

# Wellness Plan

## Looking after your mental health at the moment

Some young people, because of the way they already felt, may be finding the situation now (with worries about health, people staying home, and routines all messed up) even more difficult.

This is a guide to making a wellness plan, as a way of:

- 1) reducing the chance that things get too tough and
- 2) planning how to cope if things get tough

## What is this 'wellness plan' then?

- 1) well, first we look at what makes you feel okay
- 2) then, we look at what your normal routine is
- 3) last, we look at how you can plan to cope if things get tough

We have found that even the most resourceful and independent people can benefit from going through this with someone they trust. This is to get another view, and can help start conversations about things you want to talk about.

# Wellness Tools

## What makes you feel better?

Try to think of some things which help you to feel like yourself, feel calmer (or more lively if that's what you need), and connect you with helpful people in your life.

video-calling  
a friend

doing a  
youtube  
workout

colouring in or  
drawing

baking  
cakes

Some young people have developed their own ways of coping which 'work' to ease emotional pain in some way, but can be risky. For example: hurting themselves, drinking and taking drugs, hiding away, or over/under eating.

These are ways of coping with difficult experiences or situations, but the problem is that they harm your health, and you may have more difficult feelings afterwards (like guilt and shame after self-harm, or low mood if you drink alcohol or hide away in your room) which makes things worse.

### Try to list:

#### Things you like doing

(like hobbies, favourite things to eat, favourite things to do)

#### People who help

#### Objects that remind you of what is important to you

# Routine

## How to plan my day

It's really important to have some structure, but keeping any structure you had before Coronavirus might be difficult when you have to stay at home, you can't go to school, and you can't meet up with your friends.

Have a think, can you make your own version of your old routine for home? Just put in the things you think could help.

<b>Time of day</b>	<i>E.G.. MORNING</i>
<b>What I usually do</b>	<i>I SEE ONE OF MY BEST FRIENDS AT BREAK</i>
<b>How this helps me</b>	<i>I HAVE A BREATHER AND A CATCH UP WITH MY FRIEND</i>
<b>Something like this now</b>	<i>A VIDEO CHAT?</i>
<b>Time of day</b>	<i>MORNING</i>
<b>What I usually do</b>	
<b>How this helps me</b>	
<b>Something like this now</b>	
<b>Time of day</b>	<i>AFTERNOON</i>
<b>What I usually do</b>	
<b>How this helps me</b>	
<b>Something like this now</b>	
<b>Time of day</b>	<i>EVENING</i>
<b>What I usually do</b>	
<b>How this helps me</b>	
<b>Something like this now</b>	

# Coping when things get tough

## Understanding what's going on

1

### What happened to upset/anger/scare you?

This is something that happened, or maybe a thought you had, or a feeling that caused a reaction inside

*my mum looked stressed, I saw a news post on facebook, I couldn't be alone when I needed space, an argument*

2

### How did you feel in your body?

This could be your 'emotional brain' taking charge

*a knot in my chest, hot face and hands, dizzy, shaking, a sad sinking feeling in stomach, hunching or clenching my jaw or fists, head feels like it will explode*

# Coping when things get tough

## Planning what to do

### 3 How can I cope in the future?

Is there an emotional regulation strategy you could use to get your thinking brain to take back control from your emotional brain - to 'cool down' or 'warm up'?

**Have a look at some the ideas on the next page**

*It's important to practice these strategies during calm times when your thinking brain is in control, so that it's easier to do and will come more naturally when it isn't. Even better is if someone else can practice with you and then give you a nudge if you need to use a strategy*

### 4 What else can I do?

Is there something else you could do, if your thinking brain is nowhere to be seen and your feelings are overwhelming?

*leave the room, punch the bed, put music on, have a shower*

Next, is it possible to avoid the thing that upset you in the first place? If you can, why not try? It might not be possible – some things are unavoidable, and being at home can make this more difficult. Remember, avoiding isn't always the right thing to do, ask yourself if avoiding could make things worse in the future?

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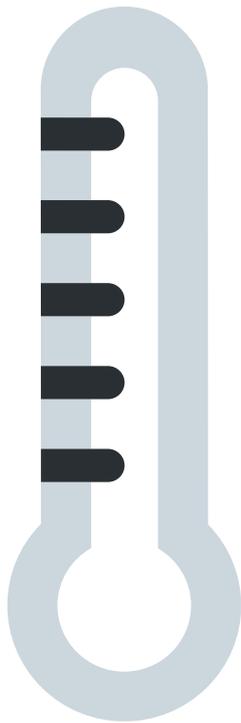
# Coping when things get tough

## How to 'cool down' and 'warm up'

### When you feel too 'hot' emotionally

Angry, terrified, feeling out of control...

You need to 'cool down' to get back into your thinking brain



'cool  
down'



I'm okay



'warm  
up'

### When you feel too 'cold' emotionally

Sad, bored, tired...

You might need to 'warm up' to feel more alert and comfortable

### TIPS: to 'cool down' when your emotional brain is taking control

#### Cold water

- hold your breath and dunk your face in a bowl of cold water
- hold for as long as you can, come up and see how you feel
- if you need to, dunk your face again

#### Intense exercise

- 'burn off' some of that horrible feeling inside
- you could do running on the spot, star jumps, press-ups, or whatever works for you

#### Hand breathing

- use a finger from your writing hand to trace round the fingers and thumb of your other hand
- breathe in deeply as you trace up your fingers, and breathe out deeply and slowly when you trace back down

### TIPS: to 'warm up' when you feel low

#### Get moving

- you might feel like staying still but move if you can - exercise
- if you can't, get out of bed or move to a different room

#### Be social

- you might want to hide away, but being with other people helps when you're low
- speak to someone if you can, in person, phone or video
- if you can't, could you text, write a letter, or just be with someone even if you're not talking, it helps

#### Look after yourself

- you might not care how you look right now, but it helps to: have a shower and brush your teeth; change into some 'going out' clothes; do your hair or your make up

## If you need more help

**Remember, improvement rarely goes in a straight line. Ups and downs are part of things getting better. It's important to think about where you've come from when things were at their worst, but if you feel there are more downs than ups, please read on...**

Talk to your parents or carers – explain what is going on for you and agree ways for them to help

Talk to someone you trust at school – this might be a teacher, head of year, the pastoral lead or SENCO. You could also talk to someone from any other services that support you with your mental health.

These organisations can provide good support and advice

- *Childline* ([childline.org.uk/get-support](http://childline.org.uk/get-support))
- *Samaritans* (phone 116 123)
- *YoungMinds* ([youngminds.org.uk](http://youngminds.org.uk))
- *EpicFriends* ([epicfriends.co.uk](http://epicfriends.co.uk))
- *Rise Above* ([riseabove.org.uk](http://riseabove.org.uk))
- *Kooth* ([kooth.com](http://kooth.com))

If you are worried about your safety, see your GP (doctor) or go to A&E at hospital (Sheffield Children's Emergency Department if you are 16 or under / Northern General Hospital Accident & Emergency if you are over 16)