

Believe in *yourself* and all that you *are*. Know that there is something inside of you that is *greater* than any *obstacle*.



What is mental health?

What is Mental Health?

- Mental health is just HEALTH
- Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we **think, feel, and act**. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

But having a problem with your mental health is different...

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Pulling away from people and usual activities
- Having low or no energy
- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with family and friends
- Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head
- Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
- Thinking of harming yourself or others
- Inability to perform daily tasks getting to school

How to maintain positive mental health

- Getting professional help if you need it
- Connecting with others
- Staying positive
- Getting physically active
- Helping others
- Getting enough sleep
- Developing coping skills like grounding techniques...

Learn to Let Go

One of the happiest moments in life is when you find the courage to let go of what you cannot change.



Grounding: What is it?

Grounding is a set of simple strategies that can help you detach from emotional pain (e.g., anxiety, anger, sadness, self-harm).

It is basically a way to distract yourself by focusing on something other than the difficult emotions you are experiencing. You may also think of grounding as centring, distracting, creating a safe place, or healthy detachment.

Although grounding does not solve the problem that is contributing to your unpleasant emotions, it does provide a temporary way to gain control over your feelings and prevent things from getting worse. Grounding anchors you, gives you a chance to calm down, and allows you to eventually return and address the problem that is triggering the unpleasant emotions to begin with. Grounding can be done anytime, anywhere, and no one has to know.

Grounding: Mental Grounding

- 1. Describe your environment in detail, using all of your senses – for example, “The walls are white, there are five blue chairs, there is a wooden bookshelf against the wall...” Describe objects, sounds, textures, colours, smells, shapes, numbers, and temperature. You can do this anywhere.
- 2. Play a “categories” game with yourself. Try to think of types of dogs, jazz musicians, animals or famous people that begin with each letter of the alphabet, cars, TV shows, writers, sports, songs, cities.
- 3. Describe an everyday activity in great detail. For example, describe a meal that you cook (e.g., “First, I peel the potatoes and cut them into quarters; then I boil the water; then I make a herb marinade of oregano, basil, garlic, and olive oil...”).
- 4. Imagine. Use a pleasant or comforting mental image. Again, use all of your senses to make it as real and vivid as possible.
- 5. Read something, saying each word to yourself. Or read each letter backwards so that you focus on the letters and not the meaning of words.
- 6. Use humour. Think of something funny to jolt yourself out of your mood.
- 7. Count to 10 or say the alphabet, very s . . . l . . . o . . . w . . . l . . . y.

Grounding: Physical Grounding

- 1. Run cool or warm water over your hands.
- 2. Grab tightly onto your chair as hard as you can; notice the sensations and the experience.
- 3. Touch various objects around you: a pen, your clothing, the table, the walls. Notice textures, colours, weight, temperature. Compare the objects you touch.
- 4. Carry a grounding object in your pocket – a small object (a small rock, ring, piece of cloth) that you can touch whenever you feel unpleasant emotions rising.
- 5. Notice your body: the weight of your body in the chair; wiggling your toes in your socks; the feel of your back against the chair.
- 6. Stretch. Extend your fingers, arms, legs as far as you can; slowly and gently roll your head around.
- 7. Clench and release your fists.
- 8. Jump up and down.
- 9. Eat something in a savouring way; fully experience the food; describe the sights, aromas, textures, flavours, and the experience in detail to yourself.
- 10. Focus on your breathing, noticing each inhale and exhale. Repeat a pleasant word to yourself on each exhale

Changing thoughts is easier than changing feelings

Thoughts play a critical role in how we experience a situation. When you notice yourself first becoming upset, try to evaluate what you are thinking that is causing that emotion. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- What is it that's really pushing my buttons here?
- Why am I reacting so strongly?
- What's the worst (or best) that could happen?
- How important will this be tomorrow? Next week? Next month?

You are not alone!

- Approximately 1 in 4 people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year
- The majority of those with mental illness experience anxiety and depression as the two most common problems
- In the last year, 7 out of 100 people have self-harmed - that's **94,285** a year - about **259** people per day aged 10 and over
- In 2014, a total of 6,122 suicides were recorded in the UK for people aged 10 and older



every day
IS a
struggle

#inourownwords

Talk to someone

The most important thing to keeping yourself safe is talking to someone. People will and do care, regardless if you feel that no-one does.

What you are feeling is normal and common, you are not alone. We can help.

For free, 24/7 support from your mobile phone

Text SHOUT to 85258

CRISIS TEXT LINE |

shout
for support in a crisis