

WELLBEING PLAN

Safety and Support



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What is in this pack?

In this pack, you will find resources and tools that you can use to help yourself when you are feeling distressed or are in a period of crisis.

This pack is for you to fill in. You don't have to fill it all in at once for it to help – you can just dip into it when you feel you can. There is no right or wrong way to complete it. It can help to fill it in when things are less difficult, so that you can use what you've written when you're feeling distressed.

Anyone can use this pack. Mental wellbeing is important for everyone.

You can seek help with filling this in if you want to. You can discuss this with your key worker or any other member of staff you trust (e.g. chaplain).

Safety plan

A safety plan is for you to write down what might help you in a period of crisis. It can include things that you can do to help yourself, as well as things that other people can do, and reminders of where you can get support.

Try to complete this when you are feeling well, but remember it's never too late to start. If you feel comfortable doing so, you can complete this with a member of staff, a peer worker, a friend, or talk this through with a member of your family or loved one.

When you're in crisis, reading what you've written below can help you to cope and to get the support you need.

What are the warning signs that I am starting to find things difficult? (This could be something like not being able to relax or get to sleep, feeling panicky or anxious, feeling tearful or angry.)

What are the triggers that make me feel stressed? (This could be something like missing a call with your family.)

What have I done in the past that has helped? Do I have any good coping methods? How can I use these in the current situation?

What can I do to calm myself or relax? (This could be something like using a distraction pack or art supplies, or doing some exercise.)

What helpful things can I tell myself when I'm upset or stressed?

Are there people, places or things that could be helpful to think about?

What activities would distract me or keep me busy?

What can I ask other people to do that might help?

Noticing and coping with my triggers

A trigger is something that makes someone feel upset or gives them the urge to do something harmful. It could be a situation, a person, a smell, a sight or an emotion.

When people can recognise their triggers, it can help them find other ways of coping.

For example, triggers can be any period of change (be it positive or negative), anniversaries of significant life events, court appearances, periods of segregation, incentives, transfer or missing a family occasion.

You can use the questions on this page to help you keep a log of your triggers. This can help you recognise when you may need to ask for help.

If you feel comfortable, you could discuss your triggers with a staff member, so they're aware of situations in which you might need support.

Go through the questions each time you feel triggered. This could be difficult, so you can stop any time. Look over your list of things that lift your mood after writing about a trigger, so you can return to something positive.

What details can I remember? (E.g. location, time, who you were with.)

What happened?

Do I remember what I was thinking at the time, my emotions, how my body felt or what I did?

Can I identify the trigger? If yes, what was it?

Can I do anything differently – could I avoid the situation, or change what I do in response to it?

Is there any way I can cope with the negative feeling next time?

Use this space to write a list of triggers, what might help, and who to turn to for support.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

What I find helpful

Answering these questions will help you think about what improves your mood. You can then look for ways to include these activities in your daily routine.

Activities I can do that improve my mood are...

Things I find helpful to think about (e.g. memories, achievements, goals) are...

Things I can ask other people to do (or not do) that might help me feel better (e.g. speak to me in my cell, not through my observation panel; ask me how I am if you notice I'm being quiet)...

Things that don't help me are...

People who can support me

Use this page to think about people who could support you.

Friends outside
of prison:

-
-
-

Friends/
peers in prison:

-
-
-

Family
members:

-
-
-

My sources
of support

Staff I get on
well with in prison:

-
-
-

Other people:

-
-
-

Professionals/
staff who I know
from outside prison:

-
-
-

Grounding techniques

This page has some activities that may help bring you back to the present and stop your mind from racing. It can help if you are feeling overwhelmed by feelings of emotion or anxiety. Try some of the techniques below – or some of your own – and see which work for you.

- Do something that requires you to focus or pay attention to something. This can distract you from other feelings and calm your mind and body. Examples of this can be reading a book or doing something in a distraction pack.
- Control your breathing. Breathe slowly, steadily and deeply. You can either:
 - Focus on breathing in and out slowly and deliberately.
 - Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to keep your shoulders down and relaxed, and place your hand on your stomach – it should rise as you breathe in and fall as you breathe out.
 - Breathe in for 4 counts, hold for 4 counts and then exhale for 6 counts.
- Move around – this could be walking, stretching, exercising or imagining yourself moving around. If you feel like you are detached from your body, try patting your arms and legs.
- Try mind exercises. For example, you could:
 - List types of a particular thing,
 - Think of as many things beginning with a particular letter as you can
 - Pick a number and count down from it
 - Sit quietly and notice 5 things you can see, hear, smell, feel and taste.

- Imagine that a friend of yours is struggling with negative thoughts in the same way that you are. How would you support them – what would you say to them? Can you apply these thoughts to yourself?

Notes:

Looking after myself

Taking care of yourself is always important, but it is especially so when you are feeling low.

Sometimes this can feel difficult. There are things that you can do to deliberately take care of yourself that can help you cope with difficult thoughts and feelings.

