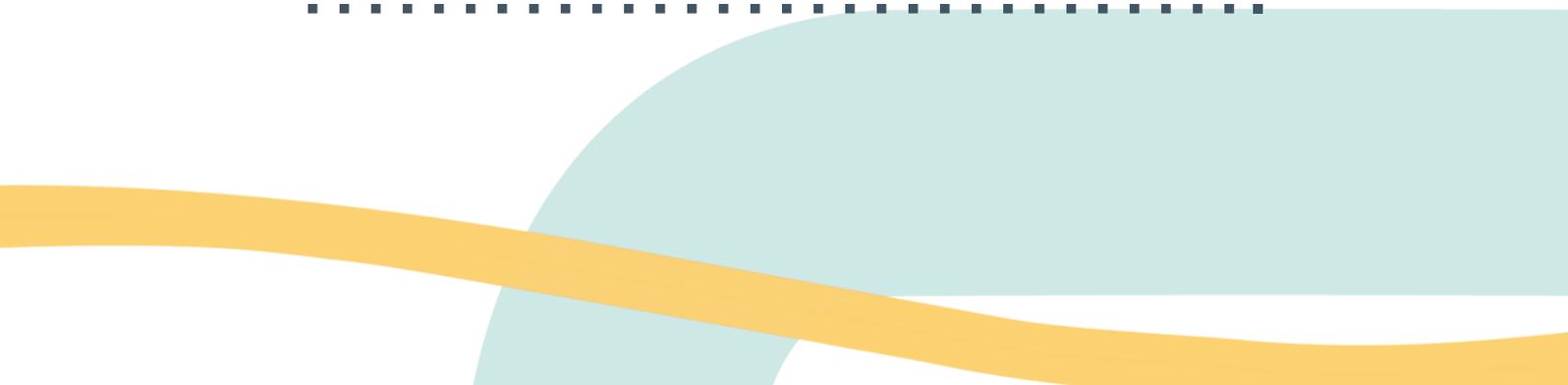
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Supporting your wellbeing pack



Name

.....



Taking care of your wellbeing

We have developed this pack to help you manage your wellbeing. It includes strategies and techniques which you might find helpful at this time.

It is normal to feel unsettled when big changes happen. You might be feeling worried about coronavirus and how it could affect you. You might be feeling frustrated or scared because of the changes being made and the impact this is having on all our lives. These are all natural reactions.

This pack should be an addition to support from staff. If you need more help or you want to talk to someone, please speak to a member of staff.



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Taking positive steps to wellbeing

It is important to find ways to keep yourself busy with activities that help you feel good about yourself. Focus on what you can do and plan in activities for each day. **Have a look a list below for ideas.**

<p>Be kind to yourself We all have bad days. Encourage rather than criticise. Treat yourself the way you would treat a friend.</p>	<p>Exercise regularly Being active helps lift our mood, reduces stress and anxiety, improves physical health, and gives us more energy.</p>
<p>Take up a hobby or learn a new skill Increase your confidence and interest</p>	<p>Have some fun or be creative Draw a picture, colour in or make a scrapbook. Enjoy yourself!</p>
<p>Help others Get involved with a project, or simply help out someone you know.</p>	<p>Relax Make time for yourself. Allow yourself to chill out and relax. Find something that suits you.</p>
<p>Eat healthily Eat regularly, eat breakfast, eat fruit and vegetables, drink water.</p>	<p>Balance sleep Get into a healthy sleep routine – including going to bed and getting up at the same time each day.</p>
<p>Connect with others Stay in touch with family and friends.</p>	<p>Music Listen to music you like. Sing a song or learn to play an instrument.</p>
<p>Try something new Try a new food, listen to new music or read a new book. Be curious.</p>	<p>Write Write a letter, a ‘thank you’ card or a journal</p>

What other activities could you plan in each day?

