

The background of the cover features a silhouette of a person's torso and arms raised, holding a broken chain. The person is positioned against a vibrant sunset sky with warm orange and yellow tones near the horizon, transitioning to a clear blue sky at the top. The chain is dark and appears to be made of heavy links, with several links broken and floating in the air above the person's head. The entire scene is framed by a white, dashed, zig-zag border.

BREAKING FREE

A GUIDE FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH WELLBEING

By Craig Rodgers

(with the use of credited resources)



**Mental Health
First Aider**

MHFA England

'Breaking Free' is inspired by my own struggles and growth. I spent a large portion of my adult life struggling with mental health in silence, and it wasn't until the last 5-6 years that I finally 'broke free' and prioritised getting better. I still find myself struggling sometimes, but knowing what I know now, I can find my way back to that feeling of freedom.

I managed a lot of my personal growth by myself and as time went on, wanted to expand my knowledge on myself and mental health. I'm now qualified in Mental Health First Aid; I've been to private therapy and do a lot of my own research through reading.

This guide is a baseline for what I've learnt about common mental health problems and includes information you can use to learn about them, helpful tips, and resources for professional help regarding each one.

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SUICIDAL TENDENCIES

Suicide is a deeply tragic and complex issue that profoundly affects individuals, families, and communities. Its impact reverberates through society, leaving behind a trail of grief, unanswered questions, and shattered lives. The pain and despair that lead someone to contemplate ending their life can stem from a variety of factors, including mental health struggles, feelings of isolation, overwhelming stress, or a sense of hopelessness.

SAMARITANS

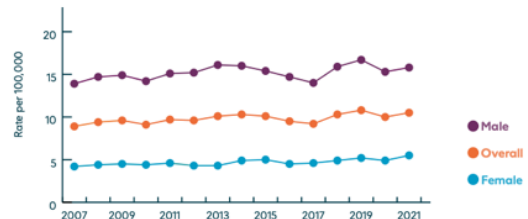
Suicides in England



Age groups with highest suicide rate per 100,000



Suicide rate per 100,000 in England 2007-2021



The overall, male, and female suicide rates in England have increased in 2021, with delayed inquests from 2020 being held. Rates in 2021 are similar to those seen in 2019.

Males are 2.9 times more likely to die by suicide in England than females.

Notes about data: Data source – Office for National Statistics (ONS). Suicide refers to deaths where the underlying cause is intentional self-harm and events of undetermined intent. Data represents suicide registrations. Increases/decreases are based on one year of data. These may not indicate longer term trends and may not be statistically significant. Overall rates for male, female and all persons are age standardised. Rates broken down by age group are crude.

Suicides in England 2021

A registered charity

Data from Samaritans Website

For anyone who finds themselves having these feelings, it is crucial to remember that help is available and that there is hope. If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal, it is important to reach out for support. The next page contains a few tips that may be helpful.



REACH OUT TO SOMEONE

Share your feelings with a trusted friend, family member, or mental health professional. Opening about your struggles can provide much-needed relief and support.



SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP

Reach out to a mental health professional, such as a therapist or counsellor, who can provide guidance, coping strategies, and appropriate treatment options.



PRIORITISE YOUR SELF-CARE

Pay attention to your physical and emotional well-being. Engage in activities that promote self-care, such as exercise, healthy eating, and practicing relaxation techniques like meditation or a breathing exercise.



AVOID SELF ISOLATION

While it may be tempting to withdraw from social interactions, try to stay connected with others. Engage in activities that bring you joy and a sense of comfort and security.

SELF-HARM

Self-harm (or self-injury) is the act of deliberately causing harm to oneself. It's often a way of coping with or expressing emotional pain. It may bring temporary relief; however, it is not a healthy or effective coping strategy and can lead to more harm.

Different forms of self-harm include cutting or scratching of the skin with sharp objects, burning the skin, hitting, or banging body parts to create pain, hair pulling and substance abuse, including poisoning and overdose.

