



# Exploring Self-Care

Looking after your own mental wellbeing

Celina Hanson: Physical Activity Sector Support Lead  
James Durcan: Physical Activity Young People's Lead  
Judy Bratt: Physical Activity Coordinator

# Learning Outcomes

- Increase your knowledge of self-care and what it is.
- Increase your awareness of self-care activities and techniques available.
- Increase your confidence to use self-care activities to support your own wellbeing.
- Take part in a few of the activities from our Self-care library.

# What is self-care?

Self-care looks different to each individual so it can be hard to define

Deliberate, restorative activities that take care of wellbeing and take care of wellbeing or balance out stressors

The act of taking care of ourselves

Self-care techniques and general lifestyle changes can help manage the symptoms of some mental health problems

Self-care helps us tune into how we are feeling and understand what we need

Self-care is an allocation of time and commitment to supporting your own health and wellbeing

# Why is self-care important?

Barriers	Benefits
Takes time	Investment in yourself
Easy to neglect	Helps you manage stress
Lack of motivation	Improves motivation
Putting others first	Makes you feel better
Stigma (guilt)	Increases resilience
Unrealistic expectations	Brings balance
Long-term effects	Maintains positive wellbeing

# Neuroscience of self-care



≡ Contents [ ] ↗



# Self-care library

A library of self-care activities to support your own and others' mental wellbeing.

Read on ▾



# Wellbeing activities

- 5 ways to wellbeing
- Wellbeing battery
- Worry tree
- Wellbeing calendar
- Circle of giving
- Finishing work checklist
- Journaling
- Positive affirmations
- Prayer
- Setback plan
- Engaging with nature
- Creativity

# Journalling

Contents



## Journalling

**Journalling can be a helpful technique in self-care practice.**

**Writing down thoughts, emotions and behaviours can provide clarity and help to identify patterns in your thinking.**

**Journalling can be a way of recording your personal achievements and goals**



### Prompts

3 things I want to accomplish...

Today I was thankful for...

### Free flow writing

Write whatever comes to mind, letting your thoughts flow

### Write a letter

To yourself or someone else, in the past, present or future

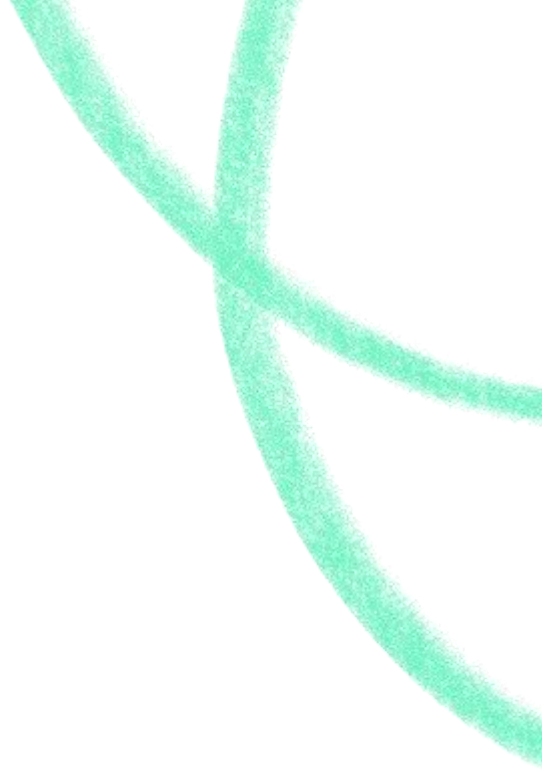
### Mood mapping

Write descriptive words about your mood or show it in pictures



# Breathing techniques

- 5 finger breathing
- 3/5 breathing
- Mindful breathing
- Deep breathing
- Alternate nostril breathing
- Breathing window



# 3/5 breathing

≡ Contents □ □



## 3/5 breathing

**3/5 breathing can help you to restore the correct balance of oxygen in your body. And help you to feel calmer.**

When we get stressed our rate of breathing often increases. We tend to take a lot of short, shallow breaths, which can make the situation worse. If we take in too much oxygen, it's likely to lead to light-headedness that can make us feel panicky. This is known as hyperventilating.

