

CREATIVE WELLBEING

HINTS AND TIPS

Section 1

Soothing and Relaxing

- Being creative can provide relaxation, distraction and absorb us and connect to an experience called 'flow,' which is like a temporary golden state of mental health.
- Creative activities, particularly those involving movement, can ease tension and stress.

Emotions

- Creative activities can boost mood and reduce anxiety.
- Creative activities can boost self-esteem, senses of achievement and pride.
- Being creative has been shown to reduce the harmful effects of stress on the body, supporting the body to take care of itself and protect the immune system.

Pain Relieving

- Many studies all over the world with all kinds of people and illnesses show that arts activities can reduce pain.
- Music is a particularly strong form of natural pain relief.

Section 2

Understanding

List all your worries starting with 'what if..' Then, write down the 'so what?' for each worry. Work through with practical steps.

Notice when you are talking negatively to yourself and imagine telling these to a friend. Ask yourself, what would your friend say?

Feelings are not facts! Separating feelings from the actual facts of what is going on is useful and can help calm the mind.

Remind yourself daily that this is temporary.

If you can't say it, show it! Movement is an ancient and powerful way of expressing feelings.

Soothing and Relaxing

Identify your own special place where you can retreat when stressed. Make it cosy with blankets, pillows, scarves. Count down from 5.

What 5 things can you see?
What 4 things can you hear?
What 3 things can you touch?
What 2 things can you smell?
What thing can you taste?

Develop a self-care toolkit. Involve sensory components (seven senses: touch, taste, sight, hearing, smell, vestibular (movement) and proprioceptive (comforting pressure)).

Repetitive, right-left movement can be effective at self-soothing and regulating emotions in times of distress.

Write without thinking: don't hold back, don't judge. Just let your feelings come out on to the page.

Fake it! Act out how calm you would like to feel: smile, breathe deep, walk talk, move your body. After 10 mins, check how you feel.

Practice gratitude: write down three things every day that you are grateful for and reflect on them.

Movement

Body Squeeze: clench all your muscles and take a deep breath. Hold for a count of 10. Breathe slowly as you gradually release the tension. Repeat.

Emotions

Dress for the life you want, not life at the moment. It is amazing how our dress can impact mood.

Find your awe: the feeling of awe makes people more likely to support others and give generously.

We have three main states: soothe, drive (motivation), and threat. Check how much time you are spending in each and try to find a balance.

Accept your feelings: There is no map for this situation, it is normal to experience big and confusing feelings.

Worry date. Set a time for worrying. Tell your worries you will listen to them then. Give yourself permission to relax until then.

Make a list. If you're feeling overwhelmed, a to-do list can help. Write it down, cross off anything unimportant, then do the simplest! This helps you feel more in control.

Pain Relieving

Research shows you can boost your mood by focussing on a positive memory. What are your favourite moments?

Connection and Belonging

Be kind to yourself and others. Offer the benefit of the doubt. Everyone is doing their best. Don't enter into every argument you are invited to.