

Recovery pack



Brilliant care through brilliant people



This pack has been designed to support you with your on going recovery. Our aim is to help you to identify coping strategies and distraction techniques and give you advice and information to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

My Safety Crisis Plan

How can I calm myself, and utilise coping strategies and distraction techniques?

List the things you can try below:

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Who can I contact when I need to talk?

Add your friend, family and emergency contact details below:

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Mental health services and support contact numbers
Mental Health Matters – 0800 1070160 | Samaritans – 116 123

Anxiety management strategies

There are a lot of techniques that you can try to help manage your feelings of anxiety. It can also take time by trying various techniques until you find the best strategies that work for you.

Be aware of your breathing

Concentrate on breathing more slowly. When you are feeling more anxious, your breathing can become faster, so it is important to try and slow it down.

Try counting to 4 as you breathe in slowly counting to 4 again as you breathe out.

Try this multiple times until you start to feel more relaxed.

Progressive muscle relaxation

Find your safe quiet place. Keep your eyes closed and slowly tense and then relax each of your muscle groups starting from your toes right up to your head.

Hold the tension in the muscles for three seconds and then quickly release.

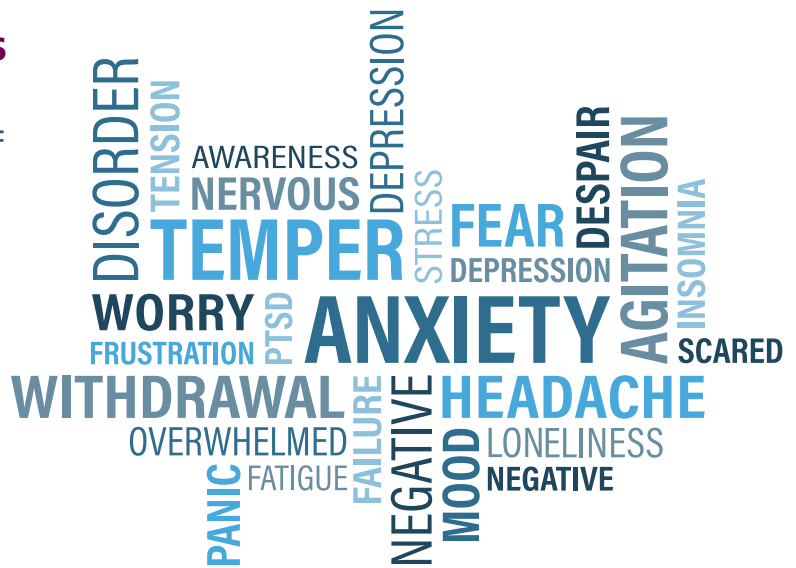
Doing this technique can help reduce the feelings of muscle tension that is often associated with feelings of anxiety.

Confronting your anxiety

Distracting yourself away from anxiety is helpful in the short term, but in the long term, it can make you feel more anxious. Try completing small tasks or exposing yourself to different situations that make you feel anxious. The best way to cope with anxiety is by developing techniques and coping strategies to stop fear taking over.

Adopt a more healthy lifestyle

- Exercise and keep active, go to the gym
- Go on regular walks, get some fresh air
- Make sure you eat healthily and have regular fluids



- Get out and about embracing nature
- See family and friends regularly
- Keep doing the activities you enjoy.



Challenge your thinking

Try and not to worry about things that haven't happened yet, as when we feel anxious it can be difficult to think positive. Remember to always try and challenge your thinking!

Plan some time for worry

Set aside as little as 10 to 20 minutes each evening for worry time. Try not to worry for more than 30 minutes. You can write them down or go over them in your head. This can help stop your worries from taking over at other times of the day/night. Try and de clutter your head focusing on more positive thoughts.

Get to know your anxiety

It can be a good idea to start a mood diary (enclosed in the pack) this can help you to find any pattern in regards to your feelings of anxiety and if there are any triggers that you can identify.



Experiences from others

Chatting with your peers who also experience anxiety can help you feel less isolated; you can then share useful techniques and information and just be there to support each other.



Give yourself some self-care

Give yourself some love and attention. Your anxiety does not define you and you are not a weak person from feeling this way.