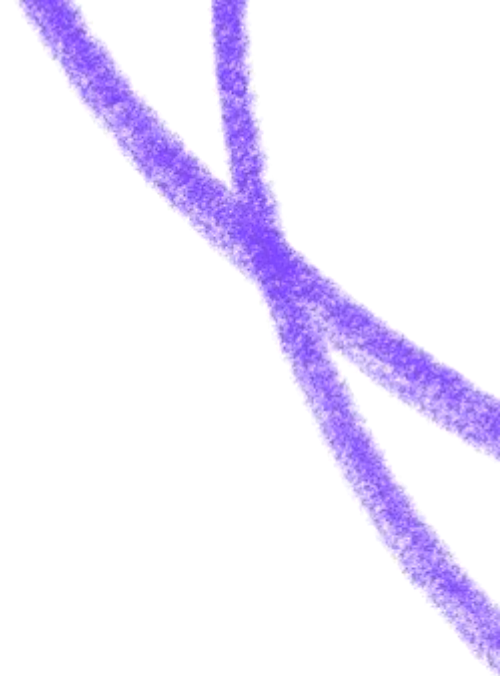
Some people can feel anxious if they're unable to hold their breath or breath out for the advised length of time. If this is the case for you, remove the numbers and inhale and exhale for a period of time that is comfortable for you.

- 1. Breathe in and count to 3 as you do so.**
- 2. Hold for 2 seconds.**
- 3. Now breathe out and count to 5.**
- 4. Keep doing this until you feel more relaxed.**

**Source:** Taken from the MENTOR 2 booklet developed and trialled as part of the Mental Health and Productivity Pilot (MHPP)

# Grounding activities

- 3 things I'm grateful for
- Tense and relax
- P.O.W.E.R
- N.O.T.I.C.E
- Stress scan
- Active mindfulness



# Tense and Relax

Contents



## Tense & relax

When you're stressed your muscles can become tight and tense. This exercise helps you notice tension in your body and relax your muscles.



Source: [www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/relaxation/relaxation-exercises](http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/relaxation/relaxation-exercises)

1. Lie down or sit with your back straight and your feet on the floor. Close your eyes or focus on a spot in the distance.
2. Start by clenching your toes as much as you can for a few seconds then releasing them. Notice the difference between the two feelings.
3. Match this to your breathing. Tense your muscles as you take a deep breath in, and relax as you breathe out.
4. Move up your body to your thighs, your stomach and all the way to your shoulders and hands, clenching and relaxing each muscle in turn. Take time to notice any parts of your body that feel tense, tight or tired. You can repeat if you still feel tense.
5. Take a moment to relax, then slowly and gently begin to move. When you feel ready, you can stand up slowly.

# Professional support

Self-care is not a cure for mental health problems, but a form of self-management for general wellbeing.

## Mind (18+):

call 0300 123 3393

(9am-6pm weekdays except bank holidays)



## Samaritans:

call 116 123

SAMARITANS

## Childline (under 19s):

call 0800 1111 or

access online chat

childline

## Shout text service:

text SHOUT to 85258

shout  
85258

## NHS:

call 111 or make a  
GP appointment

NHS





**You can't pour from  
an empty cup**





**Questions?**

# Mind's support



## Mental Health Awareness for Sport & Physical Activity+ eLearning

Increases knowledge and confidence to support people with mental health problems through physical activity.

## Physical activity & mental health newsletter

Our newsletter includes all things mental health and physical activity related. **Sign up at [bit.ly/mindpanewsletter](https://bit.ly/mindpanewsletter).**

## Self-care library

Access our free of activities to support your mental wellbeing.  
**Visit [bit.ly/SelfCareLibrary](https://bit.ly/SelfCareLibrary).**