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31 Days of Coping

2020

S M T W T F S



Create your own Journey

-Arsineh Alenkin

5 Do something challenging	6 Be creative: Draw, paint, or decorate	7 Find a fun way to do physical exercise	8 Write a letter to someone you care about	9 Do something kind for yourself	10 Find positive stories in the news	11 Eat healthy foods to boost your immune system
12 Spend time with other people	13 Think of your goals and how you can work towards them	14 Play a game you enjoyed when you were young	15 Take 5 minutes to sit and breathe. Repeat.	16 Listen to music that makes you feel happy	17 Notice your thoughts and then try to let them go	18 Thank three people you are grateful to
19 Look for the good in others and notice their strengths	20 Sit outside and be with nature	21 Write a list of coping skills	22 Watch a film that makes you feel good	23 Remember all feelings and thoughts pass in time	24 Write down three strengths	25 Learn a new skill!
26 Focus on what you can control	27 Write a positive statement about yourself	28 Sit outside with a brew and be with nature	29 Watch a film that makes you feel good	30 Play a game or watch a film with a friend	31 Name one thing you are proud of	4 Share what you are feeling
1 Make a plan to help you keep calm	2 Write down 10 things you are grateful for	3 Get active even if you are stuck indoors				

Activity planning

Now that you have thought of a few ideas to keep busy, try to make a plan for the week ahead. Try to plan activities throughout the day and break tasks down into smaller chunks.

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			



	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Keeping a routine is really important and can help to give us a sense of **purpose and achievement** and can help to feel more settled.

Positive affirmations

Sometimes we can get into unhelpful thinking patterns and think negatively about ourselves and the situation we are in. Positive affirmations can help us to think and feel better about ourselves. Use a statement that starts with I, for example:

- I am a good person
- I care about others
- I have a lot to be proud of
- I am in control of my choices
- I can get through this
- I am strong and resilient

Try to create a statement about yourself and practice using it whenever you have a negative thought.

I am.....

These questions might also help you to notice something positive from the day:



Managing worry

There are lots of changes at the moment. It would be hard not to worry about what it all means for yourself and others, but sometimes we can get sucked into worrying, thinking about it over and over. This type of worry can be exhausting and can make us feel worse.

Try to:

- Notice when you are worrying
- Remind yourself lots of worrying does not help
- Focus on the present moment (there are lots of mindfulness activities in this pack to help practice this)

Building resilience

Think about specific challenges you have got through in the past:

- How did you get through it?
- What did you do?
- What did you say to yourself?
- Who was supportive or helpful at this time?
- What resources did you use?
- What useful advice did you get from others?
- What did you learn about how to cope with challenges?

When thinking about ways you have coped with challenges in the past.

What did you notice about yourself?

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Are there any skills which could be helpful again?

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FACE COVID

POSITIVE
VIBES

F = Focus on what is in your control

A = Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings

C = Come back into your body

E = Engage in what you are doing

C = Committed Action

O = Opening up

V = Values

I = Identify resources

D = Disinfect and Distance

Focus on what is in your control

When we are facing a crisis of any sort, we are bound to feel both fear and anxiety. These are normal natural responses to challenging situations and uncertainty.

It's all too easy to get lost in worrying and ruminating about all sorts of things that are out of your control.

You can't control what happens in the future. You can't control Corona virus itself or the world economy or how your government manages this. And you can't magically control your feelings, eliminating all that perfectly natural fear and anxiety.

BUT YOU CAN CONTROL WHAT YOU DO – HERE AND NOW. AND THAT MATTERS.



Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings

What thoughts, feelings, emotions, memories and urges are showing up inside of you?



Come back into your body

Come back into and connect with your physical body.



Engage in what you are doing

Focus your attention on the activity you are doing



Committed Action

Consider what are the simple ways to look after yourself
What are the most effective ways to spend time?



Opening up

Make room for difficult feelings and be kind to yourself.
Ask yourself if someone you loved was going through this how would I treat them? What might I say or do?
Then try and treat yourself the same way!



Values

Be guided by what you value in life.
What sort of person do you want to be?
How do you want to treat yourself and others?



