

Your mental wellbeing tool kit

Small changes to our everyday routines that can brighten our mental wellbeing



Engaging in even a simple positive daily activity can have a profound impact on your mental health.

When Mariam Habib escaped an abusive marriage while pregnant with her second child, she faced barriers that inhibited her. As a single parent, Mariam faced many pressures, and she recognised the toll this was taking on her mental wellbeing and the need to take action to help address her anxious feelings. Mariam has found that creating a daily routine has helped her find her ‘happy place’ and supported her mental wellbeing. She says, “Each day I make time to do some journaling for positive reinforcement—writing down how I’m feeling, for example, and what my thoughts are.

“I remind myself that I am beautiful, I am strong, and that I am in control of my life. During this time, I also listened to religious recitations. I find these incredibly soothing and calming. “At bedtime, I do some breathing exercises to help me relax, clear my mind, and have a peaceful night’s sleep. My children are my biggest inspiration, and through building relaxation routines, I am able to be the best mum I can.” Now, not only is Mariam raising her young children as a single parent, but she has also returned to her BSc (Honours) Health and Social Care degree studies and has been recognised and shortlisted for the prestigious YAYA Awards. We explore the best practices from the NHS’s Every Mind Matters programme for doable actions you can incorporate into your everyday life to improve your mental health.

Find your ‘little big thing’ with these top tips:

GET PHYSICALLY ACTIVE: Being active is not just good for your physical health, it’s good for your mind too. It can help you burn off nervous energy, and, while it might not make feelings of distress disappear completely, it can make them less intense. You might choose gentle online yoga classes, boogieing around the home, or short walks in the fresh air.

MANAGE YOUR THOUGHTS & FEELINGS: Sometimes we develop unhelpful patterns of thought, and these can lead to unhelpful behaviour, so recognising them and thinking about them differently can improve our mental wellbeing. Try the free, practical self-help tips inspired by cognitive behavioural therapy at nhs.uk/every-mind-matters.

TALK TO SOMEONE YOU TRUST: Talking to someone we trust about how we’re feeling can improve our mental health and wellbeing and help stop us from feeling lonely. Sharing how you are feeling will help them understand what you’re going through and together you can explore solutions.

GET THE MOST FROM YOUR SLEEP: Good-quality sleep makes a big difference to how we feel mentally and physically. Every Mind Matters has lots of tips for improving your sleep and an email programme to help you develop good bedtime habits.

GET CLOSER TO NATURE: Spending time in nature—in green spaces like parks or gardens—can lift your mood and help you feel more relaxed. You can also bring nature into your life by tending to plants on a windowsill or balcony.

PLAN SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO: It’s important to have something to look forward to, especially when you’re finding things tough. It will help you counter boredom and lethargy, as well as boost your mood and energise you. It does not have to be anything complex to plan or costly; it could be fixing a time to meet with a friend or neighbour for a cuppa or a visit to a free local attraction.

TALKING THERAPIES If you are struggling with feelings of anxiety or depression, NHS Talking Therapies can help. These services offer practical psychological therapies that can assist with various common mental health disorders and they are free and effective.

Talking Therapies are delivered by trained NHS mental health professionals in one-to-one sessions, in-person or over the phone, and can also be accessed online via interactive websites. You can refer yourself to NHS Talking Therapies by visiting nhs.uk/talk to locate your local service and complete an online form, or contact them via email or phone. Eligibility only requires registration with a GP.

Find your ‘little big thing’ with Every Mind Matters. Search nhs.uk/every-mind-matters

(Photo credit: Freepik.com)

HELP IN A CRISIS

If you are having thoughts of suicide, are harming yourself or have thought about self-harm it is important to tell someone.

These thoughts and feelings can be complex, frightening, and confusing but you do not have to struggle alone.

If you cannot wait to see a doctor and feel unable to cope or keep yourself safe, contact one of the organisations below to get support right away:

Find your local 24/7 NHS crisis line at: nhs.uk/urgentmentalhealth or visit 111.nhs.uk

If you are under 35 and experiencing thoughts of suicide, or for anyone that is concerned that a young person could be thinking about suicide:

Visit: papyrus-uk.org
Call: **0800 068 4141**
(9 am – midnight, 365 days a year)
Text: **07860 039967** or
Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

IF YOUR LIFE OR SOMEONE ELSE’S LIFE IS AT RISK CALL **999**



HM Government





Mental health and wellbeing

It’s important to look after your mental health.
For advice and practical tips
Search Every Mind Matters