

Taking Care of Me

***A wellbeing guide
developed by Link Up***



BECOME.



With thanks to Carmen, Florida, Rachele-Leah, Jasmine and the rest of the Link Up group, who wish to remain anonymous. Their ideas are captured in this guide.



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About this guide

In 2021, the charity Become decided to run some sessions to support the wellbeing of the young people who access the service. The UK was still in the grips of the coronavirus pandemic and for many people, this had a negative impact on their wellbeing.

Become realised that many young people who access the service have challenges in their lives that impact on wellbeing. However, they also have many skills, strengths and resources to manage these challenges. Over six months, the young people who attended Become's Link Up met with a clinical psychologist to share some of the ways they were already managing their wellbeing. This guide is a collection of those ideas. There is some information as well as some exercises for you to try. We hope that by sharing these ideas, other people will benefit from the wisdom of the Link Up group. There is a lot of information in this guide that might feel a bit overwhelming. We hope you can take your time to read it and are able to dip into it as and when you're ready.

Some of the ideas in this guide may be new to you, and some of these ideas may be things you've used for a long time. You probably have other ideas and skills that are not mentioned here too. We hope this guide can be a work in progress, and other ideas can be added to it. We hope you enjoy it!

About this guide

A note on language

In this guide, we refer to the people who attend Link Up and the people who access Become more generally.

Throughout this guide, we will use different words including young people, service users, participants and care-experienced people.

We decided to use multiple different words because we wanted to **acknowledge that each person might want to identify themselves differently. We hope these words fit for you.**



About this guide

A disclaimer

Although we hope that this guide will be helpful, we wanted to mention that the ideas in this pack might not be helpful for everyone, as everyone has different experiences, challenges, strengths and resources. We're hoping this guide will get you thinking about your own wellbeing and what works for you, rather than being a 'one size fits all' solution.

Wellbeing is complex and while these ideas may help, they may not be what you're looking for. At the end of this guide are some alternative resources and ways to access support for mental health and wellbeing.

This guide discusses wellbeing and mental health. While the aim of this guide is to be supportive, it might also be triggering.

If you feel like you need some further support you can arrange an appointment with your GP.

If you need support urgently, you could call the Samaritans on 116 123 or NHS 111 for advice.

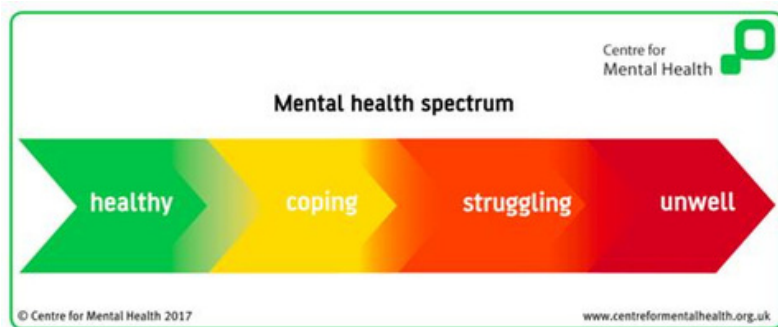
If you feel you are not able to keep yourself safe, you could call 999 and ask for an ambulance, or visit A&E.

The Stress Bucket

We began the wellbeing sessions thinking about what ‘wellbeing’ and ‘mental health’ meant to the participants in the group. We discussed how wellbeing and mental health exist on a spectrum. We all have wellbeing and mental health and may be at different points on the spectrum at different times. We realised that although our wellbeing feels personal, it fluctuates and often changes based on what is happening in the world around us. The pandemic was a good example of this – as the world changed, so did lots of people’s mental health. We also spent some time talking and thinking about stigma and shame. We discussed how often the stigma which surrounds mental health can create feelings of shame which impact wellbeing. We hope that conversations such as the one the group had, which normalise and contextualise mental health, start to break down some of the stigma surrounding mental health.

Thinking points

Did you know mental health exists on a spectrum? What factors in the world might cause you to move up or down the spectrum? Have you come across mental health stigma in your life? What could help to reduce mental health stigma among people you know?



The Stress Bucket

We continued our conversation about wellbeing and mental health using the analogy of the 'stress bucket'. The analogy states that we all have a personal stress bucket. The size of everyone's bucket may be different, depending on their lived experiences. Stress flows into the bucket, filling it up. If there is more stress than can fit into the bucket, it overflows. It might be one small thing that causes an already full bucket to overflow. When the stress bucket overflows, we may notice we struggle with our wellbeing. For example, we may feel anxious or low. However, there is a tap at the bottom of the bucket to let stress out and stop it from overflowing, keeping the stress at a manageable level. The tap represents coping skills.

The Link Up group spent some time discussing the stress bucket analogy. Everyone shared their ideas for what fills up and what helps to empty their stress bucket. We realised that the things that fill up the stress bucket are common parts of life. We spoke about how having a bucket that is getting full doesn't show that the person has a 'problem' or a 'weakness', but just shows they are a person going through the ups and downs of life.

