The Little Book of Mental Health
A practical guide for everyday emotional well-being
First Edition – 2013

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Introduction

Everyday well-being is about how we feel, think and behave. Nobody feels blissfully happy, thinks positive thoughts and behaves sensibly all the time. However, if you are in a pretty good state of mind, it is generally much easier to enjoy life and cope with its challenges.

Looking after your state of mind is just as important as taking care of your body, yet most of us manage our physical health far better than our mental health. As soon as we feel a physical ache or pain we generally try to do something about it, but when we find ourselves feeling very low or stressed we tend to think it is just part and parcel of life and don't do anything to improve the situation.

If you do feel down, anxious or distressed, you are not alone. One in four of us experience a mental health problem in any one year. If you feel you are a risk to yourself or anyone else, then you should contact your GP or other Healthcare Provider to discuss this immediately.

The phrase “mental health problems” covers many different conditions, ranging from mild or temporary distress to problems which severely limit a person's ability to cope with everyday life. The move from a mild state of anxiety or depression to a severe one can be very gradual, but it is important to recognise the signs so that action can be taken before the condition becomes serious or prolonged.

Helpful Tips

If you do feel down, anxious or distressed, you are not alone. One in four of us experience a mental health problem in any one year.
The Secret of Emotional Well-being

10 basic skills for gaining and maintaining emotional well-being

Set yourself achievable goals
Set yourself some goals. Make sure that your goals are specific and achievable. If they are too vague you will never know if you achieved them. If you set them too high you will end up frustrated. Too low and there will be nothing to aim for. Write down short-term, middle and long-term goals. An example of a short-term goal will concern things to do that day. A middle-term goal could be to make a change to your lifestyle, like deciding to start jogging. A long-term goal might be to learn a new skill, change your job etc.

Helpful Tips

Just as achieving physical fitness takes time, practice and commitment, so too does achieving mental fitness.

Be good to yourself
Take notice of your achievements, however small and reward yourself. Think about what gives you pleasure and enjoy the reward. Tell others about your achievements. Giving time to activities we find rewarding increases our sense of well-being, whereas a routine made up almost entirely of things that we have to do can have the opposite effect. Doing things to put you in a good mood is sensible, not self-indulgent; so don't feel guilty about it.

Believe in yourself
Self-confidence is concerned with how we feel about our abilities. Self-esteem is slightly different as it reflects the degree to which we value ourselves. You can build up your self-confidence and self-esteem even if it has been low since childhood.
Helpful Tips

To build self-confidence and self-esteem:
- Behave as if you’re more confident than you feel
- Learn from your mistakes
- Speak encouragingly to yourself
- Do the best you can, but don’t try to be perfect
- Spend time with people who make you feel good.

Manage your time

Good time management means setting goals and planning to tackle the most important things first. Do not waste time on low priority jobs or spend valuable time on things outside of your control. Take 5-10 minutes each morning to plan the day.

Prioritise jobs in this way:

A = Absolutely essential
B = Better done today
C = Could wait
D = Delegate/ask someone else to do it

Face and solve your problems

We all have a tendency to avoid facing our problems. Avoidance is not helpful in the long run because it can make the problem worse, it can create new problems and thirdly it stops you getting on with your life and leads to more stress and tension.

Keeping things in perspective

There is always more than one way of seeing things. This means that although you may not be able to choose the facts, you may be able to choose how you react to them. You can help yourself feel better and be more effective by looking at your situation with an open mind and being realistic about what you can manage.
Learning to relax
Practicing relaxation will give you more energy, decrease anxiety and irritability and reduce pains due to tense muscles. Relaxation time should be seen as an important part of your daily routine.

Expressing your feelings
Expressing our feelings promotes a sense of well-being and freedom from tension. It helps us to recover from hurtful experiences, and also helps other people to understand what is going on inside us. Of course there are times when displays of emotion are not helpful, but hiding or holding back our feelings can cause tensions that affect our physical and mental health.

Managing your diet
The foods you eat can play an important part in the way you feel, physically and mentally. Too much sugar, coffee or salt can cause tension and irritability, and alcohol is a depressant. For general well-being the secret is a balanced diet.

Exercise
Regular exercise is good for us in many ways. It can increase our confidence and self-esteem, stimulate “feel good” chemicals in our bodies, provide an outlet for tension and frustration, relieve anxiety, help us sleep better and prevents some physical illnesses. Choose a sport or exercise you enjoy. If you have concerns about your health or fitness speak to your GP.

Learn to say NO
Learning to say ‘No’ in an assertive and tactful way is a difficult but important skill to learn. Remind yourself now and then that you have this right.
Problem solving – one step at a time

- Choose a problem that is causing you concern, then:
- Write down the problem. Be specific
- Write down a list of possible solutions
- Write down the advantages and disadvantages of each solution
- Choose a solution and break it down into steps
- Tackle each step, one at a time.

If you have more than one problem, write them all down and put them in order of difficulty. Tackle the least difficult problem first.

Check your alcohol intake

People who are anxious and/or depressed may try to cope with their symptoms by drinking more alcohol. This makes things worse.

The Chief Medical Officers’ guideline for both men and women is that:

To keep health risks from alcohol to a low level it is safest not to drink more than 14 units a week on a regular basis.

