



Wellbeing action plan

A simple, ever-evolving resource to help you keep yourself well and take appropriate action if things start to go less well.

Hello!

We hope you find this little booklet a useful starting point for trying to be kinder to yourself and keeping yourself well, especially at difficult times. It's based on a well-tested model called 'Wellness Recovery Action Planning' which is designed for people in recovery from mental illness.

We've simplified the idea and backed it up with advice and suggestions from young people to create this easy to use resource designed to help you promote your wellbeing, regardless of whether you've faced mental health issues or not.



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We hope that completing this booklet will be both informative and fun and that it will help you to reflect on how you can best look after yourself and seek help if you ever need it. Keep it safe and return to it – feel free to scribble all over it or start again as you learn more about yourself and what works for you.

Throughout, we've included a range of ideas shared by young people to get you started and inspire you.

Good luck – be kind to yourself!

My wellness toolbox

The first thing we need to do is to think about all the different things that help to make us or keep us well. These things make up our 'wellness toolbox' which can be a jumble of all sorts of different things. Nothing is too silly to put in your wellness toolbox – if it keeps you well or makes you smile, it should go in...



Getting active

I love to just get my blood pumping; it's a great way to work out anger, frustration or worry and really takes your mind off things.



Getting outside

Just being in outside space, camping and scouting, road trips, sunsets and sunrises, rollercoasters, walking the dog, taking a mindful walk.



Connecting

Time with family, quality time with friends, looking after pets, group activities, team sports, counselling, talking to friends online, WhatsApp groups.



Reaching out

Sometimes I kind of can't face being with people but I can still have a laugh with my mates online and it usually helps me feel better.



Positivity journal

I have a journal where I record one thing to be grateful for every day. Some days it's hard to think of something, but I always feel better when I do.



Playlist of my life

I find songs to represent all the different things I'm feeling then I sing along. Trying to allow myself to feel a range of different things. I try to end with something upbeat.



Worry balloon

I write my worries on a balloon... then I blow it up and I let it go or pop it.



Quiet time and relaxing

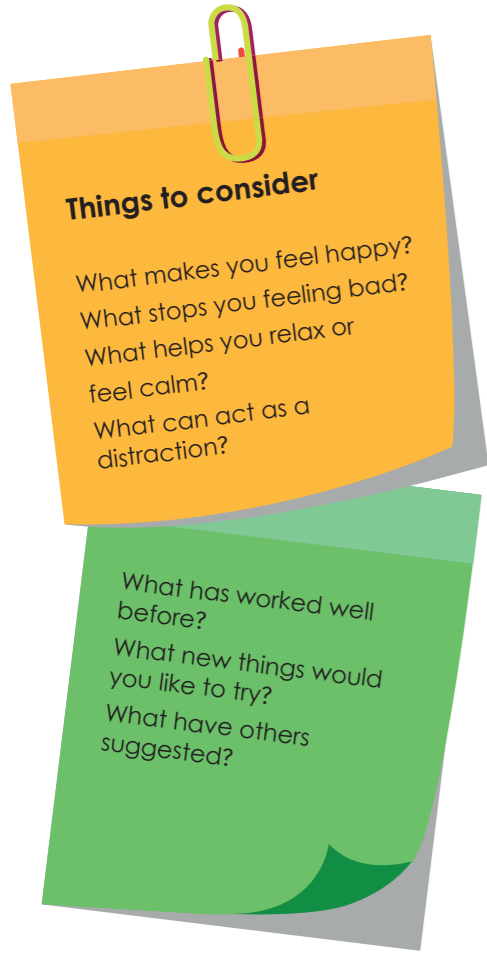
I enjoy my own space – sleeping in or taking a long bath. I immerse myself in things that make me happy like reading books, playing video games, listening to music, watching my favourite TV shows and cooking.



The healing power of tea

We decided that there is hardly anything that doesn't feel a bit better with tea! Seriously though... even when things are really bad, if you take time out to make a hot drink and sit down with it, it gives you time to be calm, focus and begin to plan your way out of a hole.

Things that support my wellbeing



Things to consider

What makes you feel happy?
What stops you feeling bad?
What helps you relax or feel calm?
What can act as a distraction?