We noticed that sometimes some of the things that empty the stress bucket might also fill it back up. For example, ordering takeout empties the bucket because it feels good. However, sometimes it also makes people feel guilty about spending money which then feeds back into the bucket. We thought this meant that it was really important to get a balance between what goes in and out of the bucket.

THE STRESS BUTT!

STRESS FLOWS IN:

TRAUMA, WORRY, ANXIETY ABOUT WORK, FINANCES, FAMILY, RELATIONSHIPS HEALTH, SLEEP, STUDIES etc.

STRESS OVERFLOWS:

MENTAL & PHYSICAL HEALTH SUFFERS

SIZE OF BUTT = VULNERABILITY

(THE BIGGER IT IS → THE LESS VULNERABLE TO STRESS & OVERFLOW, THE SMALLER IT IS THE MORE VULNERABLE TO STRESS & OVERFLOW YOU ARE)

TAP OFF: BAD COPING, STRESS BUILDS UP AND OVERFLOWS

TAP ON: GOOD COPING, LETS STRESS OUT

TAP = YOUR MH TOOLS AND COPING SKILLS:

THERAPY, MEDICATION, MINDFULNESS, MEDITATION, SLEEP HEALTHY EATING, EXERCISE, YOGA, FRIENDS, LAUGHTER, JOY etc

OOH LOOK GROWTH!

AND EVEN MORE UNDER HERE OUT OF SIGHT!

The group shared their experiences about what fills up their own stress buckets:



The group also shared their ideas about what skills they can use to empty their stress bucket:



Thinking points

- What are the things that fill up your stress bucket?
- Do you think these are similar or different from the things which might impact other people you know?
- What empties your stress bucket?
- What gets in the way of you doing the things which help to empty your bucket?

Exercise

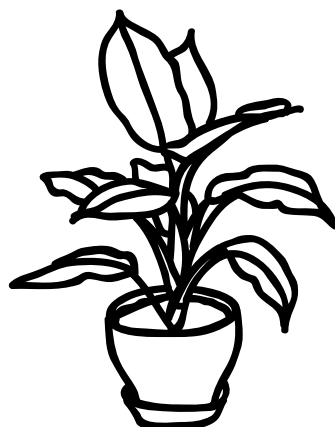
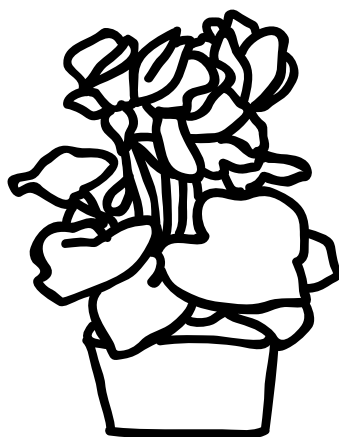
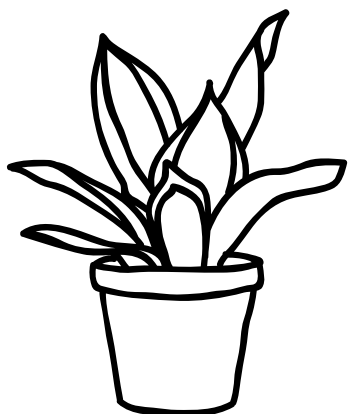
Have a go at drawing your own stress bucket. Use the image above to help you.

In the rest of this pack, we explore in more detail some of the ideas about ways to empty the stress bucket.

Mindful moment

'Mindful colouring' is an activity that is similar to meditation - taking a moment to breathe deeply, focus on one task and try to let go of thoughts of what happened yesterday, what you are going to do when you finish or worries you may have.

Take a moment to focus on colouring in the plants below.



Values

We spent some time thinking about what values, and thinking about how connecting with values can be a way to empty the stress bucket.

A person's values are the beliefs and ideas that are most important to them. They help to determine life's priorities, and they influence decision-making. For example, a person who values wealth may prioritise their career, while a person who values family might try to spend more time at home.

When a person is able to do things that align with their values, their wellbeing tends to be better. When a person's actions do not match their values, for example, if someone who values family ends up working a lot, they may become discontent.

Thinking points

How do your values and your wellbeing relate to each other? When you do something that is important to you, does it impact your wellbeing? What about the impact on your wellbeing when you can't do the things that are important to you?

The group spent some time thinking about what values different celebrities might hold and how these might impact what they choose to do with their lives.

Values

The group spent some time thinking about what values different celebrities might hold and how these might impact what they choose to do with their lives.



We thought Beyoncé might have values like fighting for rights, family, success, and privacy.

We thought Donald Trump might have values like money, power, control, being right, and family.



Thinking points

How do you think holding these values might impact what Beyoncé and Donald Trump choose to do with their lives? What might happen to their wellbeing if something got in the way of them following their values?

