10 STEPS TO AID POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

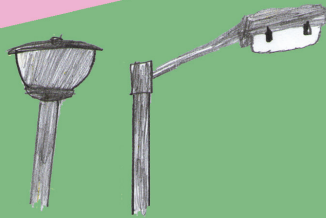1) Exercise regularly – it keeps us fit and releases endorphins which are responsible for our feelings of pleasure.

2) Talk to someone you trust – this can be parents, teachers, friends or your doctor.

3) Try art and music therapies – e.g. painting, drawing, playing a musical instrument or listening to music.

4) Find a way to relax – you could take up a new hobby or skill.

5) Eat and drink properly – A healthy body helps to create a healthy mind.

6) Do something for others – helping others can make you feel better about yourself.

7) Get enough sleep – try getting into a routine and sticking to it.

8) Be mindful – take in what is happening at the present to try to understand your thoughts, feelings and behaviour.

9) Celebrate the small victories – reward yourself when you accomplish something, no matter how small.

10) Accept who you are – be kind to yourself and cut out any negativity.

#SUSV

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Talk to friends, family, teachers, youth workers or other adults who you can trust.

Speak to your doctor.

Young Minds   **0808 802 5544**
www.youngminds.org.uk   (Parent Helpline)

NHS choices
www.nhs.uk

Mind   **0300 123 3393**
www.mind.org.uk

ChildLine   **0800 1111**
www.childline.org.uk

Winston's Wish   **08452 030405**
www.winstonswish.org.uk

Samaritans   **116 123**
www.samaritans.org

Sane line   **0300 304 7000**
www.sane.org.uk

Rethink Mental Illness   **0300 5000 927**
www.rethink.org

The Mix   **0808 808 4994**
www.themix.org.uk

In an emergency call 999 or present at A & E.

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NORTHUMBERLAND
YOUTH SERVICE
SOUTH EAST AREA

Speak Up, Silent Voices

Depression
Low Mood
Anxiety Support Panic
Self Harm
eating disorders
MENTAL HEALTH
Teens Bipolar AWARENESS
SCHIZOPHRENIA
Suicide

Let's talk about Mental Health

Mental Health problems can affect the way you think, feel and behave. They can cause serious disorders in a person's behaviour or thinking as well as affecting someone's ability to cope with and meet the demands of everyday life. In this leaflet we aim to educate you on mental health and illness, raise awareness and offer advice and support options.

COMMON DIFFICULTIES

These are some of the more common Mental Health illnesses that young people face:
- Anxiety
- Low mood
- Depression
- Bereavement
- Eating Disorders
- Self-Harm
- Panic Attacks

SYMPTOMS

If you, a family member or a friend has 3 or more of these symptoms, it could be an indication of a mental illness.
- Distancing yourself from people
- Low moods or low self esteem
- Frequently feeling anxious
- Isolating yourself from daily activities
- Little motivation
- Change in appetite
- Change in appearance
- Uncontrollable restlessness
- Lack of concentration
- Lack of sleep
- Dizziness
- Worrying effects you in a negative way
- Self-consciousness about your weight
- Excessive exercising
- Calorie counting

STIGMA

Stigma is a strong feeling of disapproval which surrounds mental illnesses leading to prejudice and discrimination against those who are affected.

Stigma can isolate people, exclude people from day to day activities, stop people attending school and keeping jobs, prevent people from seeking help, delay treatment, have a negative impact on physical health and impair recovery.

Stigma surrounding mental health can magnify the issues that young people dealing with mental health problems face, this is why it is so important to reduce the stigma attached to mental health issues.

How to stop stigma:

- Talk openly about mental health - not to highlight mental health as a negative but to promote positive mental health.
- Educate yourself and others about mental health.
- Use the correct language.
- Be positive about mental health.
- Support those who are suffering from mental health issues.

Reducing stigma can aid recovery and improve the young person's chances on improving their mental health.

PERSONAL STORIES

It is really important to be able to talk about your mental health problems, you may feel like you are alone and that nobody will understand how you feel. Opposite are two personal stories by young people.

Anonymous –
My journey with mental health has been very long and confusing. I only got diagnosed with an "extreme case of severe social anxiety" and "conversion disorder" two years ago. I've been in therapy for about 11 years and I'm only 16. My biggest piece of advice would be to speak out. If you are in therapy and feel it isn't working, tell somebody. I was scared of change, but because I spoke up I now have amazing help and have started getting better. My mental health problems once meant that I had 25-30 pseudo seizures a day and I had to drop out of high school. If you're in the middle of what seems like hell, I promise it gets better. Never give up, and take it one step at a time.

Anonymous –
I am actually in a very good place right now, but I have attempted suicide. My depression stemmed from a variety of things, mostly how I viewed myself. I ended up with an eating disorder and severe anxiety because I couldn't view myself in any way other than worthless. When I was in year 7, I knew I wasn't a girl but I didn't think anyone would accept me, so I kept it hidden until about two months ago. After a suicide attempt in year 9 I got support from friends, school and various mental health systems. They gave me the help I needed. I'm now going to college, I have good friends and I can be who I really am. To anyone who is feeling as though they aren't mentally healthy, the best thing to do is get help as soon as possible. It is terrifying and stressful and may seem worse at first but in the long run it is the best thing you can do.