

Our Best Mental Health Tips -Backed by Research

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/publications/our-best-mental-health-tips>

This guide provides our best tips on how to look after your mental health – all backed by evidence. You can try these daily, just like brushing your teeth, to help protect your wellbeing and cope with life more effectively.

1. Get closer to nature

Spending time in nature can be calming, uplifting, and help us feel less alone. Whether it's a walk in a park, "forest bathing" in the woods, or simply noticing birds and water nearby, nature can help reduce stress. Tune in to the smells, sounds, and textures around you.

2. Get more from your sleep

Sleep affects our ability to cope. Aim for 7–9 hours a night, avoid screens, alcohol, caffeine, and vigorous exercise before bed. Try to keep the same bedtime and wake time daily. A relaxing bedtime routine can also help.

3. Keep moving

Physical activity improves both mental and physical health. It releases feel-good hormones and helps with sleep and self-esteem. You don't need to be sporty — dancing, walking the dog, or gardening all count.

4. Eat healthy food

Food affects mood. A balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables supports brain health. Avoid sugary snacks and excess caffeine. Eating with others can strengthen relationships. If your eating habits are linked to emotions, talk to someone you trust or seek support.

5. Be kind and help create a better world

Kindness benefits both the giver and receiver. Acts of kindness, even small ones like a smile or kind words, can boost mood and strengthen connections. Volunteering or working for a cause can also help you feel connected and purposeful.

6. Be curious and open-minded to new experiences

Trying new things keeps life interesting and can shift negative thinking. Change your routine, try a new hobby, or take a different route on your walk. It can open up possibilities and boost your confidence.

7. Plan things to look forward to

Having something to look forward to brings hope. It could be something small like a favourite TV show or something bigger like a holiday. Making and keeping plans can help you get through hard times.

8. Learn to understand and manage your feelings

Understanding your emotions helps you cope. Try to name your feelings and where they come from. Be kind to yourself — speak to yourself like you would to someone you love. Writing down your feelings, using positive affirmations, or practising mindfulness can help.

9. Talk to someone you trust for support

Opening up can be difficult, but talking with someone you trust can bring relief and help shift your perspective. It can also strengthen your relationships.

10. Be aware of using drugs and/or alcohol to cope

These might offer temporary relief but often make things worse. If you're using substances to manage emotions, notice it without judgement. Talk to someone or get help from confidential services like *Talk to Frank* or *Narcotics Anonymous*.

11. Try to make the most of your money and get help with problem debts

Money worries can be overwhelming and isolating. Talking to someone can help you feel less alone and reveal new solutions. Free advice is available from charities like *Money and Mental Health* and *StepChange*.