Values

It can be easy to feel disconnected from our values, especially during the coronavirus pandemic, and this can have a negative impact on wellbeing. The group thought of a list of questions to help you to reconnect with your values:

1. What centres you?
2. What is important to you?
3. What makes you feel happy?
4. If you lost something in your life, what would impact you the most?
5. What helps you cope in difficult times?
6. If someone was writing your legacy, what would you want them to remember about you?
7. Describe yourself in 3 words.
8. What do you look for in other people you want to be friends with?
9. What can you not compromise on in friendships and relationships?
10. If you were prime minister for a day, what would you do?
11. If there was one thing you could guarantee for your future, what would you choose?
12. If a genie came and gave you three wishes, what would you do with them?
13. What one thing are you most grateful for in your life?
14. What messages would you want to pass on to your younger self?

Exercise

Have a look at the list of questions above and write down some answers.

Use your answers to these questions and the list of values below to identify five values that are most important to you.

For each value, write down a few words to describe what that value means to you.

Values

Abundance	Accountability	Achievement	Action
Adventure	Ambition	Awareness	Balance
Beauty	Being the best	Calmness	Cheerfulness
Clarity	Comfort	Compassion	Competition
Connection	Contribution	Control	Courage
Creativity	Curiosity	Determination	Discipline
Effectiveness	Empathy	Energy	Enthusiasm
Excellence	Fairness	Faith	Fame
Family	Flexibility	Freedom	Friendship
Fulfilment	Fun	Harmony	Happiness
Health	Honesty	Honour	Humility
Independence	Integrity	Intelligence	Intimacy
Inspiration	Kindness	Knowledge	Liveliness
Love	Money	Nature	Passion
Peace	Perfection	Persistence	Philanthropy
Power	Respect	Security	Simplicity
Significance	Spirituality	Spontaneity	Strength
Stability	Success	Status	Teamwork
Tolerance	Tradition	Truth	Vitality
Wealth	Wisdom		

The Link Up group thought about these questions for themselves. The most common values they identified were: fulfilment, honesty, faith, friendship, accountability, inspiration and compassion.

Knowing what your values are is the first stage. The next stage is to do things that are in line with these values. When our lives have more actions that are aligned with our values, our wellbeing tends to be better.

Exercise

For each value you have identified, set yourself a few small tasks you could do in line with your value. The template below may help you.

My value is

This value means to me.

Next week I could

Next month I could

Next year I could

After thinking about values, there were two key quotes the group wanted to share. These are “when you honour your values, you honour yourself” and “if your values are fulfilled, you’re happiest”.

Thinking points

Having spent some time reading through this section and thinking about your values, what are the main things you will take away? What key messages would you want to share with others?

Social support

The group identified social support as being an important tool that helps stress to flow out of the stress bucket.

The group spent some time thinking about what 'social support' meant. We thought it meant the support we get from others around us. This includes friends, family, pets, communities, teams and professionals. We discussed how having shared interests with others can help encourage social support.

The group reflected on how the pandemic had impacted the ability to access social support. For example, being physically distant from others, being worried about getting ill from others and feeling isolated. The pandemic also provided some opportunities for social support, for example re-connecting with people who live far away over social media.

Thinking points

What does social support mean to you? How did the pandemic impact your social support? Did the way you access social support change?

We thought about how social support impacts our wellbeing and mental health. Social support can help us to feel safe, trusted and supported. It helps us to offload stress to others. Social support can also help with practical things, for example, child care and DIY. In general, the more we are able to access social support, the better our wellbeing is.

Thinking points

In what ways does the social support in your life support your wellbeing?

Exercise

Use the tables below to reflect on the different types of social support you have in your life.

List three people, groups, or communities that provide you with social support

Support 1

Support 2

Support 3

Exercise

Use the tables below to reflect on the different types of social support you have in your life.

Describe how each of your supports help you, or could help you, with emotional, practical and social needs. How does this impact your wellbeing?

Support 1

Support 2

Support 3

Support 4

Exercise



Use the tables below to reflect on the different types of social support you have in your life.

What specific steps could you take to better utilise your social support?

Support 1

Support 2

Support 3

Support 4

Although social support can have a positive impact on wellbeing, the group reflected that there can be some challenges in accessing social support. Here are some of the challenges to social support identified by the Link Up group:

- Feeling like a burden.
- Finding it difficult to know what to say to let others know you need social support.
- A lack of confidence or low self-esteem.
- Worries about covid.
- Practical barriers like where you're living or how much spare time you have.
- Taking the first step.
- Finding people with shared interests or experiences.
- Feeling that others won't understand you.

We noticed that lots of us faced the same challenges. The group found that talking about and sharing these challenges with each other was a form of social support, and it felt like a problem shared was a problem halved!

Thinking points

Do you experience any barriers to accessing social support? How do you overcome challenges you may have?

The group spent some time thinking about tips to overcome challenges in accessing social support. Here are some tips they wanted to share:

- Have a list of positive affirmations about yourself. Look at this list when you're feeling low in confidence.
- Remind yourself of the benefits of social support, and how you'll feel afterwards.
- Remember that motivation often comes second. So if you don't feel like seeing other people, try to make yourself do it. You might notice you feel more motivated by being around others.
- Acknowledge what's impacting you and stopping you from seeking social support
- If you're feeling worried about seeking social support, write down your worries. After you seek social support, go back to your worries and see if they were justified.