If you regularly drink as much as 14 units per week, it is best to spread your drinking evenly over 3 or more days.

If you wish to cut down the amount you drink, a good way to help achieve this is to have several drink-free days each week.

Helpful Tips

*Speak to your GP if you think you have lost control of your alcohol intake.*

As a rough guide, there’s ONE unit of alcohol in:

- half a pint of ordinary strength beer, lager or cider
- one small glass of wine
- a single pub measure of spirits.
Managing Depression

Most of us have felt low from time to time, but usually the low mood passes after a few days.

Sometimes, a person sinks into depression to a point where they may need professional help to get back to normal.

Depression does not mean that you are weak or lazy. It is a common illness like high blood pressure, diabetes or arthritis. It can occur at any age. The good news is that there are things you can do to help yourself and treatments that work well.

Helpful Tips

Most people recover completely from depression. You should never give up. Try to live one day at a time and keep reminding yourself that you will not always feel like this.

Signs of depression

When we become depressed, we may experience:

- Loss of identify and self-esteem
- Sadness, when there is maybe nothing to feel sad about
- Extreme guilt over minor matters
- A sense of failure, when this is not realistic
- Loneliness, even among other people
- Tearfulness, when there is nothing to cry about
- Constant exhaustion
- Feelings of hopelessness, misery or despair
- Difficulty in concentrating or making decisions
- Thoughts of death or suicide.
**When to seek help**

You may be experiencing clinical depression and should seek help if your low mood or loss of interest in life:

- interferes with your home, family or work life
- lasts for two weeks or more
- brings you to the point of thinking about suicide.

Talk to your GP or contact one of the mental health associations or voluntary organisation if you are concerned.

**Coping with depression**

- Avoid sitting or lying about doing nothing
- Identify things you used to do regularly and things which you used to enjoy
- Plan to gradually increase the routine of pleasant activities
- If a task seems too difficult, try breaking it into a series of small steps
- Above all reward yourself for your efforts
- Avoid discussions of bad feelings. Solving problems is more helpful
- If your appetite is poor, eat small quantities regularly and drink lots of fluids
- Keep to a normal sleep routine. Avoid daytime naps. At night get up if awake for 30 mins or more, and try to relax
- If you go off sex, keep some physical closeness with partner and reassure them it is not personal but a temporary symptom.

**Helpful Tips**

It is important to be active even when you do not feel like it. Getting going again can help you feel better.
Depressive thinking

When you are depressed there are changes in the way you think, as well as in how you feel. You tend to look on the black side of everything, see the worst in yourself, in your life and your future. Once you are feeling down, you are more likely to remember the bad things that have happened and ignore the good ones. Negative thinking can also trigger depression and it slows down recovery.

Identifying negative thinking

Negative thoughts can be difficult to spot because they become a habit, they can flash quickly into your mind and most of us are not used to noticing our thoughts. Learning to spot and catch these negative thoughts is a skill you can master with time.

Some examples of negative thinking are:

- **Thinking the worst**, e.g. your boy/girl-friend doesn't phone. You assume they don't like you anymore.
- **Ignoring the positive and only seeing the negative**, e.g. ‘The shelves I put up are no good because one screw fell out.’
- **Taking things personally and blaming yourself for what others do**, e.g. ‘My son failed that exam. I should have helped him more. I am a bad parent’.

You may also have beliefs that are unrealistic:

- I should be happy all the time
- If someone is hurt by something I say or do, I am a bad person
- If I show emotion, I am weak
- If I don’t succeed, I am worthless.
Changing negative thinking

You can learn to think more positively with the 3 Step Approach and this will make a huge difference in your life:

- **First**, write down your negative thoughts as soon as possible. If it’s difficult to notice any thoughts, try noticing when you feel down and ask ‘What went through my mind just before I started feeling sad’.

- **Second**, ask yourself ‘Is what I believe TRUE?’ Ask yourself if everyone would have the same belief Think of other possible explanations for the event Try a real-life experiment. For example, if your friend doesn’t phone, call him or her to ask why.

- **Third**, balance each unreasonable thought with a more realistic one. These should be different to the unreasonable belief. Try to make them realistic statements. Try to make as many alternatives as possible.

If you are worried about feelings getting out of control keep track of your feelings, thoughts and behaviour on a “mood chart”. This will help you notice anxious or negative thought patterns as soon as they begin, so you can start using your self-help strategies.

Make a list of specific feelings, thoughts and behaviour that sometimes apply to you. Only you will know what to put in these lists, but here are some examples:

**Feelings I am aware of:**
- Sad
- Lonely

**Thoughts that bother me:**
- Nobody likes me
- I can’t cope

**Negative behaviour:**
- I’m trying to do too much at once
- I’m avoiding people
Positive checklist:

- I am coping with life
- I am in control of my thoughts and feelings

Give each of your feelings, thoughts and behaviour a “rating” from 0 to 5.

0 = have not noticed any problems;

5 = things could hardly be any worse. For an example of a mood chart see next page.
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Managing Stress and Anxiety

It is normal to feel anxious if you are facing something dangerous or difficult, but it is not usual to feel anxious all the time or to feel that anxiety is ruling your life. Severe anxiety is like a “false alarm” – the body over-reacting to something that is not really dangerous. The most noticeable physical signs are nausea, light headedness, sweating, a racing heart, palpitations and rapid breathing.