There aren't any generic causes for self-harming behaviours, however each individual case will be very complex and personal. It is often associated with certain mental health conditions including depression, anxiety, borderline personality disorder, eating disorders and post-traumatic stress disorders. Other factors can include self-loathing or self-punishment during feelings of guilt, shame, or self-hatred. Some individuals may even harm themselves to feel real or alive, in the sense that their life feels empty or numb.

If you or someone you know is self-harming, it is critical to talk to somebody. This is a serious issue that requires professional support and treatment. Understand that you will not be judged and there is no shame in talking about your struggles. Mental Health First Aiders are here to help and support you while signposting you to the right resources.

- Find somebody to talk to, preferably a professional such as your GP or a therapist.
- If you're not ready to talk to anybody professional face to face, there are always hotlines you can call or text and remain anonymous and still receive guidance. The next page will have some resources.
- Find a friend or family member you can trust and speak openly about your struggles, whether they can help or not, speaking up is always the first step.

• PLEASE ALWAYS CALL 999 DURING EMERGENCIES

TALK TO US

If things are getting to you

 **116 123** FREE
This number is FREE to call round the clock

 jo@samaritans.org

 samaritans.org



A registered charity

To speak to our friendly team:

 info@harmless.org.uk

 www.harmless.org.uk


support | information | training | consultancy

CONFIDENTIAL NO MATTER WHAT

 **0800 58 58 58**  **THECALMZONE.NET/WEBCHAT**

5PM-MIDNIGHT | FREE | CONFIDENTIAL | ANONYMOUS

**CAMPAIGN
AGAINST
LIVING
MISERABLY
CALM**

Feeling low?

Anxious?

Struggling
to cope?

Text
SHOUT
to **85258**
for free,
confidential
support, 24/7

Call 111 for more advice and support.
ALWAYS CALL 999 IN AN EMERGENCY.



YOU HAVE
THE POWER TO SAY,

*“This is not
how my story
will end.”*

DEPRESSION, LOW MOOD, AND DARK PLACES

We all, at some point in our lives, suffer with a low mood. Some more than others. I commonly wake up feeling in those dark places, I always feel a surge of stress hormones fill my system, but also in my mind; I'm groggy, dehydrated, lightheaded, and already dreading the day ahead. What I've come to learn over the past few years, is that my low mood isn't always a random act. When that dark place persists, I think back to the days before, and the days ahead. What's my diet been like? How's my water intake been? Did I spend all night scrolling last night? Have I had alcohol recently? Did I go the gym? Or go outside? Most of the time, I find I haven't been prioritising my self-care. I always think ahead too, have I got something stressful coming up? Have I got important deadlines etc.

BRAIN CHEMICALS

In this modern world, more and more of us are suffering with low levels of certain brain chemicals which directly affect our moods.

- **LOW DOPAMINE** is caused by addictive behaviours.
- **LOW OXYTOCIN** is caused by a lack of social connection.
- **LOW SEROTONIN** is caused by disengagement from human instinct.
- **LOW ENDORPHINS** is caused by a sedentary lifestyle.

Making note of any unhealthy habits you may have and finding new ways to boost your mood is the first step in changing the way you feel. The next page contains some tips on how to boost these chemicals. Try to focus on small and achievable tasks each day that will improve your mood and create positive lifestyle changes and habits.

BOOST EACH CHEMICAL

DOPAMINE

Productivity

- Clear daily goals
- Clean workspace
- Phone free mornings
- Daily reading

OXYTOCIN

Connection

- Actively listen
- Prioritise social life
- Contribute to others
- Say thank you

SEROTONIN

Energy levels

- Morning sunlight
- Morning meditation
- Eat natural foods
- Have early nights

ENDORPHINS

Stress reduction

- Exercise hard
- Stretch your body
- Sing and dance
- Relax in baths

Credit: @tjpower - Instagram

Quick dopamine hits are what we, today, tend to reach for, as currently, it's so easily accessible. These quick hits are usually given by high sugar and processed foods, scrolling, alcohol and nicotine, gaming, dating apps and porn. Evolution taught us to receive long lasting dopamine hits through hard work and challenging activities. Our ancestors would go out and hunt, fight and survive for their boosts, but in the modern world we have created, we crave a quicker, easier approach. When dopamine rises quickly in your brain, it will just as quickly spike and crash out.