Notes for me to remember on how I can manage anxiety:

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My mood diary

What was happening, who was I with? Where was I?

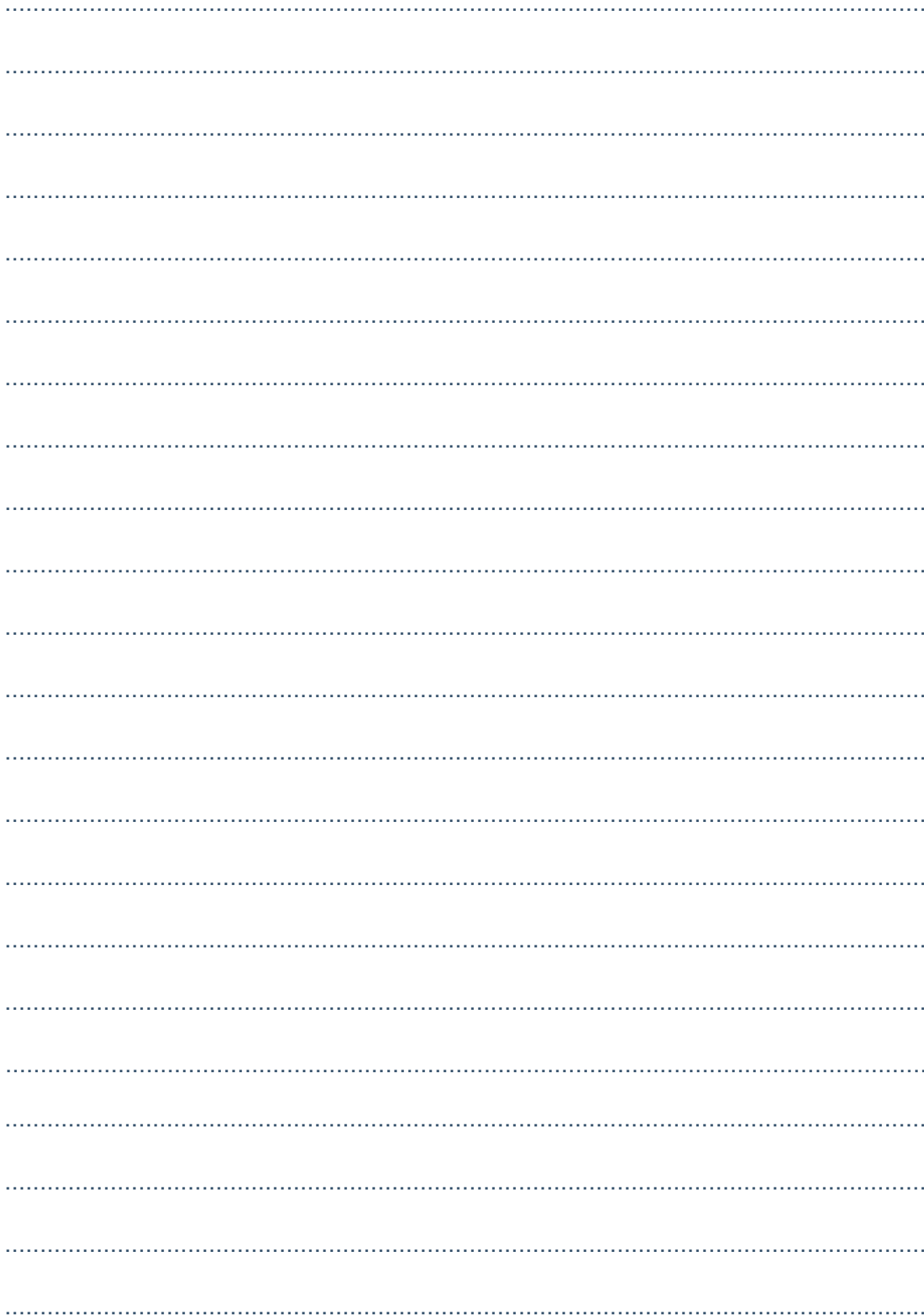
How did I feel? (thoughts, images)

What was I doing just before or after I felt this way?

