

Being active is great for our physical health, but it's also really good for our mental health and wellbeing. If you are thinking about taking up an activity to boost your mental wellbeing, choose one that you will enjoy, and that you can make part of your life.



There is lots of evidence to show that being active helps your mental wellbeing in the following ways:

- It encourages you to set goals and when you achieve them it's good for your mood and self-confidence.
- It helps to raise your self-esteem, whether your activity is solo or in a group
- Physical activity causes chemical changes in your brain, which in turn can have a positive impact on your mood

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5 ways to get active today

1. Research activities available in your area
2. Look online for free workouts. there are lots to choose from!
3. Build extra activity into things you do each day
4. Practice stretches & exercise as you watch TV
5. Start walking when you can. Morning, after work, whenever suits you.



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Forming and maintaining good relationships with people around you is very important for your mental wellbeing. Staying in touch with family and friends can help us to feel happier and more secure.



Evidence shows that connecting with others can help your mental wellbeing in the following ways:

- Good connections can help you to build a sense of belonging and self-worth
- Keeping in contact gives you an opportunity to share positive experiences.
- Good connections provide emotional support and allow you to support others

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5 ways to improve connections

1. Set time to connect with family & friends
2. Listen to others without judgement
3. Ask your neighbours how they are and really listen to their answer
4. Make small talk with the postie, shop assistant, etc
5. Text a friend you haven't seen in a while



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The acts of giving and showing kindness are good for our mental wellbeing as well as for those who are on the receiving end of our kindness.



Research suggests that acts of kindness can help improve your mental wellbeing in the following ways:

- Giving to others creates positive feelings and a sense of reward
- Acts of kindness, no matter how small, give you a feeling of purpose and self-worth
- The act of giving helps you connect with other people, which is good for your self-esteem

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5 ways to give & show kindness

1. Say 'thank you' when someone does something for you
2. Spend time with someone who you know would like company
3. Volunteer for a charity
4. Notice how your colleagues are feeling, and have a chat with them.
5. Send a card to someone you haven't seen for a long time



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Paying more attention to the present moment, also known as “mindfulness” can improve your mental wellbeing, help you to enjoy life more and understand yourself better.



Evidence shows that pausing to take notice helps your mental wellbeing in the following ways:

- Taking notice can strengthen and broaden your awareness
- Appreciating the moment can help to reaffirm your priorities
- Heightened awareness helps you to understand your feelings better, allowing you to make positive choices based on what is important to you

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5 ways to be more mindful

1. Notice everyday things. The taste of food, feeling the wind on your face...
2. Spend time in nature, be aware of colours, sounds, textures and reflections
3. Sit somewhere different at work or take a different route on a walk
4. Be aware of your breathing
5. Take notice of your feelings & let them come and go



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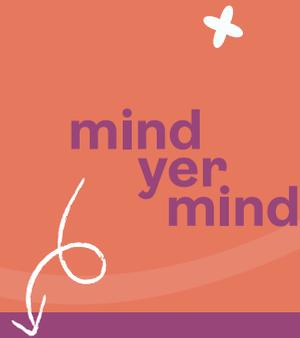
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Why not think about something that you are interested in, so that learning is enjoyable and you are more likely to continue. Even if you feel like you do not have enough time, there are lots of different ways to bring learning into your life.



Learning something new activates the release of the 'feel-good' chemical dopamine in the brain and helps to promote positive mental wellbeing in the following ways:

- Learning new skills can boost your self-confidence and raise your self-esteem
- Learning can help you to build a sense of purpose
- Learning can help you to meet new people and form new connections



5 ways to learn something new

1. Take up a new hobby - drawing, chess, learning a new language
2. Take up DIY - learn to fix things in your home
3. Learn to cook some new meals
4. Ask for extra responsibility at work
5. Sign up for an online course or one at a local college



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Do you know there are simple things you can do to look after your mental wellbeing?

Research shows that there are **5 steps** you can take to improve your mental health and wellbeing. These are; *Connections, Learning, Taking Notice, Giving and Being Active.*



Why these 5 steps are an important:

- 1. Connections** – help to build a sense of belonging, allowing you to share experiences, and support each other.
- 2. Learning** – new skills boosts your confidence, gives you a sense of purpose, and helps you connect with others.
- 3. Taking notice** – of the present moment can improve your mental health & help you understand yourself and the world better.
- 4. Giving** – creates positive feelings, giving you a feeling of purpose & self-worth, & helps you connect with others.
- 5. Being Active** – can help to raise your self-esteem by setting & achieving goals, & by causing chemical changes in your brain that have a positive impact on mood.



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