ANXIETY

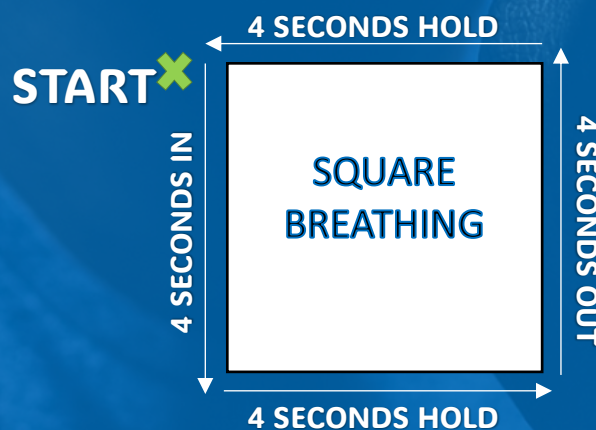
Anxiety is usually a response to feelings of pressure, stress, or fear. It is very natural in some situations as it is our minds way of preparing the body for some kind of threat. Symptoms of anxiety include feeling restless or irritable, feeling shaky, sweating, trouble sleeping, increased heartrate and shortness of breath. These signs can be scary, but it is important to remember that they are generally harmless.

The causes usually vary in each person and can be impacted by different situations and experiences. Other times there are no clear triggers, and it can be confusing trying to figure it out, leading to more feelings of upset or fear.

CALMING ANXIETY RIGHT NOW

BREATHING – CALM YOURSELF

Breathing techniques are vital during times of intense anxiety. Being able to regulate your breathing will calm your nervous system and allow you to return your body to the here and now. Box breathing is a great method that I learnt to help calm myself and can be done anywhere and anytime. Find a four-sided shape, such as a door, window or sign, whatever you can find. Start at one corner and take a 4-second-deep breath in as you follow the side to the next corner. Hold for 4 seconds while moving the next corner, and then breathe out for 4 seconds to the next. Repeat this process as often as needed until you start to feel calmer.



Credit: Dr Julie Smith
'Why has nobody told me this before?' - Book

MEDITATION - GROUND YOURSELF

When we are anxious, our minds are usually elsewhere, in the past or future, overthinking, worrying about what has happened or what's to come. Shifting your focus to the present moment and grounding yourself will help bring your thoughts back to the here and now where you're supposed to be.

Meditation, in my opinion is always mistaken as some mystical power that needs to be done in a temple, it was my first view on it. But it's actually a very easy technique to practice and can be done almost anywhere and anytime. It is simply being able to stop for a moment, escape from our busy life and allow ourselves permission to pause, breathe and reset. With plenty of practice, anybody can master it. But where do you start?

- 1. Find Somewhere comfortable, sit or lie down.**
- 2. Set aside any distractions.**
- 3. Use peaceful background music if you please.**
- 4. Be aware of your senses.**
- 5. Build a rhythm of slow, deep breathing.**
- 6. Keep your mind focused on your breathing, or the sounds around you, or the temperature of the room. When your mind begins to drift, fight the urge and bring your focus back.**
- 7. Allow yourself as much time as you need.**
- 8. Practice as part of a daily routine.**

There are also plenty of meditation videos online which will guide you, these are highly recommended for beginners. Practice when symptoms of anxiety arise, or even when they don't to promote good mental health. Also investigate meditation groups in your local community.

SHIFT YOUR FOCUS – GROUND YOURSELF

Another simple technique to shift our minds from anxious thoughts back to reality is a method called 'The 5-4-3-2-1 Method'. This again can be done anywhere and anytime you feel it's needed. The rules are simple, focus on your senses and address each one.