You can also use your Journal to keep track of your mood.



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Exercises for stress relief

This calm breathing technique for stress, anxiety and feelings of panic takes just a few minutes and can be done anywhere.



It is important to do calm breathing techniques regularly, as part of your daily routine for it to be most effective.

You can do calm breathing techniques for stress standing up on your feet, sitting in a chair that supports your back, lying on a bed or a yoga mat, or even on the floor.

Ensure that you are as comfortable as possible. If appropriate, wear baggy clothes or loosen any clothes that may restrict your breathing.

If you're lying down, place your arms by your sides with the palms facing up with your legs out straight. Alternatively, bend your knees so your feet are flat against the floor.

If you're seated or standing, place both feet flat on the ground, roughly hip-width apart.

It is important to try and breathe deep down into your stomach, make sure you are comfortable, without forcing it too much.

Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth.

Breathe in softly and regularly. You might find it helpful to count steadily from 1 to 5. Then, without stopping or holding your breath, breathe out gently, counting from 1 to 5 again if you find this helpful. Complete this pattern every 3 to 5 minutes.

List of grounding exercises

- Remind yourself of who you are now. Say your name. Say your age now. Say where you are now. Say what you have done today. Say what you will do next
- Breathe in and out and take ten slow breaths. You will need to remain focused giving attention fully to each

breath, as you breathe in and out. Try and say the number of the breath to yourself as you breathe out



- Go to the sink and try splashing water on your face. Take note of how it feels. How does the towel feel as you dry your face. Think of words to describe the sensations

- Take small sips of cool water

- You can put a cold can or bottle of soft drink in your hands. Feel how wet and cold it is on the outside. Take notice of the bubbles and taste as you drink it



- If you can't sleep and wake during the night, reassure yourself of who you are and where you are at that moment. Remind yourself what year it is, what age you are. Look around the environment noticing familiar items while naming them. Listen for different sounds, feel what you are lying on, notice the textures, the cool or warm air, and listen for any sounds

- Feel your clothes on your body, note whether your arms and legs are covered or not, feel the sensation of your clothes on your skin as you move in them. Notice how your feet feel to be cradled in the shoes or socks you are wearing or how they feel resting on the floor

- If you are meeting with friends or family and you feel comfortable, concentrate on what they are saying and doing, remind yourself why you are with them and what they mean to you



- If you are in a seated position, feel the chair under your body and your weight and legs pressing down onto it. Take note of the pressure of the chair or floor against your limbs and body

- While you are lying down, feel the contact between your head, your body and your legs, as they touch the surface you are laid upon. Starting from your head, take note of each part of your body and how it feels all the way down to your feet
- Listen and concentrate and name what sounds you can hear. Begin with the closest or loudest sounds. Try and listen for sounds in the distance
- Hold a cup or mug of tea in both your hands and feel how warm it is. Breathe in its scent. Drink it slowly taking small sips, take your time and taste each mouthful
- Look around, take note of what you see in front of you and at each side. Name and notice the amount of large objects and smaller ones
- Choose one object you can see. Copy its outline with your eyes, as if you were drawing it



- Walk around taking your time and take note of each step as you take one and then another
- Stomp your feet, noticing the sensation and sounds as you make a connection with the ground
- Rub and clap your hands noticing the noise and sensations in your hands and arms
- Wear an elastic band on your wrist (not too tight) flick it gently, so that you can feel it springing back onto your wrist.
- Step outside if possible; notice the temperature of the air and how it changes as you go outside



- Notice five things you can hear, see, feel, taste or smell
- Spend time with a pet if you have one. Notice what is different and special about them. How do they make you feel?

- Run your hands over an unusual texture. Describe it in your mind as if you were feeling it for the first time
- Get some different nuts, or seeds. Focus on how they look, feel and smell. Place some in your mouth rolling them around taking note of how it feels. Chew them slowly, mindfully, noticing how it feels to swallow
- Put on a piece of instrumental music. Give it all of your attention, listening for each instrument
- Get a piece of paper and a pen. Start drawing as the music plays, Try following the music with the pen
- Tend to your plants if you have any and get in the garden digging in the soil.



