

Your Health and Wellbeing



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Self-Care

Self-care is the activity we deliberately do to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health, something that we often overlook.

Self-Care Tips:

- Try to get a regular number of hours sleep. Getting regular sleep will make you feel energized, relaxed, and ready to deal with whatever the day throws at you!
- Write down thoughts and ideas so you are not thinking all the time.
- Turn off technology occasionally – take time to focus on the real world and focus on yourself.
- Cut down on caffeine – although you think your morning coffee is keeping you awake, it is also keeping your heart rate up and lead to stress and other health problems.
- Exercise when you can – it does not have to be much, a walk a day is enough!
- Relax when you can, in a bath or reading a magazine. Taking time out to do something for yourself can work wonders.

Stress

In January 2018, a large study into stress in the UK was conducted. Their results were....

84% of people asked said they experienced stress regularly.

39% said they feel too stressed.

Money was the most common cause of stress.

54% said they were worried about the impact on their health.

32% said they use exercise as a way to overcome their stress.

Television was the most common stress reliever in the West Midlands.

48% said stress had a negative impact on their personal and professional life.

51% said they experienced fatigue because of stress.



Coping Strategies

Here is a list of practical ways you can minimize the impact of stress. Write down an example of when each could work for you?

Coping Strategy	When Could I Use It?	Did It Work?
Be Active		
Take Control		
Connect With People		
Have Some Me Time		
Challenge Yourself		
Avoid Unhealthy Habits		
Mindfulness		
Work Smarter not Harder		
Try and be Positive		
Accept things you can't Change		
Write it Down		
Help Others		
Be Kind to Yourself		

Solutions to Sleep

A lack of sleep can impact on your mood, concentration, decision-making ability, alertness, relationships and quality of life. Below are some tips to try and help improve your sleep.

- **Keep Regular Hours:**
Going to bed and getting up at roughly the same time every day will programme your body to better sleep. Choose a time when you're most likely to feel sleepy.
- **Create a restful sleeping environment:**
Your bedroom should be kept for rest and sleep. Keep it as quiet and dark as possible. It should be neither too hot nor too cold.
- **Make sure that your bed is comfortable:**
It is difficult to get restful sleep on a mattress that is too soft or too hard, or a bed that's too small or old. Mattress toppers can increase comfort and are much cheaper than buying a new mattress.
- **Exercise regularly:**
Moderate exercise on a regular basis, such as swimming or walking, can help to relieve some of the tension built up over the day. However, do not do vigorous exercise too close to bedtime as it may keep you awake.
- **Cut down on stimulants such as caffeine in tea or coffee, especially in the evening.** They interfere with the process of falling asleep,

- Don't over-indulge:
Too much food or alcohol, especially late at night, can interrupt your sleep patterns.
- Don't smoke:
It's bad for sleep. Smokers take longer to fall asleep, they wake up more frequently, and they often have a more disrupted sleep.
- Try to relax before going to bed:
Have a warm bath, listen to quiet music, the HOPE relaxation and mindfulness CD, or do some gentle yoga to relax the mind and body.
- Write away your worries:
Deal with the worries or a heavy workload by making lists of things to be tackled the next day.
- Do not worry in bed:
If you can't sleep, don't lie there worrying about it. Get up and do something you find relaxing until you feel sleepy again, then return to bed.
- Turn off technology:
Using phones, tablets, laptops and watching TV all have a powerful effect on our brain. They switch the brain to 'information gathering' mode which keeps us alert and stimulates thinking.

www.sleepcouncil.org.uk/how-to-sleep

Food and Mood

Our mental health can be affected in many ways by our diet. Some of the main symptoms are:

- Lack of concentration/unable to think straight (brain fog!)
- Lack of energy/apathy
- Irritability/quickness to anger
- Low mood – depression symptoms
- Negative thinking
- Anxiety/dread
- Shaking/trembling
- Restlessness
- Lightheaded/faint
- Tiredness/fatigue



Improving our diet can:

- Increase our positive feelings.
- Increase our energy levels.
- Encourage clearer thinking.
- Lead to calmer moods.

Top tips for improving your food and mood:

- Eat breakfast.
- Eat regularly throughout the day.
- Choose less refined high sugar foods and drinks and more wholegrain cereals, pulses, fruit and vegetables.
- Don't consume too much caffeine and sugar.

- Include protein at each meal.
- Eat a wide variety of foods.
- Include oily fish (omega 3 fatty acids) in your diet.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Maintain adequate fluid intake.
- If you drink alcohol keep within recommended limits.



How does Exercise Affect our Mental Health?

Exercise is one of the most effective ways to improve your mental health!

Your mind and body are connected. The mind can't function unless your body is working properly – but it also works the other way.



Why should I exercise?

- Less likely to be depressed, anxious or tense.
- Feel good about yourself.
- Concentrate and focus better.
- Sleep better.
- Reduce stress.
- More likely to be able to keep mobile and independent as you get older.
- Less likely to have problems with memory and dementia.

What might work for me?

Activity should:

- Be enjoyable – if you don't know what you might enjoy, try a few different things.
- Help you feel more capable. Gardening or DIY projects can do this, as well as getting you more active.

- Give you a sense of control over your life – that you have choices you can make (so it is not helpful if you start to feel that you have to exercise). The sense you are looking after yourself can also feel good.
- Help you to escape for a while from the pressures of life.
- Be shared. The companionship involved can be just as important as the physical activity.



How do I start?

- Start with something easy – go for a walk, stretches, yoga.
- Follow videos on You Tube.
- Build up your level gradually.
- Try to do something most days, even if you feel tired.
- Start by working out how much you do already.
- Set goals to help stay motivated.