**5 THINGS
YOU CAN SEE**



**4 THINGS YOU
CAN TOUCH**



**3 THINGS YOU
CAN HEAR**



**2 THINGS YOU
CAN SMELL**



**1 THINGS YOU
CAN TASTE**

FACE THE ANXIETY – CHALLENGE YOURSELF

When we feel anxious about something, it's very common to avoid it. This only maintains your anxious thoughts about it. Part of my anxiety growing up was always social anxiety, instead of facing it, I became a hermit, stayed in, avoided talking to new people and avoided my own friends, and stayed comfortable. Telling your brain that something is safe to do is usually not enough, we must experience the uncomfortable to grow. Challenge yourself in small, achievable steps to face what makes you anxious. Your brain will take some convincing, so be sure to repeat it as often as you can, taking bigger steps each time and expanding your comfort zone without overwhelm.



"What if I fall?
Oh, but my darling,
what if you fly?"

SUBSTANCE MISUSE & ADDICTION

The use of substances isn't always classed as misuse or addiction, it only becomes a problem to someone when the use becomes harmful to themselves and others around them. This includes both physical and mental damage. People tend to use alcohol and drugs, along with many other forms of substances, to relieve many unpleasant feelings, but when does it become a problem?

- **DEPENDENCY-** When a person becomes physically or mentally dependent on using, including difficulty to control the amount they have, or increasing their intake. Dependency can also lead to a big effect on relationships, work, school, or previous interests.
- **HARMFUL USE-** The use of substances, whether dependent or not can always be harmful to both physical and mental health, such as increased depression after the use of alcohol or diseases spread through injecting drugs.

SHORT- & LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF HARMFUL SUBSTANCES

- **Physical injury & death (fights, traffic accidents)**
- **Aggression / Anti-social behaviour**
- **Sexual risk taking**
- **Suicide / Self harm**
- **Psychosis**
- **Depression & Anxiety**
- **Multiple substance misuse**
- **Long term physical health issues**
- **Social, Career and Legal issues**

WHEN / HOW TO GET HELP

Seeking help for substance abuse is crucial when you find yourself struggling to control your substance use and it starts negatively impacting your life. If you notice significant changes in your behaviour, relationships, work, or physical and mental health due to substance abuse, it's time to reach out for assistance. Recognizing the problem and acknowledging the need for help is the first step. You can seek support from various sources, including healthcare professionals like your GP, addiction counsellors, support groups, or helplines. They can provide guidance, treatment options, and a non-judgmental environment to help you overcome substance abuse and achieve a healthier, more fulfilling life. Remember, seeking help is a courageous decision that can lead to positive changes and long-term recovery.



Alcoholics Anonymous

0800 917 7650

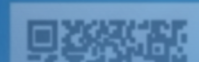
www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Email: help@aamail.org

SCAN HERE FOR
LOCAL MEETINGS



ALL ENQUIRIES ARE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE



Cocaine Anonymous

Do you have a problem
with drugs and alcohol?

So did we.



UK Helpline: 0800 612 0225

Local Info: 07760 632986

info@casw.co.uk

www.casw.co.uk



Hub of Hope



hubofhope.co.uk



The Hub of Hope is one of the UK's leading mental health support databases. Use it to find support groups, communities, charities, private and NHS mental health support and services that are local to you. Download the app or use the website to get started.



THE MONSTERS TURNED OUT
to be just trees

FEEL BETTER THIS WINTER



As the clocks roll back and the days get shorter and colder, you might start feeling a little more deflated, tired, and low. This is commonly known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). This is a very natural and common disorder that most of us will feel during this time of year.

Typical symptoms usually include sadness, low energy, difficulty to concentrate, oversleeping, weight gain and a general lack of interest for activities that usually bring us joy. The changes in the body's circadian rhythm, which regulates your sleep-wake cycle and mood suffers a disturbance as reduced exposure to sunlight during the winter disrupts your internal clock, leading to hormonal imbalances. Use these tips if you think you're suffering this winter.



GET OUTSIDE – Try to get outside and get as much sunlight intake that you can to increase natural vitamin D intake.