- Taking a break from social support can be helpful too.
- Talk honestly with others about how you're feeling about social support.
- Find shared activities so the focus doesn't have to be on conversation. E.g. going skateboarding or watching films together.
- Use a code in your WhatsApp groups to let people know you need support. This can help if you don't feel ready to talk in detail about what's going on, but want to let people know you need help. An example was writing "girl check me" in the group chat.
- Remember that you can be your own social support too. How can you treat yourself with the kindness you would want from a friend?
- Don't forget about animals as a form of social support!

Exercise

Below are some of the challenges identified by the group.

Use the list above, or your own ideas, to think about some solutions to these challenges.

Add any other challenges you can think of to the list, and come up with some solutions.

Challenge to social support	Ideas for overcoming the challenge
Feeling like a burden	
Finding it difficult to know what to say to let others know you need social support	
A lack of confidence or low self esteem	
Worries about coronavirus	

Challenge to social support	Ideas for overcoming the challenge
<p>Practical barriers like where you're living or how much spare time you have</p>	
<p>Taking the first step</p>	
<p>Finding people with shared interests or experiences</p>	
<p>Feeling that other won't understand you</p>	

The group wanted to share some final messages with you about social support.

They said

- “You’re doing better than you think!”
- “You can be your own social support”
- “You’re not alone, there’s always support out there. Don’t isolate yourself and seek support in whatever way you can”.

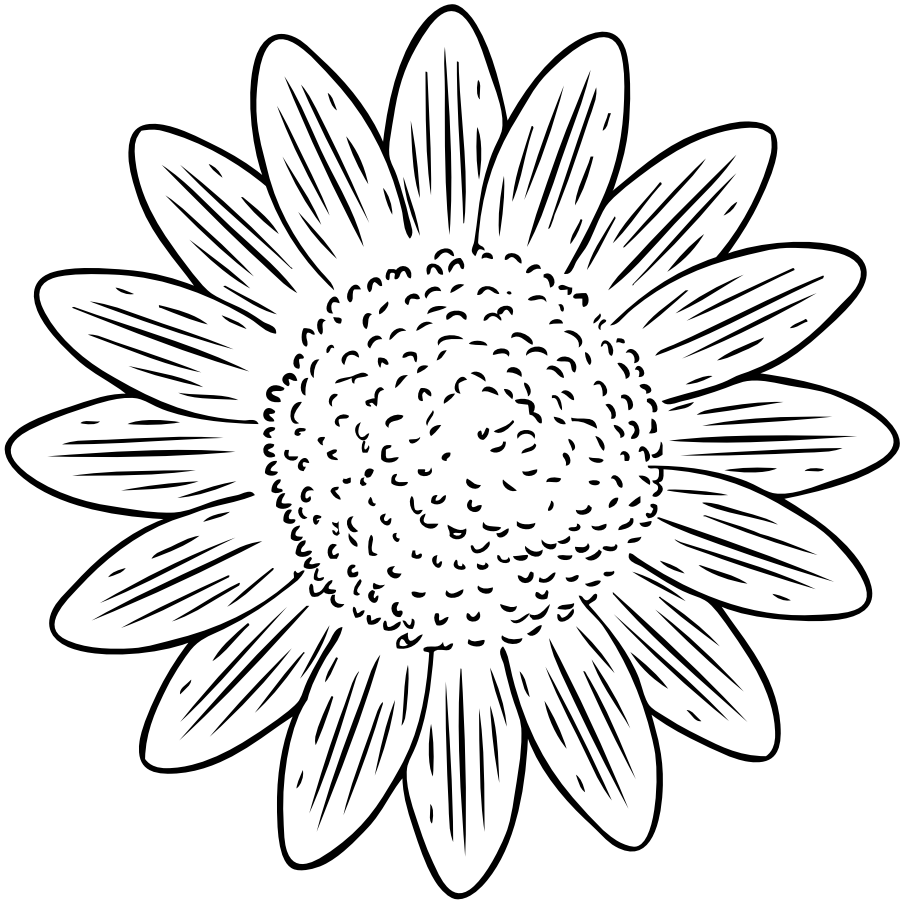
Thinking points

After reading through this section on social support, is there anything new or different you want to try? Is there anyone you want to share this information with?

Mindful moment



Take a moment to focus on colouring in the sunflower below.



Self-esteem

In several of the Link Up sessions, the group spoke about the topic of self-esteem. The group reflected that low self-esteem can fill up the stress bucket. We spent a session focussing on self-esteem and sharing tips and tools to manage it.

We began by thinking about what good and low self-esteem meant to the group. Here are the definitions we came up with.

Low self-esteem is when people have a general sense of not feeling good about themselves. Low self-esteem can affect what people do. For example, if someone is experiencing a period of low self-esteem they may withdraw from others or avoid trying new things. Experiencing low self-esteem can also affect how people think. For example, they may have doubtful or negative thoughts about themselves, and about how others view them. Self-esteem can also affect emotions, for example feeling sadness or anxiety.