Ways I can take care of myself

Think about what I eat and drink

- Eat three regular meals a day – even when it is the last thing you feel like doing.
- Eating well and keeping healthy can have a positive impact on mental wellbeing too.
- Include lots of fruit and vegetables in your diet. Eat fewer high sugar foods.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Limit your caffeine intake.
- Avoid drugs and alcohol (as they can make you feel worse in the long run).

Keep active

- Try meditation, mindfulness or relaxation techniques. Ask the library or chaplaincy if you would like to learn more about these techniques.
- Exercise and/or go to the gym. Try some of the exercises on the next page.
- Take any opportunities for time outdoors or exercise.

Do things I enjoy

- Try meditating.
- Take time to read something you are interested in.
- Start a diary or journal.
- maintain your job.

Socialise

- Make friends on the wing and socialise when you can.
- Go to the chapel or meet with the chaplaincy.
- Where possible, use the exercise yard and association time.

Ask for help

- Asking for help is not a sign of weakness. Staff are available to speak to, and will help support you in any way that they can. You can speak to anyone including healthcare, chaplaincy or wing staff.

Exercise suggestions

Remember to start any exercise with a warm-up of at least a 5-minutes, stretching your muscles and moving gently. It is important to repeat this after the exercise to cool down.

Try starting with 8 repetitions or 30 seconds of each exercise, and increase the number of reps as you feel more comfortable. You may wish to keep a record of your exercise in the achievement log later in the Safety Support Plan.

Try talking to the gym department for more suggestions.

Squats

- Stand straight with your feet slightly wider than hip-width apart.
- Put your arms straight out in front of you.
- Steadily bend your knees, as if you are about to sit down. Direct your weight back into your heels, leaning forward slightly, until your thighs are parallel to the floor.
- Steadily straighten to a standing position again.

Standing crunch pulls

- Stand straight with your feet hip-width apart.
- Put your arms straight out in front of you.
- Raise one knee towards your chest. At the same time bend forwards, and pull your elbows to your sides.
- Repeat with the other knee.

High knees/high feet

- Jog gently on the spot.
- Raise your knees high in front of you OR bring your heels higher up behind you on each step, until the brush the back of your leg.
- Continue, increasing the speed.

Wall sits

- Place your back against a stretch of wall, with your feet shoulder-width apart.
- Move your feet away from the wall, and slide your back down the wall until your knees form a right angle.
- This should be a similar position to sitting in a chair.

Other ideas:

Drawing exercises

Try the following drawing exercises – if you want to try something different, try to use different materials to create these images, e.g. newspaper cuttings, folded paper, or objects in your cell or room.

For an extra challenge, try setting time limits. Try 5 minutes, 20-minutes and then 1 hour to see the differences in the pieces you can create.

- Draw a famous picture or painting from memory.
- Choose a photograph in your room, or an image from a book or a newspaper. How closely can you copy it?
- Listen to a sound near you – what would this look like if this was an image?
- Draw an album cover for your favourite artist.
- Create an image just using words and letters.
- Use your other hand to draw a picture of yourself.
- Pick three objects from your cell or room and draw them from memory.
- Draw the most detailed snowflake you can.
- Imagine your favourite piece of music. How would you describe it without using words?
- Choose your favourite plant or animal, and draw it only using dots.
- Make an image board:
 - Fold a sheet of paper in half, then in half again. This will give you 4 squares on each side.
 - At the top of each square, write a day of the week (Monday to Sunday).
 - Each day, draw an object that reminds you of something you did that day. In the last square, draw something that represents the whole week.
 - This will help you practise drawing every day and also give you an image diary to look back on.

Mood diary

This diary can help you understand more about yourself and enable you to recognise changes that affect your mood. Each day, note your mood here – you could do this by giving it a score (for example, out of 10), drawing or using different colours. There's no right or wrong way – it's your own record of what's going on for you. You might want to note how much sleep you get, as this can impact your mood.

Maybe you find out you feel worse at weekends, but feel better after going to the gym, so you try and go to the gym more at the weekends. You might find it helpful to show this to someone to help you find potential solutions.

You might want to try doing this for a week to see if you find it helpful. Don't worry if you miss a day – you can just carry on when you're able to.

Day	How did I sleep?	Mood	What was happening that day/what affected my mood?
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Day	How did I sleep?	Mood	What was happening that day/what affected my mood?
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Day	How did I sleep?	Mood	What was happening that day/what affected my mood?
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Day	How did I sleep?	Mood	What was happening that day/what affected my mood?
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Are there any patterns you notice?

What action could you take as a result?

Over the next week [date:]

What I want to be different:

What will be my goal for the week?

How did I do?

Over the next week [date:]

What I want to be different:

What will be my goal for the week?

How did I do?

Over the next week [date:]

What I want to be different:

What will be my goal for the week?