How to get a positive sleep pattern

Your sleep routine can have a major effect on your mental and physical health. If you have a lack of sleep it can greatly affect your energy levels, productivity, emotional balance, and even your weight. We all have difficulty sleeping at certain times in our lives.



There is a way we can help ourselves to sleep better and adopt a more positive sleeping pattern. Making simple adjustments but important changes to your daytime and bedtime routines can have a huge impact on how well you sleep. A good night's sleep will give you better concentration, help you to feel more emotionally balanced, and full of energy all day long.

How can I get a better night's sleep?

Keep to a regular routine with going to bed and waking up. You will then begin to feel much more refreshed and more full

of energy throughout the day. The use of an alarm might help you to regulate your pattern set at the same time each morning but it is just as important that you try and go to bed at the same time each night.

Avoid sleeping in too late even on weekends. The more your sleep routine differs the worse you will feel. Limit naps in the day to 15 to 20 minutes in the early afternoon.

Don't give in to after-dinner sleepiness. If you get tired way before your bedtime, try and do something not too stimulating, such as some light housework, chat to a friend, or get your belongings ready for the next day. Napping too close to your bedtime will disrupt your bedtime routine.

Control your exposure to light

Melatonin is a naturally occurring hormone. It is controlled by exposure to light and it helps to regulate your sleep-wake cycle.



During the day

It's important that you expose yourself to bright sunlight when you wake up.

The closer you expose yourself to when you get up, the better. Enjoy your breakfast in the sunshine as the light on your face will help you to wake up.

Remember to spend as much time outside during the day as you can. Exercise or take your dog for a walk preferably during the day instead of at night.



Bring as much natural sunlight into your home environment or place of work as possible. Keep curtains and blinds open during the day. Let that Sunlight in!

At night

Avoid bright screens such as phones, TV's, computers or tablets within one to two hours of your bedtime. You can also minimise the impact of using devices with

screens by turning the brightness down. Do not be tempted by late-night television. Try listening to relaxing music or audio books instead. Make sure the room where you sleep is dark. Use blackout curtains to block light from windows, or you could try a sleep eye mask which can be effective. Keep a low-level night light on if you need to. This will make it easier for you to fall back to sleep if you have to get up for any reason.

Exercise during the day

Regular exercise will help to improve the symptoms of insomnia and sleep apnoea and it will also increase the amount of time you spend in the deep, restorative stages of sleep. However, you must not exercise too close to when you go to bed as this could interfere with your sleep pattern. It's important to relax before settling down to bed.

Low-impact, relaxing exercises, such as yoga or gentle stretching, can help to promote sleep. Walking for just 10 minutes a day can also significantly improve your sleep quality.



However, it can take several months of regular activity before you experience the full sleep-promoting benefits. Be patient and focus on building an exercise habit that you can stick to.

Eating and drinking

Limit your caffeine and nicotine intake. These are both stimulants that can cause sleep problems. If you need support with Smoking Cessation please speak to your GP.



Try and avoid large meals at night. It is a good idea to make dinner time earlier in the evening. Try and avoid heavy, rich, spicy foods within two hours of your bedtime as this can cause heartburn or indigestion.



Try and avoid alcohol before bed. While a glass might help you to relax, it can interfere with your sleep cycle once you're asleep.



Remember that drinking lots of fluid before bed can make you need the toilet more often during the night. This can result in broken sleep.



Having sugary foods and refined carbs, such as white bread, white rice, and pasta during the day can also trigger wakefulness at night and pull you out of the deep, restorative stages of sleep.



If you need a bedtime snack you could try:

- Half of a turkey sandwich
- A small bowl of whole-grain, low-sugar cereal
- Milk or yogurt
- A banana



Wind down before bedtime

Stress, anger or worry can also make it very difficult for you to sleep well.

If anxiety or worry dominates your thoughts at night, there are steps you can take to help prevent this from affecting your sleep pattern.



Make sure your bedroom is a welcoming environment with limited distractions.

Keep your room dark, cool, and quiet.

Keep your room cool. Typically, people sleep best in a slightly cool environment, usually around 18°C.

Relaxation techniques for better sleep

Try various relaxation techniques before going to bed, this is a great way to wind down, calm your mind, and get ready for sleep.