Good self-esteem is when people feel more confident about themselves. They have a general sense of liking themselves, and that other people view them in a positive way. We thought that good self-esteem isn't about being perfect but, instead, about accepting who you are and not being so hard on yourself.

We realised that self-esteem is on a spectrum and fluctuates over time. We may have periods of low self-esteem and periods of better self-esteem. Our self-esteem is often affected by things happening in the world around us.

Self-esteem

Thinking points

What do you think about these definitions of self-esteem? Can you think about times in your life when your self-esteem has been lower, and times it has been better?

How do psychologists understand low self-esteem?

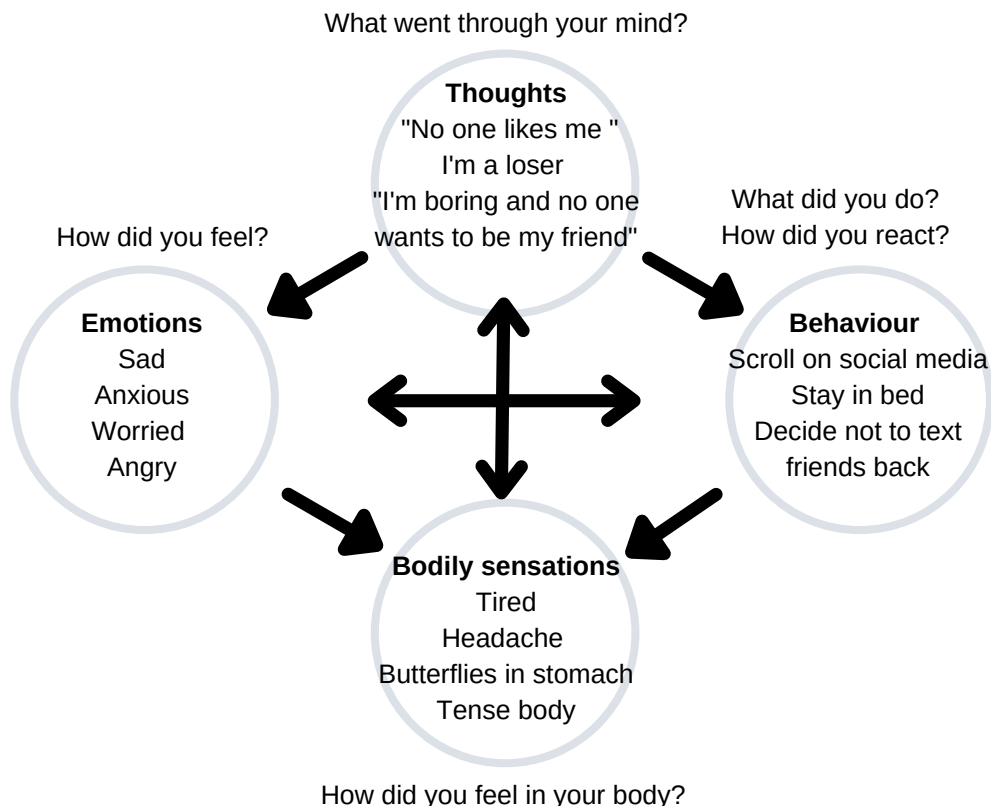
Psychologists have some ideas about the challenges that people face in their lives. There is a psychological idea called Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) which focuses on how thoughts, behaviours and bodily sensations interact to impact how we feel. Often we find ourselves getting caught in vicious cycles which keep low self-esteem going. In order to change a vicious cycle, we can start to make changes in our thoughts, and changes in our behaviour.

Below is an example of a low self-esteem cycle. As you read through it, think about the arrows and notice how the different sections feed into each other, keeping low self-esteem going.

Situation

Think of a recent time when your self-esteem was low. Who were you with? What were you doing? Where were you? When did this happen?

I went on social media on Friday night and saw some of my friends were at a party which I didn't know about.