People often react to severe anxiety by avoiding the situation that makes them feel bad. However, this is not helpful in the long run, because the more you avoid something, the more difficult it will seem to you. It also limits what you can do and does not give you the chance to discover that the situation was not really dangerous after all. Try making a plan to help you face your feared situation, with the least frightening event to be tackled first.

When people are under stress, there is also a tendency to worry more than usual. Worry and unrealistic or negative thinking can be triggers for anxiety. People who get anxious sometimes think in ways that bring on the anxiety or make it worse. You may also have beliefs about yourself and about other people that are unrealistic. Anxious people often imagine that other people are judging them harshly.

Coping with anxiety

- Learn to relax and do relaxing things
- Reduce caffeine and avoid using alcohol
- Regular physical exercise will help
- Make a plan to solve problems and take action
- Change the way you think.

Remember you can learn to think more realistically and this will make a huge difference in your life. Use the 3 Step Approach (see Managing Depression).

Worry and negative thinking is a habit and it takes time to change.
Helpful Tips

Taking action may make you feel more anxious at first. Just keep going at your own pace and remember how much better you feel when you are able to take control and lead a fuller life.

When to seek help

If your anxiety is severe it is important to seek help. Talking therapies can help you feel more positive and in control. Prescribed drug treatment can provide short-term help.

Ask your GP for advice or contact one of the organisations listed at the back of the book.

Relaxation exercise

- Choose a quiet place where you will not be interrupted
- Before you start, do a few gentle stretching exercises to relieve muscular tension
- Make yourself comfortable, whether sitting or lying down
- Start to breath slowly and deeply, in a calm, effortless way
- Gently tense, then relax, each part of your body, starting with your feet and working your way up to your face and head
- As you focus on each area, think of warmth, heaviness and relaxation
- Allow any distracting thoughts to go to the back of your mind; imagine them floating away
- Don’t try to relax; simply let go of the tension in your muscles and allow them to become relaxed
- Let your mind go empty. Some people find it helpful to visualise a calm, beautiful place like a garden or meadow.

Stay like this for about 20 minutes. Then take some deep breaths and open your eyes, but stay sitting or lying for a few moments before you get up.
Slow breathing to reduce anxiety

Anxiety can make you feel breathless. The natural response to this is to breathe in more or to “over breathe”. However, this makes the problem worse. The best solution is to slow down your breathing which will stop the unpleasant feelings of anxiety.

Remember to breathe in using your abdomen (not your chest). This is sometimes called stomach breathing, because the abdomen should gently rise and fall rather than your upper chest.

- Breathe in slowly through your nose to the count of 3 seconds
- Then slowly breathe out to the count of 3 seconds
- Pause for 3 seconds before breathing in again
- Continue this exercise for 5 minutes or so.
- Practice twice a day for 10 minutes (5 minutes is better than nothing)
- Try to check and slow down your breathing during the day
- Use the slow breathing technique whenever you get anxious.

Helpful Tips

Remember the technique of slow breathing sounds very simple, will take practice to master but is very effective.
Panic attacks

Panic attacks feel very frightening because they seem to come out of the blue. Most people describe a sudden, overwhelming sense of anxiety, including:

- Feelings of absolute terror
- Very rapid breathing and heartbeat
- Dizziness or faintness
- Sweating and hot or cold flushes
- Feelings of unreality.

Helpful Tips

The important thing to remember is that feelings of panic will never cause you any harm. Your body is simply gearing itself up for a non-existent danger.

Coping with a panic attack

- Slow your breathing
- Stay where you are
- Remind yourself that you are safe and that the feeling will pass
- Try to distract yourself by looking hard at something nearby
- Face the situation again later.

Anger

Anger needs to be expressed, because if it gets bottled up inside it can cause harm or boil over into rage. Anger has to be expressed calmly not aggressively. Remember that losing your temper is never a good solution. It may provide temporary relief, but later on you will feel bad, which can lead to more anger.

First aid for anger

- Breathe slowly and deeply
- Slow down. Don't rush into words or actions you may regret
- Count to 10
- Walk away if possible
- Do something physical like a vigorous walk or housework
- Take some exercise such as running, walking, cycling or swimming – but not a competitive sport as this can increase feelings of aggression.

**Helpful Tips**

*If you want to deal with your anger STOP blaming others and START to change yourself.*

**How to tackle deeper, long-term feelings of anger**

- Talk to someone about the way you feel
- Ask your GP for help in tackling your feelings
- If it is yourself you are angry with, think whether you are blaming yourself unfairly
- Try to think about the bigger picture
- Express your feelings in writing or painting
- Practice techniques to make yourself more relaxed and stress-free
- Don't take things personally
- Recognise your own early warning signs.
Professional Help

If you are experiencing mental distress there are many treatments available to help.

Medical treatment

Sometimes when a person’s distress is acute, their GP may prescribe medication. Some people dislike the idea of taking medication, believing they should be able to manage without, but there are times when it is the best solution.

Taking medication on its own is beneficial but it can also help you help yourself through other treatments. Some medication may have side effects – usually minor but it is very important to not stop taking medication without consulting your doctor.