Motivation

A Self-Motivation Quiz

Instructions:

- For each statement, circle the number in the column that best describes you.
- Please answer questions as you actually are, (rather than how you think you should be) and don't worry if some questions seem to score in the 'wrong direction'.
- When you are finished, calculate your total score. Use the score interpretation to see your results!

Statement	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often
I'm confident of my ability to achieve the goals I set for myself	1	2	3	4	5
When working on my goals I put in maximum effort and work even harder if I have suffered a setback.	1	2	3	4	5
I regularly set goals and objectives to achieve my vision for my life.	1	2	3	4	5

I think positively about setting goals and making sure my needs are met.	1	2	3	4	5
I use rewards (and consequences) to keep myself focused. For example, if I finish my work on time, I allow myself to take a coffee break.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe that if I work hard and apply my abilities and talents, I will be successful.	1	2	3	4	5
If I have a deadline, I try not to worry to minimize stress and anxiety.	1	2	3	4	5
When I come up with a really good idea, I know that this is not a fluke and can praise myself for this.	1	2	3	4	5
When an unexpected event threatens or jeopardizes my goal, I tend to walk away, set a different goal and move in a new direction.	1	2	3	4	5

It bothers me when others only do the minimum amount of work necessary to keep others satisfied.	1	2	3	4	5
When I set a goal, I have faith that I am going to accomplish it.	1	2	3	4	5
I create a vivid and powerful vision of my future success before embarking on a new goal.	1	2	3	4	5

Total Score: _____

Quiz source:

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_57.htm

Results – If you scored....

12 -27: You allow your personal doubts and fears to keep you from succeeding. You've probably had a few incomplete goals in the past, so you may have convinced yourself that you aren't self-motivated – and then you've made that come true. Break this harmful pattern now, and start believing in yourself again.

28 - 43: You're doing OK on self-motivation. You're certainly not failing – however, you could achieve much more. To achieve what you want, try to increase the motivation factors in all areas of your life.

44 – 60: Wonderful! You get things done, and you don't let anything stand in your way. You make a conscious effort to stay self-motivated, and you spend significant time and effort on setting goals and acting to achieve those goals.

These results indicate our current motivation levels, if they are low, remember that this doesn't define you and they can be temporary if we apply the changes in this booklet.

Support Available through Accelerate



Valley House offers 1:1 emotional and practical support with a range of issues such as:

- Housing
- Budgeting/debt
- PIP applications
- Charity applications
- Emotional support
- Coping strategies

In addition, we offer workshops on the following topics:

- 5 ways to wellbeing
- Understanding me from the inside out
- Personality and personal development
- What is stress?
- Introduction to budgeting and debt management



The Starfish Collaborative

Creativity • Wellbeing • Community • Change

- Support, information and brief psychological interventions for people feeling anxious, low in mood or depressed.
- One to one or group sessions online until further notice.
- Online/zoom courses in a variety of subjects.
- Art and craft therapy.

If you are interested in anything that Valley House or Starfish has to offer, then please speak with your Journey Guide.

Useful Numbers

Coventry and Warwickshire MIND:

- Community Support - 024 7601 7226
- Recovery and Wellbeing Academy (free courses and workshops)
0300 303 2626

Safe Havens:

- Out of hours mental health support
- 7 days a week from 6pm – 11pm
- Coventry - 07921 876 065
coventryhaven.mhm@nhs.net
- Warwickshire - 024 7771 4554 or 07970 042 270
safehaven@cwmind.org

IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapy):

- Support for people with anxiety and depression
- 024 7667 1090

Mental Health Matters:

- Helpline for emotional support, advice and guidance
- 24 hours, 7 days a week
- 0800 616 171

Samaritans:

- 116 123

No Panic:

- Helpline
- 7 days a week 10am – 10pm
- 0808 808 0545

National Debtline:

- Free debt advice
- Monday to Friday from 9am – 8pm and Saturday from 9.30am – 1pm
- 0808 808 4000

Stepchange:

- Free debt advice
- Monday to Friday from 8am – 8pm and Saturday from 8am – 4pm
- 0800 138 1111

Change Grow Live:

- Support with drug and alcohol issues
- Coventry - 024 76 010 241
- Warwickshire - 01926 353 513

Women's Aid:

- National Domestic Abuse helpline
- 24 hours, 7 days a week
- 0808 200 0247

Man Kind:

- Support for male victims of Domestic Abuse
- 10am – 4pm, Monday to Friday
- 01823 334 244

Useful Websites

www.cwmind.org.uk

- Advice and support
- Lots of info on mental health conditions
- cwmind.org.uk for details of local support

www.sane.org.uk

- "A leading UK mental health charity. We work to improve quality of life for anyone affected by mental illness."

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/mentalhealth/Pages/Mentalhealthhome.aspx

- Help and advice.

www.rethink.org

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<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/your-mental-health>

- "we deliver change and help empower people to make real changes in their lives".

www.helpguide.org

- Guide to mental, physical and emotional health.

www.blurtitout.org/about

- Created

<https://rethinkyourmind.co.uk>

- Created by those with experience of mental health.
- Purpose is to creatively express well-being.

www.bigwhitewall.co.uk

- Peer support through online community
- Resources for self-management
- Information and advice
- Guided support programmes on a range of common issues
- Monitored 24/7 by trained clinicians.

<https://www.thecalmzone.net>

- The Campaign Against Living Miserably is leading a movement against suicide.

<https://nopanic.org.uk/>

- Advice and support for those living with phobias, OCD and other anxiety related disorders.