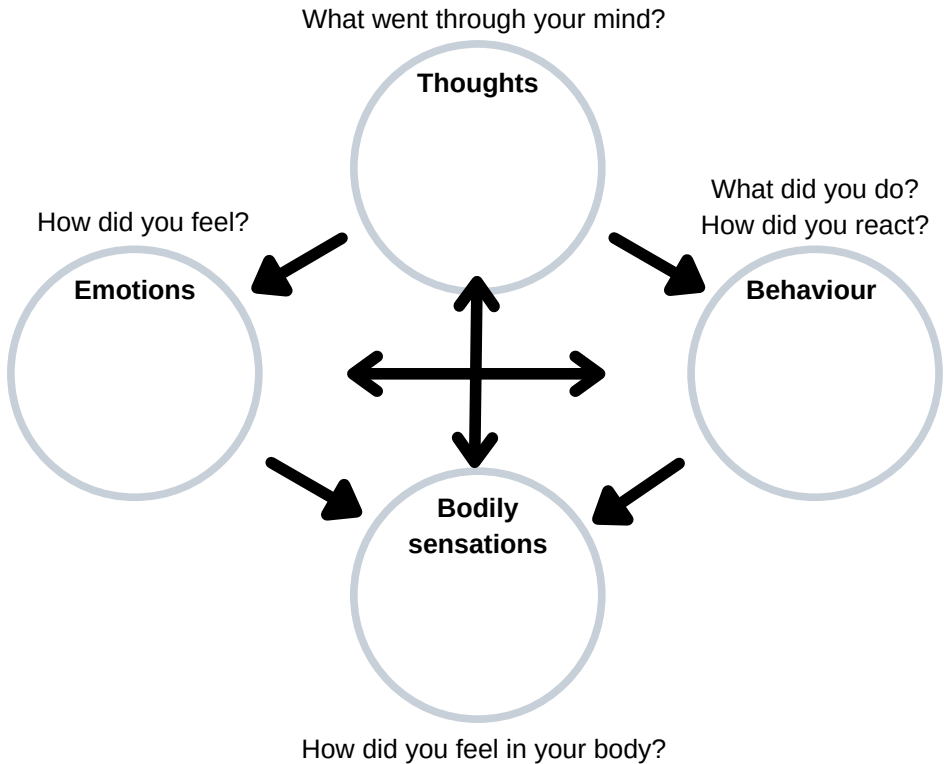


Exercise

The first stage of improving self-esteem is understanding it. Have a go at filling in the example below. Think about how different sections feed into each other, keeping low self-esteem going. You can fill the diagram by thinking about yourself. If that feels difficult, think about a character in your favourite film or book.

Situation

Think of a recent time when your self-esteem was low. Who were you with? What were you doing? Where were you? When did this happen?



Thinking points

Looking at the cycle you have drawn, how could change be introduced to thoughts and behaviours to help improve self-esteem?

Below are four tips that the group shared to help improve self-esteem.

Tip one: Pause and check your thoughts

Low self-esteem is associated with thoughts about ourselves and others. These thoughts tend to be negative or self-critical. We tend to have the same patterns of thoughts over and over again. Thoughts also tend to be automatic, they can pop into our minds without us intentionally trying to think about them.

Although our thoughts often feel true, they are not facts! Having the thought “I am a loser” or “I am a failure” is not the same as being a loser or being a failure. It can be helpful to pause and check our thoughts. This can help us to get some of our thoughts into perspective.

Exercise

Write down a common negative or self-critical thought that comes into your mind. If this feels difficult, go back to the example you did of a character from your favourite film or book.

Once you have a thought written down, ask yourself the questions below. Write down a response to each question.

After you have answered these questions, write down a new, alternative thought you could hold in mind. What is the impact on your emotions of holding this new thought in mind? How does holding this new thought in mind impact how you might act?

THINK!

Ask yourself if your thought is:

True?

Is this thought FACT or opinion? What is absolutely true about this situation?

Helpful?

Is this thought helpful to me? What WOULD be helpful to think right now?

Inspiring or Important?

Does this thought inspire me, or is it very important, right now? What is really important to think or do right now?

Necessary?

Do I really need to believe and act on this thought? Immediately? Later? Never? What is necessary to do right now?

Kind?

Is this thought kind to me or others? What WOULD be a kind thought, right now?



Exercise

Another technique to pause and check thoughts is to put them on trial. Use the template below to think about the same or different low self-esteem thought.

In this exercise, you will put a thought on trial by acting as a defence attorney, prosecutor, and judge, to determine the accuracy of the thought.

Prosecution and Defence: Gather evidence in support of, and against, your thought. Evidence can only be used if it's a verifiable fact. No interpretations, guesses, or opinions!

Judge: Come to a verdict regarding your thought. Is the thought accurate and fair? Are there other thoughts that could explain the facts?

The Thought

The Defence *evidence for thought*

The Prosecution *evidence against the thought*

The Judge's Verdict

Tip two: Gather examples of times things went ok

Often when we are experiencing periods of low self-esteem, we ignore positive things about ourselves, which leaves us focusing on the bad. It can be helpful to switch our attention to the things we like about ourselves and our lives. If we start to collect evidence in line with a more positive or kinder self-view, we may notice our self-esteem improves. These might be small things, like someone smiling at you in the street, a colleague making a cup of tea or getting a nice text from a friend.

Exercise

Make some copies of the box below and cut them out. Each day, add one or two things into the box. Find a place to store these examples. Maybe you could get a jar or box to store these ideas. Or maybe you have a notebook you could use to keep a record.

Next time you are feeling down or your self-esteem is low take these examples out and have a read.

- How might reading over these examples impact how you feel about yourself?
- How might reading over these examples impact what you do?

What happened? *Date, time, who, where, what?*

What does this mean?

I am...

Others are...

The world is...

Remember, this exercise is about switching our attention from the negative to the positive, so only record positive examples.

