

What else can you put into your Psychological First Aid Kit?

We have reflected on the different things you can add to your Psychological First Aid Kit, this is your opportunity to think about what you could add to yours. Jot down ideas on this worksheet, using the 5 Ways to Wellbeing as inspiration, to ensure that you have a range of things you can call on to help support and resource you.

For more information about the 5 Ways to Wellbeing, visit the [New Economics Foundation](#).



Connect



Be active



Take notice



Learning



Give

We know making changes and sticking to them is often easier said than done, and sometimes we need a bit of help. This [behaviour change planner](#), using the principles of MAP - Motivation, Action, and Prompts, can help make those changes easier to achieve.

What else can you consider?

Below we have considered some things that can be helpful to add to your Psychological First Aid Kit and other things which you might want to consider doing less of or not at all:



Learning a new skill

Learning new things is a good way to meet new people and boost our self-confidence, which in turn improves our mental health and wellbeing.

- Here are some ideas to keep you learning:
- Try out a new recipe once in a while
- Book yourself onto a wellbeing course or training session
- Join a class to learn a new language or musical instrument
- Learn something new about the people around you



Keeping active

Regular physical activity is good for us. Exercise helps reduce stress and adrenaline, while increasing feel-good hormones. It's also associated with lower rates of anxiety and depression. Exercise doesn't need to be strenuous; the important thing is to find a routine that works for you.

Exercise is an important tool to make use of when things get challenging. However, it can sometimes be hard to do due to things like caring responsibilities, injury, or work commitments, so it's important to have other things in your kit to call on.



Ignoring stress, it will go away

We all experience stress, but what causes it and how it affects us differs from person to person. It's important to understand how stress affects you uniquely, and what you can do to manage. Watch our Understanding Stress animation to get you started, and for more info and resources on stress and how to manage yours, have a look at our [Managing Stress materials](#).



Gardening

Gardens can work wonders when we're stressed or under pressure.

Gardening can help us achieve a number of the 5 ways to wellbeing. Through them we can connect, be active, take notice, learn and give. Have a look at this [article to hear why gardening is good for your mental health](#).



Act of kindness

Acts of kindness don't have to be big gestures: listening to someone intently after they have had a bad day, being accepting and non-judgemental to those around us or helping someone carry things when their arms are full are all examples of acts of kindness that we can do in our everyday lives.

Doing something nice for someone doesn't cost a lot of time or money: even the smallest acts can make you and someone else get that warm feeling. Remember, [doing good does you good](#).

Some ideas for [random acts of kindness](#) that you can incorporate into your day:

- Smile and say good morning/afternoon to people you pass on the street.
- Prioritise some 'me' time and do something you enjoy, like listening to your favourite podcast or song.



Prioritise work over time with friends or family

A healthy work-life balance will mean different things to us all. It's not so much about splitting your time 50/50 between work and leisure but making sure you feel fulfilled and content in both areas of your life. A healthy balance could be:

- Meeting your deadlines at work while still having time for friends and hobbies

- Check if a neighbour needs any help with shopping.
- Call a friend that you haven't spoken to in a while.
- Have a conversation with a colleague you don't usually chat to.

Being kind to yourself is just as important as being kind to others. Remember that whatever you manage today is good enough. Whether that is making the bed or learning a new skill, being kind to yourself is recognising both of these activities are achievements.

If you are struggling, try not to beat yourself up and tune out the voice of comparison by appreciating and celebrating the little things you have done, whether that is having a shower or getting up to get a glass of water.

[Kindness | Mental Health Foundation](#)

- Having enough time to sleep properly and eat well
- Not worrying about work when you're at home

This can be challenging if, for example, we also have caring responsibilities, a demanding boss, or health difficulties.

[Work-life balance | Mental Health Foundation](#)



Walking with friends

We know that people who have strong social support networks – people they like, enjoy spending time with and feel supported by – tend to manage stress and maintain their mental wellbeing more effectively than people who are more socially disconnected and feel alone.



Watching TV

There is increasing evidence that, unless you are a wheelchair user, sitting down too much can be a risk to your health.

To reduce our risk of ill health from inactivity, we are advised to exercise regularly, at least [150 minutes a week](#), and reduce sitting time.

Studies have linked being inactive with being overweight and obese, [type 2 diabetes](#), some types of [cancer](#), and early death.

Sitting for long periods is thought to slow metabolism, which affects the body's ability to regulate blood sugar, blood pressure and break down body fat.

Many adults in the UK spend around 9 hours a day sitting. This includes watching TV, using a computer, reading, doing homework, traveling by car, bus or train, but does not include sleeping.

However, sometimes watching something easy helps us switch off from the day, so watching TV for limited periods can be helpful.

[Why we should sit less | NHS](#)

Group activities, such as walking, have the potential to offer the best of both worlds: a good dose of regular exercise and time to have fun and build friendships with others. The relationships built during these meet-ups allow walkers the opportunity to seek advice and support when they're faced with challenges or tough times. As the saying goes: a problem shared is a problem halved. [Walking | Heart foundation](#)



Having a drink

Those of us who drink alcohol do so for a variety of ever-changing reasons, including: to relax, to socialise, to de-stress, to have fun, to relieve boredom, to try and cope with or avoid problems including relationship difficulties, because others around us are drinking, because we feel lonely. However, drinking too much and too often can often cause or exacerbate all sorts of problems with our physical and mental health, including damaging relationships with our loved ones.

This doesn't necessarily mean that we should avoid alcohol completely of course, but it is important to understand how alcohol can affect us and our relationships with those round us, and the benefits of cutting down or going alcohol-free.

You can find out more in these [Fact sheets from Alcohol Change UK](#)

To get an idea of what the amount you are drinking could mean, try the [AUDIT self-assessment questionnaire](#).