

Taking care of ourselves and others we care for.

Sometimes it seems like we or the people we care for have little or no control over what we/they think and how we/they feel. But, there are things that we can do that will help us to feel better.

Diet

Food can affect mood! There is a link between what we eat and how we feel so it is important to have a healthy, balanced diet for both your body and mind.

Eating well doesn't have to be expensive. Try these sites for brain food on a budget:

- [Change4Life](#): easy tips and recipes
- [NHS Choices](#): healthy eating for teens
- [Royal College of Psychiatrists](#): linking eating well and mental health

Exercise

Everyone knows that exercise is good for your body – but it's also important for our emotional wellbeing. Scientists have discovered that exercise causes your brain to release chemicals that make you feel good. There is evidence to show that exercise can help raise self-esteem, help sleep problems, improve memory and concentration, takes your mind off negative thoughts, as well as reducing feelings of anxiety and depression.

Try these sites for more ideas:

- [NHS Choices](#): physical activity for teens
- [Young Minds](#): exercise and mental health

Improving your self-esteem

Self-esteem is how we think and feel about ourselves. Having healthy self-esteem makes it easier to cope with life's ups and downs. If you have low self-esteem, the thoughts and feelings you have about yourself tend to be negative.

This can make you more prone to mental health problems.

Try this site for some ways to boost your self-esteem:

- [Young Minds](#): top tips on how to boost self-esteem

Taking time to relax

Regular relaxation is beneficial for our mental health. If we make a regular time each day to practice some of the techniques we will get better and better at relaxation and notice our day-to-day stress levels are lower. We will also become able to use relaxation at the times we need them most.

A great way to relax is to practice mindfulness. This is the focusing of attention and awareness on the here and now, and is often used to reduce anxiety, stress and depression. It has its roots in Buddhism, though is used widely by people of all ages from all different backgrounds with all sorts of problems.

Sharing what is bothering you

Sharing what is bothering you can help to make it feel more manageable. If you feel that the problems you're having are too big for you to deal with by yourself you may want to get in contact with your GP, someone from school or someone else you trust.

If you are finding it hard to talk to people you know about how you feel, contact [ChildLine](#), [The Samaritans](#), or [Mindful](#).

These links might also be helpful:

- Not sure how to start a conversation with your GP about mental health? Check out the award winning [Doc Ready App](#)
- We've designed a [Cope-ometer](#) to help younger children understand the link between stresses and mental health – but it applies to all of us!
- Check out the Thinkuknow [Guide to Internet Safety](#)