Try some deep belly breathing (as shown previously in the pack)

Try some progressive muscle relaxation (as shown previously in the pack)

Bedtime rituals and routines can also help you to relax - create a "toolbox" of relaxing bedtime strategies that will help you to unwind before you go to sleep. Such as:

- Read a book or magazines but make sure the light is dim but light enough to read
- Have a warm relaxing bath
- Listen to relaxing wind down music
- Complete a set of easy stretches
- Engage in your favourite low-level activity
- Listen to your favourite audio books
- Make a plan for the next day
- Have the lights low leading up to going to bed



Learn ways to get back to sleep.

Even if you have trouble getting back to sleep, try and relax by doing the techniques previously discussed in the pack, although it's not a replacement for sleep, relaxation can still help rejuvenate your body.

If you're still awake after more than 15 minutes, get out of bed and do a quiet activity, such as reading a book. Keep the lights dim and avoid bright screens so as not giving your body signs that it's time to wake up.

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Apps for wellbeing and mental health

People are starting to use apps in their everyday life. This can range from shopping, travel or entertainment. They can also be used to help you to look after your wellbeing and mental health. I have listed some apps below that could be useful.



Long term goals:

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Remember your online safety

Always make sure to keep yourself safe whilst you are online. Mind has a great online safety page that gives advice on 'How to Stay Safe Online.'

Please note that some of the apps that are listed below are free but others may need to be purchased. Some apps may also contains adverts and in-app purchases.

Apps for mental wellbeing



Silver cloud

Silver Cloud provides a wide range of supportive and interactive programmes, tools and tactics for mental and behavioural health issues. These programmes address wellbeing, life balance, time management, communication skills, goal setting, communication and relationship management, anger management, stress management, relaxation and sleep management, among many others.

RC Psych Mental Health app

This app is only available on the app store for iOS devices. This is an application developed for the Royal College of Psychiatrists by Dr. Melvyn Zhang. The aim of this application is to:

1. Provide general public information about key mental health disorders
2. Provide links to relevant videos and podcasts

3. Provide links to the Royal College Website to which members of the public could find further information about mental health disorders.

Happier

This app is only available on the Apple store for iOS devices. Happier helps you stay more present and positive throughout the day. The Apple Watch app is like your personal mindfulness coach -- use it to lift your mood, take a quick meditation pause, or capture and savour the small happy moments that you find in your day. Share how you feel using your Apple Watch which will help you lift your mood with inspiring quotes, clear your mind with a positive meditation break, or easily capture and share something positive using just your voice. Use Happier as an on-the-go gratitude journal to record happy moments both big and small. Connect with other Happier users in a positive and supportive environment.



Diary Mood Tracker – Daylio

Daylio enables you to keep a private diary without having to type a single line. Pick your mood and add activities you have been doing during the day. You can also add notes and keep an old school diary. Daylio is collecting recorded moods and activities in the statistics and calendar. This format will help you to understand your habits better. Keep track of your activities and create patterns to become more productive.



Catch it

Catch It is a joint project between the Universities of Liverpool and Manchester, to help users better understand their moods through the use of an ongoing diary. The app was designed to illustrate some of the key principles of psychological

approaches to mental health and well-being, and specifically Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).

Calm Harm

Calm Harm provides tasks that help you resist or manage the urge to self-harm. You can add your tasks too and it's completely private and password protected. What does it do? The four categories of tasks target the main reasons why people self-harm. Distract helps to combat the urge by learning self-control; Comfort helps to care rather than harm; Express gets those feelings out in a different way and Release provides safe alternatives to self-injury.

Stay Alive

This app is a pocket suicide prevention resource, packed full of useful information to help you stay safe. You can use it if you are having thoughts of suicide or if you are concerned about someone else who may be considering suicide.

Apps for depression and anxiety



Well Mind

Well Mind is your free NHS mental health and wellbeing app designed to help you with stress, anxiety and depression. The app includes advice, tips and tools to improve your mental health and boost your wellbeing.

What's Up?

What's Up? is a free app utilising some of the best CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) and ACT (Acceptance Commitment Therapy) methods to help you cope with Depression, Anxiety, Anger, Stress and more.