Talking treatment

You may choose to see a therapist, counsellor, nurse or other mental health worker to discuss your problems. Usually this is available through the NHS via a referral from your GP if the problems are severe. Therapy is also available privately and some non-statutory agencies provide free or low cost counselling.

There may also be NHS services available in your area which you can access through self-referral such as psycho-educational groups.

If you are working and your employer has an occupational health department they may provide counselling, especially if your problems are centred around work.

Steps you make want to take in managing your problems are as follows:

Self Help

There is a lot you can do to help yourself. Take a look at the suggested reading list in this book. You can also be helped by support from family, friends, teachers, or work colleagues. However, there may come a time when you feel you might benefit from additional help. Help can be found via your local authority, and private voluntary organisations. The agencies listed in this book are there to help you.
Helpful Tips

For more self-help options see the recommended reading list and the list of useful organisations at the back of this book.

GP surgery

There are many sources of help to be found via your surgery. A GP is many people’s first point of contact when seeking help. A sizeable proportion of most GPs’ work is related to emotional problems. GPs can:

- talk through your problems with you
- prescribe short-term medication such as anti-depressants and tablets to reduce anxiety
- refer you to a mental health worker at your surgery
- refer you to specialist mental health services
- talk with you about other sources of help in your community.

Your Practice Nurse, Health Visitor or District Nurse may also be able to help you manage your mental health difficulties and discuss options available in your surgery and community.

Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust is committed to ensuring that people who receive our mental health services have good experiences, feel empowered and work in partnership with staff about their treatment, care and support.
Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Counselling & Psychology

The mental health worker may also recommend group or one to one psycho-education or psychological therapy which are also provided by the Primary Care Mental Health Service. These include cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), counselling or therapy with a primary care psychologist.

CBT looks at the ways our thoughts shape the way we feel and behave. It has a proven record of success in helping people manage a range of mental health problems. It helps you examine your beliefs about yourself and to view your situation differently. Building up your coping skills can improve your mood and enable you to face feared situations.

Counselling

Counselling can provide a supportive and non judgemental atmosphere for you to talk over your problems and explore a more satisfactory way of living. It is often helpful in dealing with depression.

Primary Care Psychology

Sessions with a psychologist can help you explore your difficulties and make some choices. The psychologist may help you examine in detail the issues which are troublesome and to find an area where it would be possible to start making some positive changes.

Try the different exercises in this booklet.

Specialist mental health services

Sometimes when problems become severe or people are at risk your GP will talk to you about referral to your specialist mental health service. This is a team of mental health staff including a Psychiatrist, Community Psychiatric Nurses (CPN), Clinical Psychologist, Social Worker, and other support staff. They are skilled and experienced in managing complex problems in a professional, confidential and sensitive manner. There are some mental health problems that require early access to specialist services, these include psychosis, dementia, and some eating disorders. If you are at all concerned that this may apply to you make an appointment to discuss with your GP.
If someone close to you is experiencing emotional problems, encourage them to talk about their feelings and, if necessary, get advice from their GP.

You can help by listening. Be reassuring and encouraging but try not to tell them how they should feel or what they should do. Show appreciation, small successes should be recognised and celebrated. Anything that may help the person feel more light-hearted and forget their problems for a while is beneficial. Practical help may be needed short term with everyday tasks. You may need to stand up for the person’s rights about anything that concerns them.

It can be very upsetting when a friend or relative is distressed, and you may well find yourself in a caring role that you did not choose. If so, you will need support in coping with your own feelings. Ask friends and relatives for help. Outside support may also be helpful. Remember your emotional well-being is important too!
Support Services in Herefordshire & Worcestershire

24/7 NHS Urgent Mental Health Helpline (all ages)
Offers advice, support and assessment for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis. Mental health advisors will be able to listen to your concerns and make appropriate plans with you. They will transfer your call to a trained mental health clinician if needed.

Tel: 0808 196 9127

Age UK Herefordshire & Worcestershire
Tel: 0800 008 6077
Web: www.ageuk.org.uk/herefordshireandworcestershire

CAMHS – Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care NHS Trust
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service work with Children and Young People (up to 18) that are having problems with their Mental Health.

Web: hacw.nhs.uk/camhs

Herefordshire & Worcestershire NHS Healthy Minds
A range of free mental health support and resources for adults, Worcestershire (16+), Herefordshire (18+).

Web: www.healthyminds.whct.nhs.uk

Suicide prevention self-help tools & more links to Herefordshire & Worcestershire services

Web: www.healthyminds.whct.nhs.uk/nwt-suicideprevention
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Wellbeing and Recovery College

They offer a wide range of courses and workshops designed to take each individual on a journey, however short or long, to find not only new skills, but the knowledge and understanding of what health and wellbeing and recovery means to them. To find out more

Web: hwwellbeingandrecoverycollege.org.uk
Email: HW_WellbeingRecoveryCollege@comfirst.org.uk

Kooth

Free, anonymous online mental health and wellbeing support and counselling is available for young people of Herefordshire & Worcestershire aged 11-18

Web: www.kooth.com

Qwell

Free, anonymous online mental health and wellbeing support and counselling is available for residents of Herefordshire & Worcestershire, anyone aged 19+