Identify Resources

Offer support to others and use trustworthy and reliable guidance
www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019



Disinfect and Distance Physically

Disinfect your hands regularly and keep a safe physical distance from other people



Information adapted from
FACE COVID-19 document
by Dr Russ Harris
@jessicatwigg

Mindfulness practice

Mindfulness can be described as **paying attention** to what we are experiencing in this moment, and doing so with a particular attitude: One of **curiosity, openness, acceptance and warmth**.

Simply observing what we are experiencing, right now, and bringing a warm curiosity to whatever arises. Allowing thoughts and feelings to come and go without getting caught up in them and without a need to change what you observe. This is your experience

Mindfulness is something that we can bring to any aspect of our day to day life. It can help to create feelings of **calmness, warmth and self-compassion**.

Take a moment to feel your breath and ask yourself: **How is my mind right now? Is it busy or calm?**

.....

.....

.....



Mindfulness practice - Mindful breathing

- Sit in an upright position on a chair. Place both feet on the floor and put your hands in a comfortable position, perhaps resting on your lap, or on the arms of your chair.
- If you feel able to do so close your eyes.
- Focus on your breathing, pay close attention to each in breath and each out breath. You could pay attention to the temperature of your breath or the depth of your breath.
- Thoughts will come into your mind, and that's okay, because that's just what the human mind does. Simply notice those thoughts, then bring your attention back to your breathing.
- Likewise, you can notice sounds, physical feelings, and emotions, and again, just bring your attention back to your breathing.
- Keep paying attention to your breathing for a few minutes.
- With practice you could try this for about five minutes before bringing your attention back to your surroundings.



Mindfulness practice – The body scan

- Sit in an upright position on a chair. Place both feet on the floor and put your hands in a comfortable position, perhaps resting on your lap, or on the arms of your chair.
- If you feel able to do so close your eyes.
- Focus on your breathing, pay close attention to each in breath and each out breath.
- Now bring your attention to your head, notice any physical sensations in this part of your body.
- Next scan your neck and the top of your shoulders and see if you are aware of any sensations in this part of your body.
- Bring your attention down your back and notice how the top, middle and bottom of your back feel.
- Now bring your attention to your legs, notice how the top of your legs feel, then bring your attention to the bottom of your legs, finally focusing on your ankles, feet and toes.
- Now direct your attention to your hands, noticing how your fingers and thumbs feel.
- Scan your wrists, lower arms, elbows, and top of your arms and pay attention to any sensations in this part of your body.
- Bring your attention to your tummy area and notice how this part of your body feels.
- Finally pay attention to your chest. Can you notice your heart beating?
- Now take three deep breaths in and out and open your eyes, returning your attention to the room and your surroundings.

Mindfulness practice - Mindful walking

- First, set your intention to walk mindfully. Take a few deep breaths, and just acknowledge that during your walk you will try to be aware of your environment and your internal state (i.e., thoughts, feelings, sensations). There are no set rules for this walk, and it can be done anywhere.
- As you begin to walk, notice the **sensation** of your feet hitting the ground. Notice the process of moving your legs. What muscles tense or relax as you move? Notice where you are stepping, the quality of each step (i.e., are you stepping hard or lightly onto the ground), and the feel of the ground beneath your feet or shoes.
- Expand your awareness to notice your **surroundings**. As you walk, what do you see, smell, hear, taste, and feel? How does the air feel on your skin? What do you notice around you?
- Expand your awareness so that you also become aware of your **internal experiences**, such as your thoughts and emotions. What thoughts cross your mind as you walk? What emotion or emotions are there right now? Are they intense, or mild? Are these internal experiences pulling you in or can you observe them with a little bit of distance? No need to judge these internal experiences as good or bad, practice just noticing them for what they are.
- As you complete your walk, congratulate yourself for your intention to practice mindful walking, no matter how many times your mind was pulled away from the walk, or how "well" you thought your practice went today. Just notice that the intention to be mindful is the key to practice, and pat yourself on the back
- If at any point during your walk you notice your mind wandering to the past or the future, or being pulled away from the walk, just gently acknowledge that your mind has wandered and bring yourself back to the present moment and the walk.