VITAMIN D – Increase your vitamin D intake with foods such as fatty fish, white mushrooms, spinach, eggs or begin taking an over-the-counter Vitamin D supplement. If you have any concerns about deficiencies, then please speak to your GP who can assist you further.



MAINTAIN HEALTHY HABITS – Try your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle. This includes a nutritional diet, getting an adequate amount of sleep and managing stress. Try to avoid excessive alcohol consumption and limit caffeine as these can worsen symptoms. Always seek professional help if you are struggling.

EATING DISORDERS & BODY IMAGE

Eating disorders can become a serious mental health condition, usually characterised by a disturbance in eating behaviours and a distorted body image. Common types of eating disorders include anorexia, bulimia and binge eating. Typical symptoms can vary but may include significant weight loss or gain, extreme restrictions to food intake, obsessive thoughts on weight, food and binge eating. Causes can be very complex. They can involve a combination of genetic, biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors. Factors such as genetic predisposition, social pressure, low self-esteem, perfectionism, and trauma can contribute to the development of an eating disorder.

SEEKING HELP

If you, or somebody you know might be suffering with an eating disorder, it is very important to reach out for help. Treatment usually includes therapy, nutritional counselling, medical management, and support from healthcare professionals. Talk to your GP or local community health centre for first hand help. Other forms of support might include speaking to a therapist who can assist you psychologically, finding any underlying issues, promote healthier eating habits and foster a more positive body image.



 **Helpline**
0808 801 0677

 **Studentline**
0808 801 0811

 **Youthline**
0808 801 0711

Our Helplines are open 365 days a year from 9am-8pm during the week,
and 4pm-8pm on weekends and bank holidays.

 @beatED

GRIEF AND LOSS

Sadly, we all lose somebody close to us in our lifetime. It can have a really big impact on our day to day lives and our relationships with other people, our jobs, our hobbies etc. Grief can impact us, and though we usually assume it is through losing someone we love, we can grieve at other times too, any kind of ending that feels significant can trigger these reactions. Grief is normal part of our experience as a human, and something that is necessary to go through after these meaningful endings.

STAGES OF GRIEF

DENIAL- This is typically the first stage of grief. In this stage, individuals may have difficulty accepting the reality of the loss. They might convince themselves that the loss didn't really occur and attempt to continue their life as if nothing has happened.

ANGER- Once the reality of the loss sets in, individuals may feel angry and frustrated. They might place blame on themselves or others for the loss, but underneath this anger is usually pain and/or fear.

BARGAINING- In this stage, individuals may find themselves making "deals" with a higher power to reverse the loss. They might think "If only I had done this, then the outcome might have been different."

DEPRESSION- After the bargaining stage, individuals often feel deep sadness and depression. They may withdraw from social life, relationships, and experience feelings of hopelessness.

ACCEPTENCE- Finally, individuals begin to accept the loss. This doesn't mean that the pain of the loss has completely disappeared, but rather that they've come to terms with the reality of it and are starting to move forward.

It's important to note that not everyone goes through all these stages, or in the order listed above. Grief is a highly personal and individual experience, and it can vary greatly from one person to another. Some people may skip certain stages entirely, or they may experience them in a different order. Others may find themselves cycling back and forth between different stages. The concept of the "stages of grief" is a framework that can help individuals make sense of their feelings, but it's not a rigid or definitive guide to the grieving process.

DEALING WITH GRIEF

- Find some acceptance after loss.
- Work through the grief and pain.
- Adjust to a new reality and environment.
- Find ways of keeping a connection with the loved one we have lost. (Dr Julie Smith)

While mourning, people usually feel pain and find ways of distracting themselves from it. These are both vital and natural responses to grief. It's important to allow yourself to feel the emotions you are experiencing and to work through them, but it is also important to practice self-care to allow yourself to heal too. Use many of the self-care tips in this guide to help, especially during times when the pain is overwhelming. It is OK to not be OK and it is OK to feel a range of emotions. Allow them to be there but also allow a balance of good and bad. It will take time to work through the grief, but small steps mean everything in the long run. It is important to keep a connection with a loved one, without their physical presence, whatever that means to you, it could be celebrating the memories you had, or continuing activities that brought you happiness together. Seeking professional help doesn't mean you are getting things wrong, talking to a therapist is great way to express your emotions in a safe place with a trained listener who can provide you with the skills to get through it. Even talking to friends and family will benefit you greatly, please don't feel the need to stay silent and hold it all in.