Tip three: Try a different behaviour

Self-esteem affects our behaviours and the things we do. Often when self-esteem is low, people withdraw from others or spend time on their own. They might use drugs or alcohol to make themselves feel better. They might avoid certain situations which feel hard or scary. These behaviours make a lot of sense in the face of low self-esteem and often make people feel a little bit better in the short term. However, in the long term, some of these behaviours can become challenging. They may make people feel isolated and low in mood. These behaviours may also stop us from getting a different perspective and learning from new experiences. For example, if a person feels like a failure, they may avoid new challenges. This person wouldn't get the opportunity to try something new and learn the things they're good at.

Doing new behaviours might sound easy, but it's often difficult in practice as it involved doing things we don't feel like doing. It can help to start with small steps. Trying doing one small thing differently and notice how this impacts your confidence, making the next thing feel that little bit easier.

The Link Up group reflected on how difficult it can be to try and do things differently. Their top tip was about the importance of taking things slow and making small, gradual changes. They said, "it's better to take many small steps in the right direction than to take a great leap forward and then stumble backwards".

Exercise

The table below will help you to plan and reflect on some new behaviours. There are a few examples in the table to help get your thinking going.

Remember, it can be really hard to do things differently so be kind to yourself and take things at your pace.

Old 'low self-esteem behaviour'	New behaviour to try	What went well and what did I learn?
<i>Avoid speaking up at work</i>	<i>Make a suggestion in the team meeting</i>	<i>It wasn't as bad as I thought! A few people seemed interested in what I had to say</i>
<i>Stay in bed</i>	<i>Get up, go for a short walk, and take 5 deep slow breaths</i>	<i>My mood feels a little bit better when I move my body and get some fresh air</i>
<i>Decide not to text friends back</i>	<i>Text a close friend and plan to get a coffee together</i>	<i>She was pleased to hear from me. She said she had been going through some stuff which is why I hadn't heard from her for a few weeks.</i>

Old 'low self-esteem behaviour'

New behaviour to try

What went well and what did I learn?

Thinking points

This section contains ideas and tips for self-esteem.

Which of these ideas would you like to try?

Do you have any other ideas for ways to improve self-esteem that aren't in this guide?

Mindful moment

Take a moment to focus on colouring in the image below.



Self-care

In our final session, the group thought about self-care. We thought self-care was a really important way to empty the stress bucket.

The group discussed what 'self-care' means to them. Here are some of the ideas we had:

- De-stressing
- Doing things to make yourself happy
- Doing for yourself what you'd do for others
- Being selfish now and then
- Looking after yourself before you can look after others
- Not being too overwhelmed
- Maintaining your own wellbeing
- Small steps, doing what you can each day
- Allows you to manage daily challenges
- An exit from challenging thoughts
- Prioritising what you need to do
- Nurturing your wellbeing
- We're like a machine that needs oiling and re-programming to run smoothly
- Keeping up with daily life

Self-care

Thinking points

Does self-care mean the same, or something different, to you?

Although the group all agreed that self-care was important, they also identified that there were challenges to practising self-care. It may be hard to find the motivation or the time for self-care. Some people may not recognise the need for self-care, or they might not know what self-care they can do.

There were some different ideas and tips for how to overcome these challenges. One idea was to break self-care down into small manageable tasks that can be done each day. Another idea was to reward self-care, for example rewarding booking a doctor's appointment with your favourite meal.

We also discussed having prompts to remind you to practice self-care, for example, post-it notes around your bedroom or a reminder on your phone. Finally, we thought having a list of self-care activities might be helpful.

Here is the self-care list developed by Link Up. We broke self-care down into different categories.

Physical

Exercise
Yoga
Grooming and skin care
Brushing your teeth
Hugging yourself
Washing yourself
Dancing
Walking
Breathing
Sleep
Eating well



Social

Connecting with others
Volunteering
Compassion for others

Environmental

Cleaning
Calm music
Smells
Being in calm place



Spiritual

Stopping and
being calm
Praying
Time alone
Reflective time
Creative
expression



Psychological

Grounding
Breathing exercises
Meditation
Self-forgiveness
Accepting what
you can't control
Self-compassion
Checking your
thoughts

Personal time

Watching TV
Writing poems
Journaling
Time in silence
Time with others
Getting creative



Exercise

Have a go at creating your own self-care list. Would you use the same categories or different ones? Where will you keep your self-care list so you can remind yourself of different ways to look after yourself?

1. ...



The group felt that sleep was a really important aspect of self-care and so wanted to share some tips for getting a good night's sleep.

Set a schedule

Establish a regular sleep schedule every day of the week. Don't sleep in more than an hour, even on your days off.

Don't force yourself to sleep

If you haven't fallen asleep after 20 minutes, get up and do something calming. Read a book, draw, or write in a journal. Avoid computer, TV, phone screens, or anything else that's stimulating and could lead to becoming more awake.

Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and nicotine

Consuming caffeine, alcohol, and nicotine can affect your ability to fall asleep and the quality of your sleep, even if they're used earlier in the day. Remember, caffeine can stay in your body for up to 12 hours, and even decaf coffee has some caffeine!