Web: www.qwell.io
Support Services in Worcestershire

**Bereavement Support South Worcestershire (BSSW)**
Tel: 01905 760934
Web: bereavementsupportworcestershire.org.uk/

**Bereavement Support Worcestershire – St Richard’s Hospice**
Tel: 01905 763963
Web: www.strichards.org.uk/our-care/support-services

**Citizens Advice Bureau**
Worcester & South Worcestershire, Wyre Forest CAB
Tel: 0808 278 7891

**Bromsgrove & Redditch CAB**
Tel: 0808 278 7890
Web: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

**Cranstoun Worcestershire - Adult alcohol & drug recovery service**
Tel: 0300 303 8200
Web: www.cranstoun.org/services/substance-misuse/cranstoun-worcestershire/

**Cruse Bereavement Care Worcestershire**
Offer face to face support to help bereaved people, along with training for those who may encounter people who are affected by bereavement in the course of their work.
Tel: 01905 22223
Website: www.cruse.org.uk/get-support/contact-your-local-branch/
Here2Help Community Service Directory
Website: www.worcestershire.gov.uk and search Here2Help

Here4YOUTH - young person’s alcohol and drug service
Tel: 0300 303 8200
Website: www.cranstoun.org/services/young-people/here4youth-worcestershire/

Kemp Hospice Family Support and Bereavement Service
Tel: 01562 756060
Web: www.kemphospice.org.uk/familysupport

North Worcestershire Bereavement Support
Tel: 07305 238 223
Web: nwbsupport.org.uk

Primrose Bereavement Support
Tel: 01527 889799
Web: primrosehospice.org and search ‘family support’

People Like Us (PLUS) reduce loneliness or isolation in Worcestershire
Tel: 01905 27525
Web: www.onside-advocacy.org.uk/plus
Reading Well

Reading Well is a dedicated collection of books that provides information and support for managing mental health and wellbeing for children, young people and adults. Books within the Reading Well collections are recommended and endorsed by health experts, as well as by people living with the conditions, and the relatives and carers supporting them. These books are available for anyone to borrow free of charge from any Worcestershire Library. For a list of recommended books about mental health available at your local library visit: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/readingwell

Relate Worcestershire
Tel: 01905 28051
Web: www.relate.org.uk/worcestershire

West Mercia Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre
Tel: 0345 646 1188
Web: www.wmrsasc.org.uk

Worcestershire Association of Carers
Tel: 0300 012 4272
Web: www.carersworcs.org.uk

Worcestershire’s Bereaved by Suicide Service
Provides emotional support, practical help and signposting to other organisations. The service is free, confidential and available to residents of Worcestershire, of any age.

Contact: the Suicide Liaison Worker
Tel: 01905 947933
Email: worcs.bbs@victimsupport.org.uk
**Worcestershire CAMHS Reach4Wellbeing**
The Reach4Wellbeing team supports and promotes the emotional wellbeing of young people and parents of primary school age children through interactive online group programmes, using cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) principles.

Web: [hacw.nhs.uk/reach4wellbeing](http://hacw.nhs.uk/reach4wellbeing)

Email: [whcnhs.reach4wellbeing@nhs.net](mailto:whcnhs.reach4wellbeing@nhs.net)

**Worcestershire County Council**
For mental health support and local services visit: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/health](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/health)

**Worcestershire County Council Libraries and Learning service - Adult & Family Learning Courses**
Web: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk) and search 'adult and family learning courses'

**Worcestershire Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence**
**West Mercia Women’s Aid Helpline:**
Tel: 0800 980 331

**Men’s Advice Helpline:**
Tel: 0808 801 0327

Web: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/domesticabuse](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/domesticabuse)
Worcestershire Lifestyle Service

**Malvern: Citizens Advice Lifestyle Advisor Service**

Web: [www.citizensadvicesw.org.uk/health-projects/lifestyle-advisor-service](http://www.citizensadvicesw.org.uk/health-projects/lifestyle-advisor-service)

**Redditch: Worcestershire Association of Carers Lifestyle Advisor Service**

Contact your GP for referral

**Other areas in Worcestershire - Onside Lifestyle Advisor Service**

Web: [www.onside-advocacy.org.uk/lifestyle](http://www.onside-advocacy.org.uk/lifestyle)

**Worcestershire Safe Haven**

Provides telephone support and face to face appointments to Worcestershire residents who are experiencing mental health crisis. Offering a listening ear, support and signposting information we help individuals manage the difficult times.

Tel: **01905 600 400** (6pm-1am, last calls 12.20am)

**South Warwickshire and Worcestershire Mind**

Provide support and a range of programmes to help maintain good mental health

Tel: **01789 298615**

Email: [enquiries@springfieldmind.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@springfieldmind.org.uk)

**Worcestershire Young Carers**

Web: [www.yss.org.uk/worcestershire-young-carers](http://www.yss.org.uk/worcestershire-young-carers)

**YGAM – Young Gamers & Gamblers Education Trust**

A charity to inform, educate and safeguard young people against gaming and gambling harms. Provides funded workshops and resources for teachers, youth workers, early help practitioners, parents, universities, faith leaders and health professionals.