CRUSE NATIONAL HELPLINE

0808 808 1677



MONDAY

09:30 - 17:00

TUESDAY

09:30 - 20:00

WEDNESDAY

09:30 - 20:00

THURSDAY

09:30 - 20:00

FRIDAY

09:30 - 17:00



Bereavement Advice Centre

practical help when you need it most

www.bereavementadvice.org

"May there be comfort in knowing that someone so special will never be forgotten."

-Julie Herbert

STRESS

We all deal with some sort of stress in our lives, some more often than others. Different forms of stress can be caused by:

**WORK. EDUCATION. FAMILY. PARENTING.
HOME LIFE. TRAUMA. MOVING HOUSE.
FINANCES. PHYSICAL HEALTH. MENTAL
HEALTH.**

Stress can lead to a wide range of symptoms; each case will differ and be very personal to everyone depending on the situation. It is important to become aware of your surroundings and what is causing you stress. Journaling is a great way of taking a step back from your thoughts and getting them down on paper. Making note of what kind of symptoms you are experiencing is important too, these commonly include:

**INCREASED HEARTRATE. SLEEP DISTURBANCE.
CHANGES IN APPETITE. SHORTNESS OF
BREATH. WEAKENED IMMUNE SYSTEM.
AGITATION. ANXIETY. MOOD SWINGS. LOSS OF
INTERESTS. DEPRESSION. PLUS, MANY MORE.**

It's also interesting to know that stress is a natural response from our body. In difficult situations, our bodies prepare itself with energy to be at its best to make quick and vital decisions based on your surroundings. It can be an asset and not always a negative thing, but being in a constant state of heightened stress can be harmful. It's important to replenish the body after states of stress with good nutrition, rest, and other forms of self-care.

- Slow your **BREATHING** – take longer, slower, and deeper breaths. This will allow your nervous system to calm itself down and allow you to regain some kind of focus.
- **TALK** to someone – Whether it is friends, family, a professional, a doctor, a helpline, or a counsellor, try not to isolate yourself and suffer in silence, there is always a positive in talking to someone.
- Practice **MEDITATION and MINDFULNESS** to shift your focus and induce a state of relaxation.
- Set up **GOALS** and **ROUTINE** – Life can get fast and hectic sometimes, look at what you want from life, how can you organise your time better, what can you change, what can't you change? What's not working for you? What should you prioritise? What should you get rid of?
- Prioritise your **HEALTH** care. Stress is beneficial in the short term, but in the long term can have an impact on your immune system, and mental health. Be sure to replenish your body with rest, nutritional food, good hydration, and self-care for your mind. Getting plenty of sleep is key, be sure to have a consistent routine and avoid things that will affect your rest, like phone scrolling or tv late at night, junk food, caffeine etc.
- Shift the **ENERGY** – Stress is a form of energy that our body produces. Instead of sitting with it, use it on something beneficial, this could be lifting weights, going for a jog, committing to hobbies or personal goals etc.
- Determine what you can and can't **CONTROL**. – Building resilience to stress evolves with time, trauma, bad experiences, big decision making and making impactful changes to life. Being able to differentiate between what you can and can't control is a key skill in moving forward in life. You can't change that argument you had in the past, but you can determine how things pan out in the future.

GOD, GRANT ME THE
SERENITY

TO ACCEPT THE THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE,

COURAGE

TO CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN, AND

WISDOM

TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.