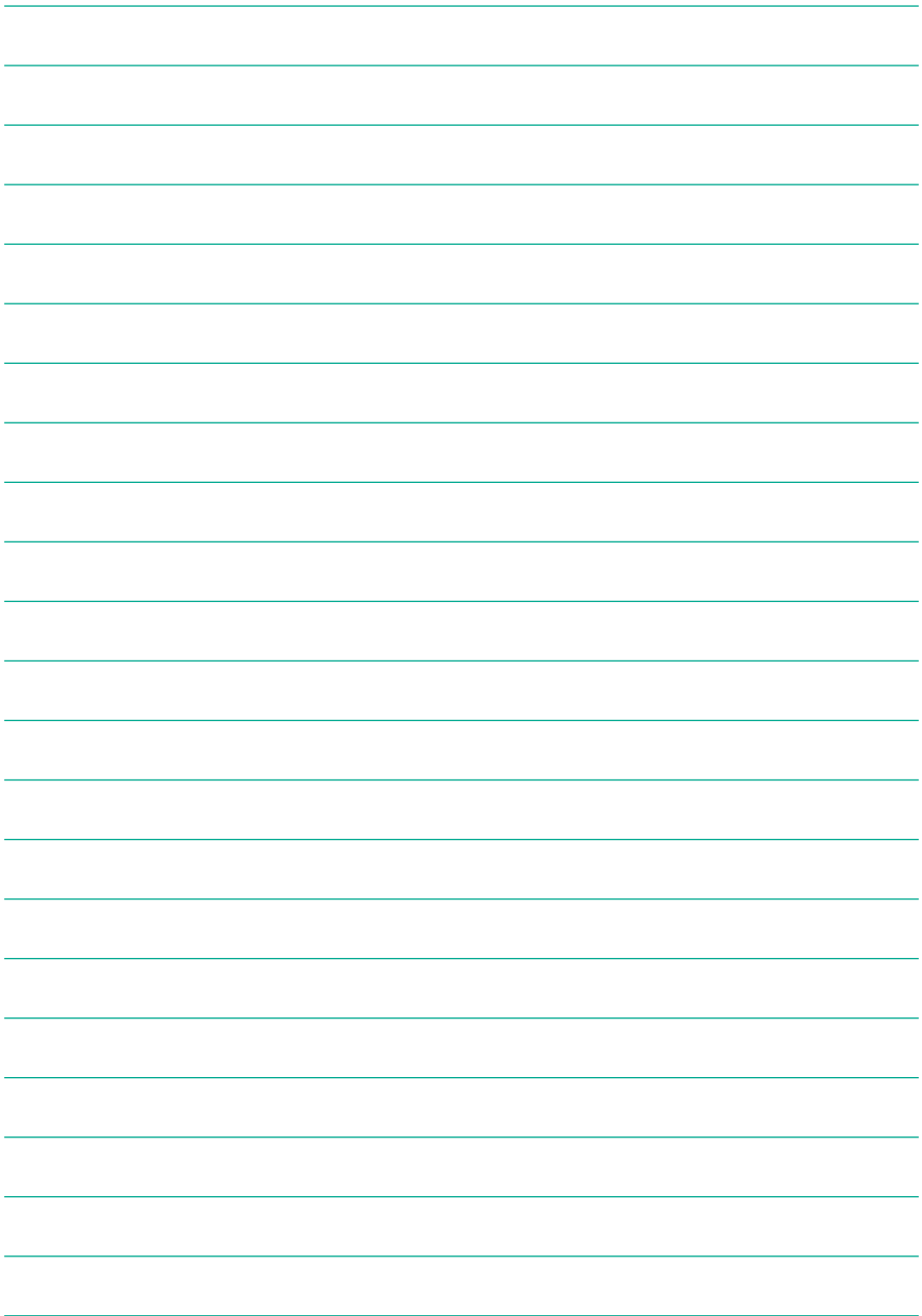
How did I do?

Over the next week [date:]

What I want to be different:

What will be my goal for the week?

How did I do?



Important contacts

You can keep a list here of important contacts who you might want to talk to when you're feeling low:

1. Name:

Number:

Address:

2. Name:

Number:

Address:

3. Name:

Number:

Address:

4. Name:

Number:

Address:

5. Name:

Number:

Address:

Who can I ask for help?

National

- Samaritans – 0845 4507797 (or you can ask if your establishment has Samaritans phones)

Local

Remember you can talk to any staff if you are feeling unsafe or are in a period of crisis. You can also ask to talk to:

- Listeners
- Other peer support networks, such as Insiders
- Local charities
- Chaplaincy
- Prisoner Information Desks (PID)
- Healthcare

Your own network

- Family and friends – use the contacts sheet to write down who you can contact
- Your key worker (if you are in an establishment that has key workers)
- If you are being supported through ACCT or CSIP, your case coordinator is here to help you and listen to you. You can tell them if you need help
- Your chaplain
- Your peers