Web: [www.ygam.org](http://www.ygam.org)
YANA – Rural Mental Health Support

Provides confidential support, mental health awareness and funding for counselling for those in farming and rural trades in Worcestershire

Web: www.yanahelp.org
Helpline: 0300 323 0400
Email: helpline@yanahelp.org

YMCA Worcestershire

Tel: 01527 61643

Web: www.ymcaworcestershire.org.uk
Support Services in Herefordshire

Books on Prescription Herefordshire
Web: [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/bop](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/bop)

Carers Support – Herefordshire
Web: [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/social-care-support/carers](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/social-care-support/carers)

Crossroads Together - CarerLinks Herefordshire

Cruse Bereavement Care Herefordshire
Offer face to face support to help bereaved people, along with training for those who may encounter people who are affected by bereavement in the course of their work.
Tel: 01432 359469
Email: herefordshire@cruse.org.uk

Herefordshire County Council
Web: [www.talkcommunitydirectory.org/keeping-well-staying-healthy/](http://www.talkcommunitydirectory.org/keeping-well-staying-healthy/)

Herefordshire Mind
Provide a range of services including residential and community support
Tel: 01432 271 643
Email: info@herefordshire-mind.org.uk
**Herefordshire Mind Safe Haven**

A warm and welcoming evening space that provides empathy, support, and safety to anyone aged 18 and above experiencing high emotional distress and/or suicidal thoughts.

Web: [herefordshire-mind.org.uk/herefordshire-mind-safe-haven](http://herefordshire-mind.org.uk/herefordshire-mind-safe-haven)

Tel: **01432 372407**

Email: [safehaven@herefordshire-mind.org.uk](mailto:safehaven@herefordshire-mind.org.uk)

Telephone and email support service available every evening, 7 days a week, from 5pm to 10pm

**Hereford Veterans Support Centre**

Provide a one stop shop of support and a friendly listening ear for anyone in the Armed Forces community in Herefordshire that may be experiencing issues or requiring support in other areas of life or work.

Tel: **01432 260656**

Web: [https://herefordshire-vsc.org/](https://herefordshire-vsc.org/)

**Herefordshire Young Carers**

Web: [hyccclub.co.uk](http://hyccclub.co.uk)

Tel: **01432 663057**

Email: [herefordshire@crossroadstogether.org.uk](mailto:herefordshire@crossroadstogether.org.uk)
Marches Counselling Service
Offer affordable, professional counselling and psychotherapy services, both in person and remotely, for adults aged 18 and over, who experience longer term emotional complications following a bereavement.

Tel: 01432 279906
Email: marches.counselling@gmail.com
Web: www.marchescounselling.org

Phoenix Bereavement Support
Support children, young people and their families when someone close to them dies.

Tel: 01432 264555
Email: info@phoenixbereavement.org

St Michaels Hospice
Offer practical and emotional support to those affected by a terminal illness, either as a patient, a family member, or a carer.

Tel: 01432 852 080
Web: www.st-michaels-hospice.org.uk/our-care/bereavement-support/

Strong Young Minds Project
The SYM programme is for young people (10 - 26 yrs) who are disenfranchised, distressed, unemployed, at risk of social isolation, poor achievement and ill health, due to poor mental health and wellbeing.

Website: www.thesymproject.org
Tel: 01432 269245
Email: symproject@thecldtrust.org
Talk Community (Herefordshire Council)
Suicide prevention resources and Herefordshire community directory
Website: www.talkcommunitydirectory.org/keeping-well-staying-healthy/mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing/suicide/

Turning Point - Drug and Alcohol Services
Web: www.turning-point.co.uk/services/herefordshire
Tel: 0300 555 0747
Email: Herefordshire@turning-point.co.uk

We Are Farming Minds
Offer free confidential mental health and wellbeing support to farmers.
Website: www.wearefarmingminds.co.uk
Helpline: 0808 802 0070 24 hours
Text: 07786 203 130
National Support Services

Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel: 0800 917 7650
Web: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society
Tel: 0333 150 3456
Web: www.alzheimers.org.uk

Anxiety UK
Tel: 03444 775 774
Text: 07537 416905
Web: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Beating Eating Disorders
Helpline: 0808 8010677
Youthline: 0808 8010711
Web: www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Bipolar UK
Email: info@bipolaruk.org
Web: www.bipolaruk.org.uk

British Association for Behavioural & Cognitive Psychotherapies
Tel: 0330 320 0851
Web: www.babcp.com
British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
Tel: 01455 883300
Web: www.bacp.co.uk

British Psychological Society
Tel: 0116 2549 568
Web: www.bps.org.uk

CALM – Campaign Against Living Miserably
Helpline for people in the UK who are down or have hit a wall for any reason, who need to talk or find information and support
Website: www.thecalmzone.net/help/get-help
Webchat: 365 days a year 5pm until midnight
Tel: 0800 58 58 58 - Evening helpline 5 until midnight 365 days a year

Child Bereavement UK
Tel: 0800 02 888 40
Web: www.childbereavementuk.org

Child Death Help Line
Tel: 0808 800 6019
Web: www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk

Childline
Tel: 0800 1111
Web: www.childline.org.uk
Cruse Bereavement Services
Tel: 0808 808 1677
Web: www.cruse.org.uk

Every Mind Matters
Web: www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters

