

St Mary's
University
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Self-care checklist

Taking care of
your own wellbeing



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Have you completed the self-care checklist?

The Student Wellbeing Service is happy to support you through difficult times, but there are also things you can do for yourself. Here is a list of things you can try. Please bring this list to your first session with us.

Physical health

Experts believe that exercise releases chemicals in your brain that make you feel good. Regular exercise, sleep and healthy food can boost your self-esteem and help you look and feel better, as well as improve your concentration.

- If possible, have you exercised lately and regularly?
- Are you getting enough sleep?
- Are you limiting your alcohol/caffeine/junk food intake and eating healthily?

Top tip!

Try the mobile app 'Sleep Cycle' to help you monitor the quality of your sleep!

Emotional health

Strong family ties and supportive friends can help you deal with the stresses of life. Friends and family can make you feel included, cared for and can offer different views from whatever is going on inside your own head. They can keep you active, grounded and help you solve practical problems.

Many of us don't like to ask for support. We don't like to burden other people. Yet most of us would want to help our friends and family if we thought they were having a hard time, so why would they feel any differently towards us?

However, if your family and friends are miles away, and you want to meet people locally, you can try the following:

Students' Union: A great way to meet new people is to join one of the societies and clubs at the Students' Union.

Meetup.com: Meetup is an online social networking portal that helps people to find and join groups unified by a common interest, such as books, music, film, health or politics.

The important thing is to not try and cope with everything on your own.

- Have you spoken to anyone about how you are feeling?
- Have you kept in touch with any positive people in your life?
- Have you told your GP how you are feeling?
- Have you accessed self-help on the internet?

Have you looked at these online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) Resources?

www.babcp.com/Public/Self-Help.aspx
www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/resources/consumers.cfm

- Have you looked at any of the following apps on your phone to help you?

Pacifica: Daily tools for stress and anxiety alongside a supportive community – based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Meditation.

Happy Feed: A private journal for saving three moments each day, to help you appreciate the little things.

Headspace: Guided meditation sessions and mindfulness training.

Breathe – Calming Reminders for Mindful Breathing: A mindfulness app that helps you stay calm and battle anxiety by sending you gentle, deep-breathing reminders throughout the day.

SAM: An application to help you understand and manage anxiety.

Structure in your day

Creating a daily routine allows you to work better, be more proficient and stay fulfilled. Sometimes, taking things in bite-sized pieces can feel less overwhelming. Try to start with small, achievable goals and work from there.

- Do you have any structure to your day?
- Have you tried any mindfulness techniques?
- Can you start or restart a hobby that you would enjoy?

Can you start a journal?

A great way of tracking your moods and thoughts is by writing them down.

Other people

Caring for others is often an important part of keeping up relationships with people close to you. It can even bring you closer together.

- Have you helped someone out today?

Why not share your skills more widely by volunteering for a local charity? Helping out can make us feel needed and valued and that boosts our self-esteem. It also helps us see the world from another angle and can put our own problems in perspective.

Find out more about volunteering from the Students' Union and the Careers Service; they can both help you discover more opportunities in this area.

Richmond upon Thames Council for Voluntary Service: Your time, talents and passions can be matched from a database of over 300 local organisations.

Do-it.org: A UK-wide database of volunteering opportunities – search by postcode and type of volunteering.

The National Trust: Lots of opportunities both indoors and outdoors.

Vinspired: Support for getting inspired and aimed specifically at young people.

Timebank: Another database of volunteering opportunities

If you would like links to the websites, apps and CBT resources, please see the electronic version of this leaflet on SIMMSpace Student Portal.