Compassion focused imagery

The aim of this activity is to develop more feelings of compassion and kindness. Don't worry if you struggle with the imagery to start with. Sometimes we need to practice to get used to it. The important thing is to be curious and see what works for you.

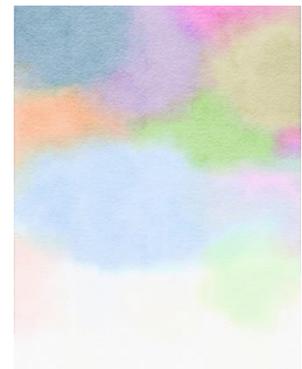
Creating a safe place

- Start by sitting comfortably and finding a soothing breathing rhythm.
- Allow your mind to focus on and create a place that seems as if it could give you the feeling of **safeness and calmness**.
- Sometimes these feelings may be difficult to generate. The act of trying, and the sense of it being the sort of place you would like it to is the important thing.
- Your place may be a beautiful wood where you can feel the wind gently on your face; it may be a beach with a crystal clear blue sea and soft white sand, or a cabin with a log fire.
- Wherever you imagine it should bring a sense of pleasure to you and a feeling of safeness.
- At your imagined place, bring your attention to each of your senses; what you can imagine **seeing, feeling, hearing, tasting and smelling**.
- When you bring your safe place to mind allow your body to relax.
- Imagine this as your own unique safe place, created by you. The place itself can take joy and happiness in you being there.
- When you imagine this place, allow yourself to feel soothed.



Compassion colour

- Imagine a colour you associate with compassion or kindness.
- Now imagine your compassionate colour surrounding you. Then slowly imagine this entering your heart area, through your body.
- As this happens try to focus on the colour as having **wisdom, strength and warmth**.
- Try to create a facial expression of kindness on your own face as you do this.



Letting go of difficult emotions through Mindfulness

Observe your emotions

NOTICE the emotion.
Step BACK.
Get UNSTUCK from the emotion.

Experience your emotion fully

As a WAVE, coming and going.
Try not to BLOCK emotion.
Try not to PUSH the emotion AWAY.
Don't try to KEEP the emotion around.
Don't try to INCREASE the emotion.

Remember you are not your emotion

Try not to act on the emotion.
Remember when you have felt DIFFERENT
Describe your emotion
Notice OTHER feelings that you have at the same time you feel the strong emotion.

Practice respecting, loving your emotion

Don't JUDGE your emotion.
Practice respecting and letting go of your emotion.
ACCEPT your emotion.

Try and express your emotion

Allow yourself to cry if you want to and then let go of the sadness and do something different.
Express anger safely – shout, scream, exercise, or write a letter and then tear it up

5-4-3-2-1...Grounding

Grounding exercises can be helpful in **managing overwhelming feelings** by helping us to regain our focus **and stay in the present moment**. Here is a simple exercise you can do to help you feel grounded:

Look around you. What can you **see**?

Describe 5 things in detail



Touch 4 things. How do they **feel**?

e.g. Hard or soft? Rough or smooth? Hot or cold?



Stop and **listen**. What can you **hear**?

Describe 3 **sounds**



What can you **smell**?

Describe 2 **scents**

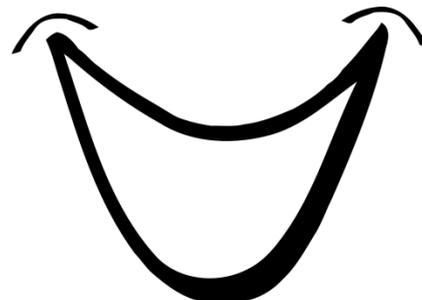
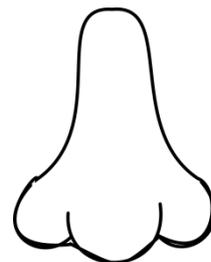


Name 1 thing you can a **taste**

Describe the **flavour**, e.g. sweet, salty, bitter, sour?

