

Taking Care of your Wellbeing

The 'Five ways to wellbeing' have been researched and developed to help people improve their health and wellbeing.

Connect

- Social relationships are a key part of being human. Building good relationships can help improve your self-worth.
- Technology can be a useful way of connecting with people who are not close by, but it is important not to rely on this alone.
- Checking in with a friend or family member can help you feel connected, especially taking it in turns to talk about how you're really feeling.

Be Active

- Being active can help reduce some symptoms of mental health problems.
- Finding ways of being active which you enjoy can improve your mood.
- Even just taking a short walk can make a difference.
- Getting some fresh air and daylight is good for your mental health, especially in the winter when there is less sunlight.

Take Notice

- Being attentive of the current moment can help your mental wellbeing.
- Sometimes this is known as being 'mindful' and at a simple level just means being in the present and noticing what's around you and what you are feeling rather than worrying about the past or future.
- Focusing on your breath for a few minutes can help you feel calmer.

Learn

- Being a life-long learner is a great way to look after your mental health.
- Learning new skills or knowledge can help improve your self-esteem.
- Even just reading a book or listening to a podcast can help keep your mind active and make you feel more confident.

Give

- Spending time supporting or helping others can improve your own happiness and give you a sense of purpose.
- Include volunteering in your community, helping someone with their chores or even just taking time to hold the door open for others.
- Focusing on someone else's needs can sometimes be a welcome break from your own worries.

Supporting Others

It can be difficult to know how to support someone when they are going through a tough time. Below are some tips to help you approach this.

Start Talking

- You don't have to wait for the perfect moment, sometimes it's easier to talk about our feelings when we are doing something else.
- Ask them how they are and then ask again. We often say we're fine when we're not, asking a second time gives people a chance to open up.
- Try to listen without judgment or preconceived ideas. Even if they don't want to talk, letting them know you are there can make a difference.
- Avoid phrases like 'it'll be ok' or 'cheer up' as this can feel dismissive. Try to use statements like: 'that sounds really tough' or 'sorry you're going through this'.
- Most people just appreciate having the space to talk about their feelings and don't need you to offer advice or solutions.

Practical Help

- If you do have time, it can be useful to ask the person if there is anything practical you can do that would help them out.
- This might include driving them to appointments, helping with childcare to give them a break or even offering to cook dinner for them if they are struggling to take care of themselves.
- Helping them to find information and support online is also useful. You can start with: www.mind.org.uk.
- Perhaps offer to do some fun activities with them too, it can help them get a different perspective from how they are feeling.

Know your Limits

- Set some boundaries of how you can offer your time and support. This means that they know what it's ok to ask for and can ensure you don't feel overwhelmed.
- If it feels like the problem is worsening or you are worried for their safety, it is important to point them towards professional support. You can advise them to talk to their GP or call 111 in the first instance.
- If they are in crisis and you fear they might take their life, call 999. Mental health emergencies can be serious, you aren't wasting anyone's time.

Your local mental health charity

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Wiltshire

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