Stress & Anxiety Companion

This app is only available on the app store for iOS devices.



The Stress & Anxiety Companion app gives you the tools you need to manage anxious feelings and identify their triggers so they won't trip you up in the future. It can help build your mental muscles to make you stronger and happier. Some of the features include: Anxiety busting exercises: Re-Breathing: control your breathing with the help of our visual exercises. Mindfulness and muscle relaxation recordings to help your muscles relax and ease tension. Brain exercises: Quick and fun exercises to interrupt anxious or negative thinking.

SAM: Self-help for Anxiety Management

SAM is an app to help you understand and manage anxiety. The app has been developed in collaboration with a research team from UWE, Bristol.

SAM will help you to understand what causes your anxiety, monitor your anxious thoughts and behaviour over time and manage your anxiety through self-help exercises and private reflection. The "Social cloud" feature will enable you to share your experiences with the SAM community while protecting your identity.

Mood Tools - Depression Aid

If you are feeling sad, anxious, or depressed, lift your mood with Mood

Tools. Mood Tools is designed to help you combat depression and alleviate your negative moods, aiding you on your road to recovery. The app contains several different research-supported tools. They include:

Thought Diary - Improve your mood by analysing your thoughts and identifying negative/distorted thinking patterns based on principles from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.

- Activities - Regain your energy by performing energising activities and tracking your mood



before and after, based on Behavioural Activation Therapy

- Safety Plan - Develop a suicide safety plan to keep you safe and utilise emergency resources during a suicidal crisis - Read information, self-help guidelines, and find help with internet resources. Video - Discover helpful YouTube videos that can improve your mood and behaviour, from guided meditations to enlightening TED talks.

Fear Tools – Anxiety Kit

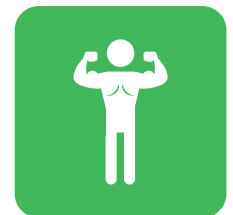
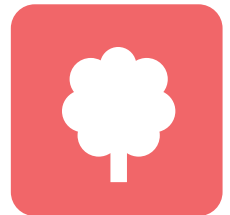
Fear Tools is an evidence-based app designed to help you combat anxiety, aiding you on your road to recovery. This application is especially useful for those suffering from Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Phobias, and Social Anxiety Disorder.

The app contains several simple, useful, and powerful tools. They include:

Thought Diary - Challenge and reframe your unhelpful thoughts with this cognitive therapy technique. Exposure - Overcome your fears with gradual exposure, an effective behavioural therapy technique.

Relax Melodies

Relax Melodies is a relaxation and sleep app that allows you to select sounds and melodies that you like and combine them to create a mix. Lay back, listen, and enjoy falling asleep. This app can also be used in many other situations aside from sleep; perfect during some of your favourites activities such as relaxing at the spa, exercising in your yoga or relaxation classes, massaging sessions, or even when taking a nap!



Notes

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Helpful numbers for support

Organisation	Services	Contact
ANXIETY UK	Monday to Friday - 9.30am – 5.30pm	03444 775 774
CALM	For men aged 15–35 years - daily, 5pm - 12am	0800 58 58 58 - Nationwide
MIND		0300 123 3393
NO PANIC	For people suffering from panic attacks and OCD	0844 967 4848
OCD ACTION		03332127890
OCD UK		0333 212 7890
PAPYRUS	Young suicide prevention society Weekdays, 10am - 5pm and 7pm - 10pm Weekends, 2pm - 5pm	0800 068 4141
SANE	Emotional support for people being affected by mental illness, their families and carers	0300 304 7000
Refuge	Advice on domestic violence	0808 2000 247 - 24hrs
Cruse Bereavement support		0808 808 1677

**Information correct at the time of publishing.
Please check with the organisations direct for up-to-date details.**

Any other information you need or feel would help please do not hesitate to ask a member of our team. We also offer support and advice to carers if required.

Thank you to the particularly brilliant Justine Norris our Occupational therapist at the North East Kent Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team for producing this.



Please call **01622 724131** if you would like this leaflet in a different language or format.
Visit us at www.kmpt.nhs.uk

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