Avoid napping

Napping during the day will make sleep more difficult at night. Naps that are over an hour-long, or those that are later in the day, are especially harmful to sleep.



Use your bed only for sleep

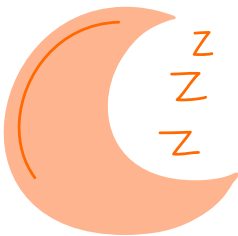
If your body learns to associate your bed with sleep, you'll start to feel tired as soon as you lie down. Using your phone, watching TV, or doing other waking activities in bed can have the opposite effect, causing you to become more alert.

Exercise and eat well

A healthy diet and exercise can lead to better sleep. However, avoid strenuous exercise and big meals for 2 hours before going to bed.

Sleep in a comfortable environment

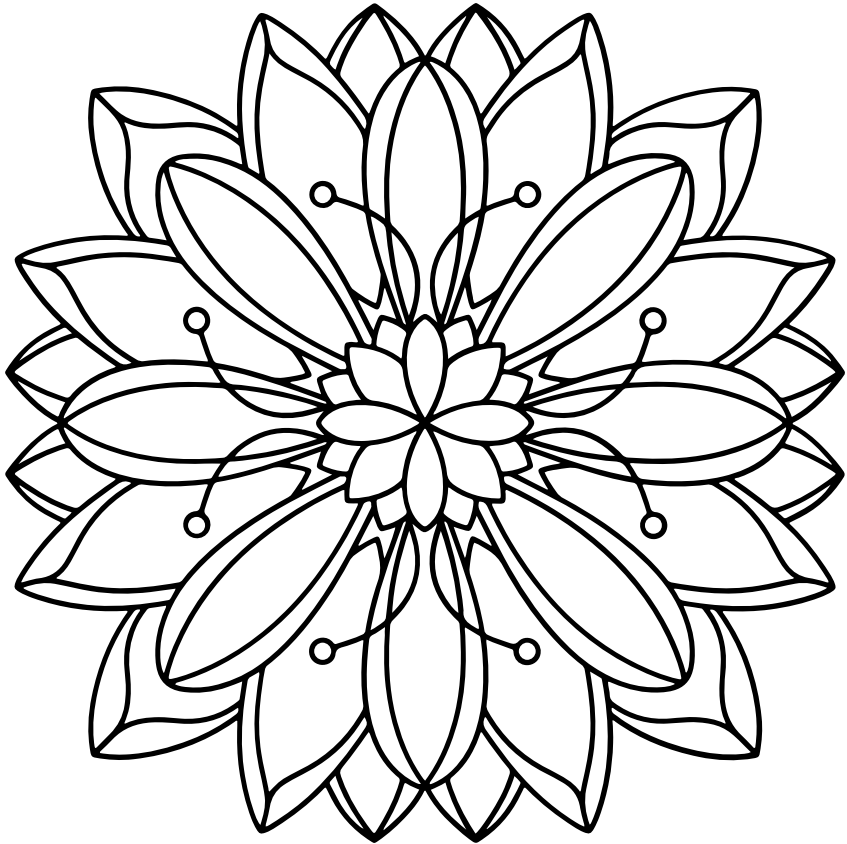
It's important to sleep in an area that's adequately quiet, comfortable, and dark. Try using an eye mask, earplugs, fans, or white noise if necessary.



Check out the tips in this video –
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7Hy5WVkfsk>

Mindful moment

Take a moment to focus on colouring in the flower below.



Other resources

Thank you for taking the time to read Taking Care of Me: A well-being guide developed by Link Up. The young people from Link Up wanted to share a final message:

Taking care of yourself and improving your wellbeing takes time. Everyone will not heal at the same speed. Be kind to yourself on your journey, everyone's journey is different. Don't make working on yourself too hard and enjoy the process.

Here are some other resources the Link Up group thought you may find helpful:

Instagram

@celutionsuk
@markmanson
@_drsoph

Apps

Headspace
Calm

Books

Good Vibes, Good Life by Vex King
The Subtle Art of Not Giving a Fuck by Mark Manson
Reasons to Stay Alive by Matt Haig
The Body Keeps the Score by Bessel Van Der Kolk

Other mental health support

The Mix www.themix.org.uk
Samaritans www.samaritans.org
Young Minds www.youngminds.org.uk
Become www.becomecharity.org.uk
Kooth www.kooth.com
Mind www.mind.org.uk

If you would like to access therapy, your GP is the best person to discuss this with.



***"Taking care of yourself
and improving your
wellbeing takes time.***

***Everyone will not heal
at the same speed.***

***Be kind to yourself on
your journey, everyone's
journey is different."***



Notes

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There is a dashed line near the bottom, suggesting a margin or a fold line. The paper appears to be a standard notebook or worksheet.

Notes

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Notes

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There is a dashed line near the bottom, suggesting a margin or a fold line. The paper appears to be a standard sheet of notebook paper.

BECOME.

**THE CHARITY FOR CHILDREN IN CARE
AND YOUNG CARE LEAVERS**