



## Promotion of Mental Health

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*We all have 'mental health', just as we all have 'physical health'. And just like our physical health, we can all have times when our mental health is better than others.*

We believe prevention is better than cure, so we want to help people look after their mental health and prevent more serious mental health problems from developing.

We also have plenty of evidence of the things that can help us all live mentally healthy lives.

Stress is a natural reaction to difficult situations in life, such as work, family, relationships and money problems. We mentioned earlier on that a moderate amount of stress can help us perform better in challenging situations, but too much or prolonged stress can lead to physical problems. This can include lower immunity levels, digestive and intestinal difficulties such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), or mental health problems such as depression. It is therefore important that we manage our stress and keep it at a healthy level to prevent long-term damage to our bodies and minds.

When you are feeling stressed, try to take these steps:

- ***Realise when it is causing you a problem.*** You need to make the connection between feeling tired or ill, with the pressures you are faced with. Do not ignore physical warnings such as tense muscles, over-tiredness, headaches or migraines.
- ***Identify the causes.*** Try to identify the underlying causes. Sort the possible reasons for your stress into those with a practical solution, those that will get better anyway given time, and those you can't do anything about. Try to let go of those in the second and third groups – there is no point in worrying about things you can't change or things that will sort themselves out.
- ***Review your lifestyle.*** Are you taking on too much? Are there things you are doing which could be handed over to someone else? Can you do things in a more leisurely way? You may need to prioritise things you are trying to achieve and reorganise your life so that you are not trying to do everything at once. You can also help protect yourself from stress in a number of ways:
- ***Eat healthily.*** A healthy diet will reduce the risks of diet-related diseases. Also, there is a growing amount of evidence showing how food affects our mood. Feelings of wellbeing can be protected by ensuring that our diet provides adequate amounts of brain nutrients such as essential vitamins and minerals, as well as water.
- ***Be aware of your smoking and drinking.*** Even though they may seem to reduce tension, this is misleading as they often make problems worse.
- ***Exercise.*** Physical exercise can be very effective in relieving stress. Even going out to get some fresh air and taking some light physical exercise, like walking to the shops, can help.
- ***Take time out.*** Take time to relax. Saying 'I just can't take the time off' is no use if you are forced to take time off later through ill health. Striking a balance between responsibility to others and responsibility to yourself is vital in reducing stress levels.
- ***Be mindful.*** Mindfulness meditation can be practiced anywhere at any time. Research has suggested that it can reduce the effects of stress, anxiety and other related problems such as insomnia, poor concentration and low moods, in some people.
- ***Get some restful sleep.*** Sleeping problems are common when you're suffering from stress. Try to ensure you get enough rest.
- ***Don't be too hard on yourself.*** Try to keep things in perspective. After all, we all have bad days.

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## Tips for Mental Health

Healthy Mind, Healthy lives !

Healthy Peoples Makes Healthy citizens !

101 Top tips from you Thank you so much to those who came back with some brilliant tips on how you manage stress. Everybody is different and what works for one person might not work for another. Here are 101 tips provided by you. Why not give it a try?

1. Meeting a friend
2. Setting aside 10 minutes a day to relax and collect my thoughts
3. Watching late night TV debates that deal with the realities of the world
4. Listening to relaxing music
5. Watching funny movies
6. Taking a walk in the countryside
7. Going to the gym
8. Soaking in the bath with lavender oil
9. Meditating
10. Talking to someone just to vent a little
11. Walking the dog
12. Getting more sleep
13. Praying
14. Reading a book to distract yourself from stressful thoughts
15. Do something good for someone else
16. Writing a letter to someone to get your feelings across and vent, but not actually sending it
17. Painting or drawing
18. Book a massage or spend time in a spa with a friend
19. Write a list of things to do and cross them off as you do them
20. Try putting things into perspective
21. Unplug the phone and get some time to yourself
22. Do something you like with family or friends like going to a show
23. Dancing around in your room to your favourite music
24. Going to your friend's house with another friend and putting the world to rights
25. Have a change of scenery
26. Go out and meet new people
27. Go to a yoga class
28. Express your feelings and emotions
29. Spend time with positive people around you
30. A hot cup of something wonderful, a journal and a pen
31. Eat a healthy meal and avoid caffeine
32. Getting closer with nature e.g. have a walk on the beach, observing the sunset
33. Watch your favourite programme on TV
34. Give yourself 'me time' just a few minutes to think about pleasant things
35. Ask yourself what would other people do
36. Thinking of the work you HAVE achieved in a day, rather than what you haven't done
37. Relaxing with reflexology
38. Go to uplifting plays, operas and concerts that make the hairs on the back of your neck stand up
39. Go to bed with a great book
40. Host a dinner party
41. Cheer up someone who is feeling down
42. Spend some time doing something you enjoy, like gardening
43. Writing down my thoughts
44. Play games on the computer
45. Avoid putting things off
46. Find a quiet place and try to visualise a happy memory
47. Do something creative like knitting
48. Play a musical instrument

49. Play with your pet
50. Get some fresh air
51. Be gentle to yourself
52. Laugh!
53. Go window shopping
54. Write short stories
55. Call a loved one
56. Talk to a stranger
57. Practice CBT
58. Chat to your friends on Skype or Facebook
59. Take a nap
60. Take a break, even a short one can make a difference
61. Going for a walk at lunchtime
62. Write poetry
63. Eat or drink something you enjoy
64. Cuddle a baby (ideally one you know - cuddles with my niece or nephew are amazing for destressing)
65. Spend time with children – they really put things in perspective, like ‘Wow there’s a cool cloud’, and remind you of simple things that used to amaze you
66. Go out to a Karaoke night
67. Imagine living in a different era, maybe wartime or before cars and trains were invented and how much harder life would be
68. Bake a cake
69. Sitting in a café with a cup of tea and a magazine
70. Go for a relaxing swim
71. Sit on a park bench and watch the world go by
72. Tidy a room or cupboard (other people might find this stressful, but I find it relaxing!)
73. Challenge a friend to a game of Scrabble
74. Breathe deeply for two minutes, and focus on your breaths 75. Bake something –
76. Write a list of the reasons you have to be happy with life
77. Take a minute to stretch your body
78. Use a relaxing room fragrance or scented candle
79. Practicing Tai Chi
80. Looking at photos of happy memories.
81. Have a cup of tea
82. Thinking of something you’re looking forward to or something that was fun
83. Go to the cinema
84. Learn new skills.
85. Go for a bike ride .
86. Listen to the birds singing.
87. Reminding yourself it could be worse and count your blessings
88. Playing board games with your family
89. Playing my favourite song and singing it out loud
90. Cleaning!
91. Practising calligraphy
92. I find moving furniture around the house very soothing
93. Write a letter to a loved one
94. Play with my children
95. Watch some programs on TV
96. Go out for a run in the park
97. Volunteer at the local homeless shelter, it helps put my worries into perspective
98. Play Sudoku or crosswords

99. Read some gossip magazines
100. Go to a salsa class
101. Get a cuddle.

**Reference:**

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Mental health foundation, UK.

**Author Profile**

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