Domestic Violence Advice Line
Tel: 0808 2000 247
Web: www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Family Lives - support to families who are struggling.
Tel: 0808 800 2222
Web: www.familylives.org.uk

Gamblers Anonymous
Tel: 0330 094 0322
Web: www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk

Help For Heroes – Hidden Wounds Service
Web: www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/mental-health-and-wellbeing/hidden-wounds-service

Miscarriage Association
Tel: 01924 200 799
Web: www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk

Men’s Health Forum
Web: www.menshealthforum.org.uk
Mental Health Foundation
Web: www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Mentell - Men, is it time to talk?
Mentell provides circles for men aged 18+ to talk in a safe and confidential space, free from advice and judgement.
Web: www.mentell.org.uk

Money Advice Service
Tel: 0800 011 3797
Web: www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

MIND
Tel: 0300 123 3393
Web: www.mind.org.uk

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel: 0300 999 1212
Web: www.ukna.org

FRANK - National Drugs Advice
Tel: 0300 123 6600
Web: www.talktofrank.com

NHS
Web: www.nhs.uk
No Panic
Tel: 0300 772 9844
Youthline: 0330 606 1174
Web: www.nopanic.org.uk

OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) UK
Tel: 01332 588 112
Web: www.ocduk.org

OCD Action
Tel: 0300 636 5478
Web: www.ocdaction.org.uk

OP Courage
A NHS mental health specialist service designed to help serving personnel or veterans. (includes the Op COURAGE urgent care and support service for the Midlands).
Web: support.veteransgateway.org.uk
Tel: 0300 323 0137
Email: mevs.mhm@nhs.net

PANDAS
Tel: 0808 1961 776
Web: www.pandasfoundation.org.uk
**PAPYRUS Prevention of Young Suicide**

Resources and information for anyone under the age of 35 experiencing thoughts of suicide as well as those supporting. Also provides HOPELINE UK phoneline 9am until midnight for children and young people under the age of 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide and also for anyone supporting.

Web: [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

Tel: [0800 068 41 41](tel:08000684141)

Text: [07860 039 967](tel:07860039967)

Email: [pat@papyrus-uk](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk)

**Rethink Mental Illness**

Web: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)

**Samaritans**

Supporting resources and information for anyone experiencing thoughts of suicide as well as those supporting.

Web: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

Tel: [116 123 - 24](tel:11612324) Hour Helpline for anyone struggling or if you are supporting anyone else

Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

**SASP - Support After Suicide**

A hub of info for those who have been bereaved, find local support services and resources on how to support someone bereaved by suicide

Web: [supportaftersuicide.org.uk](http://supportaftersuicide.org.uk)

**Resources:**

Help is at Hand – Support after someone has died of suicide booklet

Web: [supportaftersuicide.org.uk/resource/help-is-at-hand](http://supportaftersuicide.org.uk/resource/help-is-at-hand)

Finding The Words - Support After Suicide

Web: [supportaftersuicide.org.uk/resource/finding-the-words](http://supportaftersuicide.org.uk/resource/finding-the-words)
**Shout**
A free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope.

Web: [giveusashout.org](http://giveusashout.org)

Text: texting the word ‘SHOUT’ to [85258](http://85258)

Free, 24/7 mental health text support in the UK

**Side by Side – MINDS online community**

Web: [www.mind.org.uk/information-support/side-by-side-our-online-community](http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/side-by-side-our-online-community)

**SOBS - Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide**
Information for those 18 years and above who have been bereaved by suicide, find local support services and resources on how to support someone bereaved by suicide

Web: [uksobs.org](http://uksobs.org)

Tel: [0300 111 5065](http://0300 111 5065) 9am – 9pm 7 days a week

Email: [email.support@uksobs.org](mailto:email.support@uksobs.org)

**Stay Alive App**
The Stay Alive App offers help and support to people with thoughts of suicide and to concerned others.

Web: [www.stayalive.app](http://www.stayalive.app)

**Students against depression**

Web: [www.studentsagainstdepression.org](http://www.studentsagainstdepression.org)

**Student Minds**

Web: [www.studentminds.org.uk](http://www.studentminds.org.uk)
The Mix Essential support for the under 25’s
Tel: 0808 808 4994
Web: www.themix.org.uk

The Silver Line
Older people can call The Silver Line for free, confidential information, friendship and support.
Website: www.thesilverline.org.uk
Tel: 0800 470 8090 The free, 24-hour confidential helpline for older people

UK Council for Psychotherapy
Web: www.psychotherapy.org.uk

Winston’s Wish - support for bereaved children.
Web: winstonswish.org

Young Minds
Parent helpline: 0808 802 5544
Web: www.youngminds.org.uk
**Disclaimer:**

In producing this booklet Worcestershire County Council has made every effort to provide advice based on up to date evidence for what is effective. It is, however, not intended as a substitute for thorough medical assessment and clinical intervention. If you are concerned about your mental health consult your GP.

**Acknowledgements**

This booklet is adapted with permission from Everyday Emotional Wellbeing (2001), a BBC Learning Support and Mental Health Foundation publication. Additional material from: The Mental Fitness Guide; Managing Your Mind by Gillian Butler & Tony Hope, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995 and World Health Organisation (WHO) Guide to Mental Health in Primary Care 2000, the Royal Society of Medicine Press Ltd.
Five Ways to Well-being

1. **Connect**
   with the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day. Visit [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/connecting](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/connecting) to find out how you can connect more with the people around you.