What has worked well before?
What new things would you like to try?
What have others suggested?

A plan for every day

Next we think about what things we should either try to do, or try to avoid each day in order to help ourselves feel as good as possible.

Things to do

Focus on positives

Smile

Believe in yourself

Find a reason to get out of bed

Try new things

Exercise

Contacting friends and important people

Socialising

Make time for yourself

Shower

Chill out

Listen to music

Talking to people in a positive way

Get enough sleep

Putting on make-up

Give yourself space

Eat regular meals

Positive use of phones and social media

Things to avoid

Being hard on yourself

Focusing on negatives

Feeling guilty about spending time alone or about going out

Taking things to heart

Staying in bed all day

Being alone all day

Being antisocial

Negative use of social media

Comparing yourself to other people

Worrying too much

Keeping things to yourself

Taking anger out on others

Hurting yourself

Smoking, drinking, drugs

Daily maintenance plan

Things I can do for myself every day to keep myself feeling as well as possible:

Things I need to do, less often than every day, to keep my overall wellness and sense of wellbeing:

Things that I know would make me feel well, but that I don't currently do or could do a lot more:

Things I should actively avoid because they make me feel bad or worse:

Managing triggers and challenges

Triggers are **things that happen to us or situations we face** that make it harder for us to stay well. Here we think about likely triggers and how we can manage them.

My potential triggers and challenges:

Things to consider

Exams
A break-up
Friendship issues
Moving to a new school or class
Change

Failure
Difficulties at home
Physical or mental illness
Being bullied
School holidays
Not living up to expectations
Comparing yourself with others



Inspiration

Talk
Let family support you
Take time for yourself
Research the thing that is bothering you so you feel more in control
Use social media to ask for help

Make a plan
Call a helpline
Talk to someone at work or school
Use art or music to help you understand what is bothering you
Admit there is a problem



The most important thing is to say something to someone. As soon as you open up it's like a weight has been lifted from your shoulders.

Things I can do to try and manage my triggers and challenges:

Early warning signs


It's useful to learn to recognise the signs in our thoughts, feelings, appearance or behaviour which might help us or those who care about us to recognise when we need help. Thinking about this can also help us recognise when a friend might need our support too.



Inspiration

Unusual behaviour – acting different from normal
Changes in body language
Losing interest in things
Forgetting things
Not listening or caring

Saying 'yes' but meaning 'no'
Mood swings
Feeling low, angry, stressed, lonely or crying
Tiredness or becoming quiet and withdrawn
Being late for school
Avoiding friends or social situations



Changes in social media habits – shutting down, stopping social media, not answering the phone, uploading worrying photos or status updates
Neglecting your appearance or cleanliness
Self-harm
Feeling unable to manage



You get pretty good at spotting the signs in your friends but it can be harder to see them in yourself, so you have to be a kind of little team looking out for each other and stepping in when one of you needs help.

Warning signs that things are going less well for me or a friend:

What next?

If you spot the warning signs that things are going less well for yourself or a friend, what should you do next? The young people we worked with had three main suggestions:




Write it down – if you're not ready to talk to someone, write down what's wrong and commit to a next step – it might be helpful showing someone what you've written.



Call a helpline or use a website if you're not ready to talk – for example the Samaritans: samaritans.org | 116 123 | jo@samaritans.org or Childline: childline.org.uk | 0800 1111.



Talk to an adult you trust – maybe a parent, teacher or doctor.



What would you advise a friend?

What could you try yourself?

Acknowledgements

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Sources of support

[childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk) | 0800 1111 (free 24hr)
confidential listening

[samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org) | 116 123 (free 24 hr) | jo@samaritans.org
confidential listening

[studentsagainstdepression.org](https://www.studentsagainstdepression.org)
resources to move away from depression

[youngminds.org.uk](https://www.youngminds.org.uk)
mental health info and guidance

[youthaccess.org.uk](https://www.youthaccess.org.uk)
young people's info, advice and counselling

[themix.org.uk](https://www.themix.org.uk)
essential support for under 25s

To order hard copies of this booklet, please email
admin@cwmt.org or call **01635 869754**

www.cwmt.org.uk

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Raising awareness fighting depression



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