OR

Take 1 deep **breath**



Self-soothing

What is self-soothing?

Self-soothing is another way to manage difficult emotions using your five senses

When should I use this skill?

Soothe one or more of your senses for a couple of minutes each day. Plan practice time into your day. For example, try this skill when you are not distressed. Practice using the skill when you need to cope with a lot of distress.

Developing your Self-soothing kit

Pick a box or bag that you like. Collect five or more items to go into it. Try to pick items to soothe all five senses. The ideas below might help you.

Vision 	Ideas for vision Photographs Art work Colours	What are 2 things you like to look at:
Hearing 	Ideas for Hearing Favourite song Running water Sound of birds	What are 2 things you like to listen to:
Smell 	Ideas for Smell Favourite aftershave Smell of grass scented oils	What are 2 things you like to smell:
Taste 	Ideas for taste Hot/cold drink Mints Something sweet	What are 2 things you like to taste:
Touch 	Ideas for touch Brushing your hair Feeling a soft item Cream on your skin	What are 2 things you like to touch:

Apps for mental health and wellbeing

You might find the following apps helpful. Please note, some of the apps listed below allow you to use some of the practices for free, however, sometimes you have to pay. If you don't want to pay for an app, go to the end of this pack, where there is a list of free YouTube links you can access.

Mindfulness

Headspace



Stop, Breathe & Think



Mindfulness Based Living



Sleep Meditation and Sleep Stories

Calm



Slumber



Breathing practices

Breathe2Relax



Breathing Zone



Mental Health

My Possible Self
(Anxiety, stress and unhelpful thinking)



MyPossibleSelf: Mental Health 
Clinically proven self-help
My Possible Self
★★★★ 4.1, 26 Ratings
Free - Offers In-App Purchases

Stress and Anxiety Companion
(Stress and anxiety)



Stress & Anxiety Companion 
Anxiety busting toolkit
Companion Apps Limited
★★★★ 4.6, 39 Ratings
Free - Offers In-App Purchases

Woebot
(Anxiety and depression)



Woebot - your self-care expert 
CBT for anxiety & depression
Woebot Labs Inc
★★★★ 4.6, 282 Ratings
Free

What's up?
(Depression, Anxiety, Anger, Stress)



What's Up? - A Mental Health App 
Jackson Tempra
★★★★ 4.7, 146 Ratings
Free - Offers In-App Purchases

Other NHS approved apps can be discovered here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mental-health/>

Online self-help booklets and NHS approved audio guides covering a range of issues, from anxiety to low mood and difficulties sleeping can be found here:

<http://www.selfhelpguides.nth.nhs.uk/penninecare/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/moodzone-mental-wellbeing-audio-guides/>

Free guided mindfulness scripts

The free Mindfulness project website:

<http://www.freemindfulness.org/home>

Leaves on a stream:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIIZHoiOb0s> 7 minutes 57 seconds

5 minute breathing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmFUDkj1Aq0> 5 minutes 22 seconds

Body scan:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QS2yDmWk0vs> 8 minutes, 38 seconds

Self-soothing:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XI_B45DpMLU 10 minutes 7 seconds

Being present:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZToicYcHI0U> 10 minutes 30 seconds

Visuals - Calm breathing bubble:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iaQed_Xdyvw 50 seconds

Octagon breathing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wdbbtgf05Ek> 5 minutes

Sleep - Time for rest:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RsrYKy5aYKg> 5 minutes

Further help

We hope you will find the exercises suggested in this pack helpful. If you feel that you are experiencing difficulties or you would like some other ideas of techniques to use then please speak to a member of the team.



Acknowledgments

This pack was developed by the RHSD Psychology team. It draws on the following psychological approaches and resources:

- Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT); Marsha Linehan
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT); Dr Russ Harris
- Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT); Paul Gilbert
- Mindfulness; The Free Mindfulness Project
<http://www.freemindfulness.org/home>
- <https://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/>
- <https://www.psychologytools.com/>