OVERTHINKING

We all overthink the worst case scenario. This is very natural for our mind to prepare the body for danger. A smoke alarm will alert you during a house fire but will also send off the same signal when you burn your toast, But the cases both differ massively in severity, but we still understand why the smoke alarm is there, and we don't want to remove it. Our minds work the same way, but some cases may be setting off alarms in our head when its only toast we are burning.

When we predict things, like the outcome of a job interview or a big presentation etc, we tend to only think of what can go wrong. Everybody thinks different, some common cases of overthinking include:

CATASTROPHIZING

When we catastrophize, we tend to jump to the worst possible outcome and convince ourselves that this is the only result of whatever experience we are in.

PERSONALIZING

This is when we don't know everything regarding what we deem a bad situation and tend to make it about ourselves. For example, if nobody spoke to me at work one morning, I might begin thinking I've done something wrong, I've upset someone, everyone is talking about me etc.

MENTAL FILTER

This is when we focus only on the negative and ignore the positive. Our brains will focus on anything that it deems a threat to us to prepare us to keep ourselves safe.

OVERGENERALIZING

This is when we take one bad experience in our life and apply it to everything else in the future. One bad relationship might make us think we are never meant to be in one and that all future ones are going to end the same way.

LABELLING

This is when we label ourselves based on a certain past bad experience. One case of social anxiety will then lead us to believe that we will always be a socially anxious person. Having this thought bias about ourselves will convince ourselves it's true and will prevent future cases of social activities for example.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

LOOK FOR THE ALTERNATIVES

Practice looking for alternative endings and reframing the situation, especially to something positive and enjoyable. Your brain will take some convincing, so make it a habit to recognise and journal when you *are* overthinking and to practice a new approach. Reframing a threat as an enjoyable and rewarding challenge can make the situation feel better.

"I'm going to fail, and everyone is going to hate me in my new job!"

"Actually – I might be shy at first, but as time goes on, I will make new friends and build skills and experience!"

LOOK FOR THE FACTS

When you're overthinking, it tends to be a prediction, usually a horror story you've created in your brain. As stated earlier, our brains will constantly look for the worst outcome of things. Spotting the difference between fact and fiction can be a great tool in convincing yourself otherwise. When an anxious thought occurs, write it down. Then write down the evidence that it is a factual thought and the evidence that it's a fictional thought and weigh up your findings.

FICTIONAL EVIDENCE 'My friend hasn't contacted me in a while, they probably hate me, I'm not good enough.'

FACTUAL EVIDENCE: They have a demanding job. They have a busy homelife. I haven't made much effort either.

LOOK FOR THE FOCUS

Whilst our brains are focused only on the negatives, being able to shift this focus to something else more positive is a great tool for your mental wellbeing, in a lot of cases, not just overthinking. Just simply being able to be compassionate with yourself will benefit you greatly. It's not something that will change overnight, but a lifetime practice with consistency will help. Remember to balance that negative voice in your head with a positive self-talk. Think of what you would say to a friend who came to you with the same problem, what words of motivation and care would you say to them? Say them to yourself.

I'M JUST NOT SURE WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?

Struggling to figure out what's going on? Feeling shit and don't know why? The language we use is our tool for making sense of things. Some words for emotions have been used more and more to mean a wide range of things. Feeling Depressed? What exactly does that term mean in our modern reality? Being able to distinguish between specific negative feelings will help you respond to each problem. Finding new words that you can use will help your brain recognise and respond better. Use the mood wheel below to differentiate between different emotions and broaden your recognition on umbrella terms. It's important to recognise both negative and positive feelings as practicing this consistently will help you in the future.



Credit:
Dr Julie Smith:
Why has nobody told me this before?
(book)

Craig's Playlist

Queen – I Want to Break Free.

Florence and the Machine – Free.

Sea Girls – Do You Really Wanna Know?

Bleachers – I Wanna Get Better.

Young Fathers – Sink or Swim.

Sia – Alive.

Elton John – I'm Still Standing.

Twenty One Pilots – Car Radio.

Dario G – Sunchyme.

RuPaul – The Beginning.

Billie Eilish – What Was I Made For?

Wolf Alice – How Can I Make It OK?



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