2. **Be active**
   Step outside. Go for a walk or run. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness. Visit [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/beactive](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/beactive) to find out how you be more active.

3. **Take notice**
   Paying more attention to the present moment - to your own thoughts and feelings, and to the world around you – can improve your mental wellbeing. Our NHS Healthy Minds team provide a range of free, confidential support. This includes: Online therapy, groups and courses or more traditional 1:1 support. To find out more visit [www.healthyminds.whct.nhs.uk/home](http://www.healthyminds.whct.nhs.uk/home).

4. **Keep learning**
   Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun. To find adult courses in Worcestershire go to [www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk) and search ‘adult learning’.

5. **Give**
   Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you. For information on a variety of volunteering opportunities available in Worcestershire visit [www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk) and search ‘volunteering’.
Local mental health help
In Herefordshire and Worcestershire

I feel okay.
Looking after yourself
There are some simple things you can do to keep feeling happy. They're known as the 5 ways to wellbeing.
• Keep active: run, jump or do sports.
• Take notice: paint what you can see, listen to sounds or play I spy.
• Connect: talk and make new friends.
• Keep learning: how you want to.
• Give: help at home or share with friends.

I feel sad or worried.
Talk to someone
Talk to a family member like your mum or dad, a close friend or a trusted adult for example your teacher about how you feel.
Visit the CAMHS website
It includes activities you can do at home and where to go for help. www.camhs.hacw.nhs.uk

I have thoughts of hurting myself or I am in danger.
Call the NHS mental health helpline for free:
0808 196 9127 at any time and on any day.
Call 999 If there is an emergency, you are really hurt or feel unsafe.

Other people who can help you
• Young Minds: Text YM to 85258 anytime for free support
• Childline free phone: 0800 1111

Worried about a child’s mental health
• Share concerns with the child’s school/college
• Visit the CAMHS NHS website www.camhs.hacw.nhs.uk
• Visit your GP Practice Team if you are a parent or carer to discuss the best options, including access to specialist services.
Local mental health help
In Herefordshire and Worcestershire

I feel okay.

**Looking after yourself** Search ‘5 steps to mental wellbeing’ on the NHS Choices website for simple tips on how to keep your mind healthy.

**Community Services**
A list of local community groups and services. They offer information, advice, and tools on a range of feelings including loneliness and isolation or money worries.

**Worcestershire** – Here2Help: SearchForHelp (worcestershire.gov.uk)

**Herefordshire** – Talk Community: www.talkcommunitydirectory.org

I’m struggling and have been for a couple of weeks.

**Talk to someone** about how you feel. If you attend school or college speak to a teacher about support.

**Kooth** Free, safe and anonymous support for your mental wellbeing including live chat and online discussion boards. [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

**Visit the CAMHS website** Access to self-help guides, advice and a range of local support. [www.camhs.hacw.nhs.uk](http://www.camhs.hacw.nhs.uk)

I have thoughts of hurting myself or someone else and need help quickly.

**Call the free local NHS urgent mental health helpline:**

**Call 999** For free, if you are seriously injured, have taken an overdose or if there is an immediate risk to life.

Other people who can help you

- **Young Minds**: Text YM to 85258 anytime for free support
- **Childline** free phone: 0800 1111
- **Papyrus** suicide prevention hopeline: 0800 068 4141

Provided by Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust
Local mental health support you can access today
In Herefordshire and Worcestershire

I want to keep a healthy mind.
Looking after yourself
Search ‘5 steps to mental wellbeing’ on the NHS Choices website for simple tips on how to keep your mind healthy.

Community Services
List of local community services that offer information, advice, and tools.

Worcestershire – Here2Help:
SearchForHelp (worcestershire.gov.uk)

Herefordshire – Talk Community:
www.talkcommunitydirectory.org

I’m struggling and have been for a couple of weeks.

Now We’re Talking
Access to self-help guides and online courses. www.nowweretalking.nhs.uk

Qwell Free mental wellbeing support including online chat and forums. www.qwell.io

NHS Healthy Minds
Self refer for free online, group or 1:1 talking therapies. www.healthyminds.whct.nhs.uk

Worcestershire:
0300 013 57 27

Herefordshire:
01432 220 507

Visit your GP Practice Team To discuss the best options for you, including access to specialist services.

I need urgent advice and support for myself or someone I know.

Call the free local NHS urgent mental health helpline:
0808 196 9127
If you need advice and support quickly (24 hours a day 365 days a year).

Call 999
For free, if you are seriously injured, have taken an overdose or if there is an immediate risk to life.

Wellbeing and Recovery College For a wide range of courses designed to build new skills at any point on your journey. hwwellbeingandrecoverycollege.org.uk

Useful national resources
MIND: www.mind.org.uk Samaritans freephone: 116-123 Text “SHOUT” to 85258

Provided by Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust
The Little Book of Mental Health

Whether you sometimes experience difficulties yourself or are supporting someone else who struggles with anxiety or depression, this booklet is for you. It gives you useful tips on managing these problems and advice about when and where to seek help.

Importantly, it looks at things we can all do avoid mental distress and improve our everyday emotional well-being.