

Everyday Mental Health

A guide to supporting yourself and others in the here and now.



Everyday Mental Health Workbook Contents:

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Stress

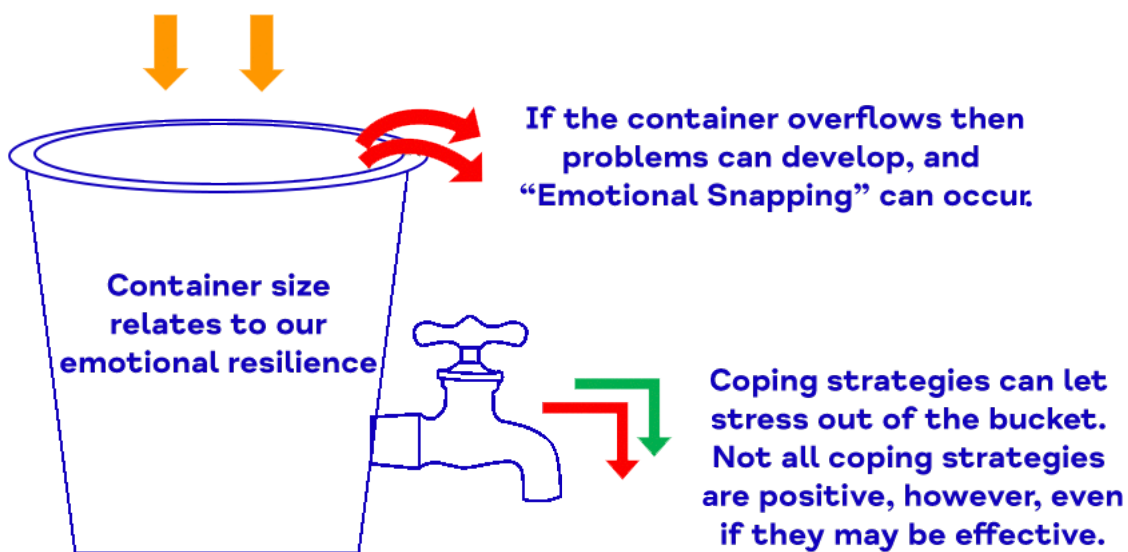
Stress is how we react when we feel under pressure or threatened. It usually occurs when we are in a situation that we don't feel we can manage or control.

Stress can come in many different forms. Some of these include:

- Physical stressors - poor diet, lack of sleep, physical illness, alcohol or drug use.
- Emotional stressors - breakdown in relationships, peer pressure, marriage, difficult relationships with family members or friends.
- Acute Life Events - Bereavement, pregnancy, physical illness, assault, natural disaster, an accident.
- Chronic stress - debts, poverty, drug or alcohol abuse, homelessness, caring responsibilities.

The Stress Container (Brabben and Turkington 2002)

Stress flows into the container



Signs of Stress

If someone is feeling stressed, they might:

- Feel irritable, angry, impatient or wound up.
- Feel anxious, worried or afraid.
- Avoid the things that are causing them stress.
- Find it harder to make decisions.
- Withdraw or isolate themselves.
- Experience headaches.
- Feel like their thoughts are racing and they can't switch off.
- Have trouble sleeping or feel tired all the time.
- Eat more or less than usual
- Smoke or drink alcohol more than normal.

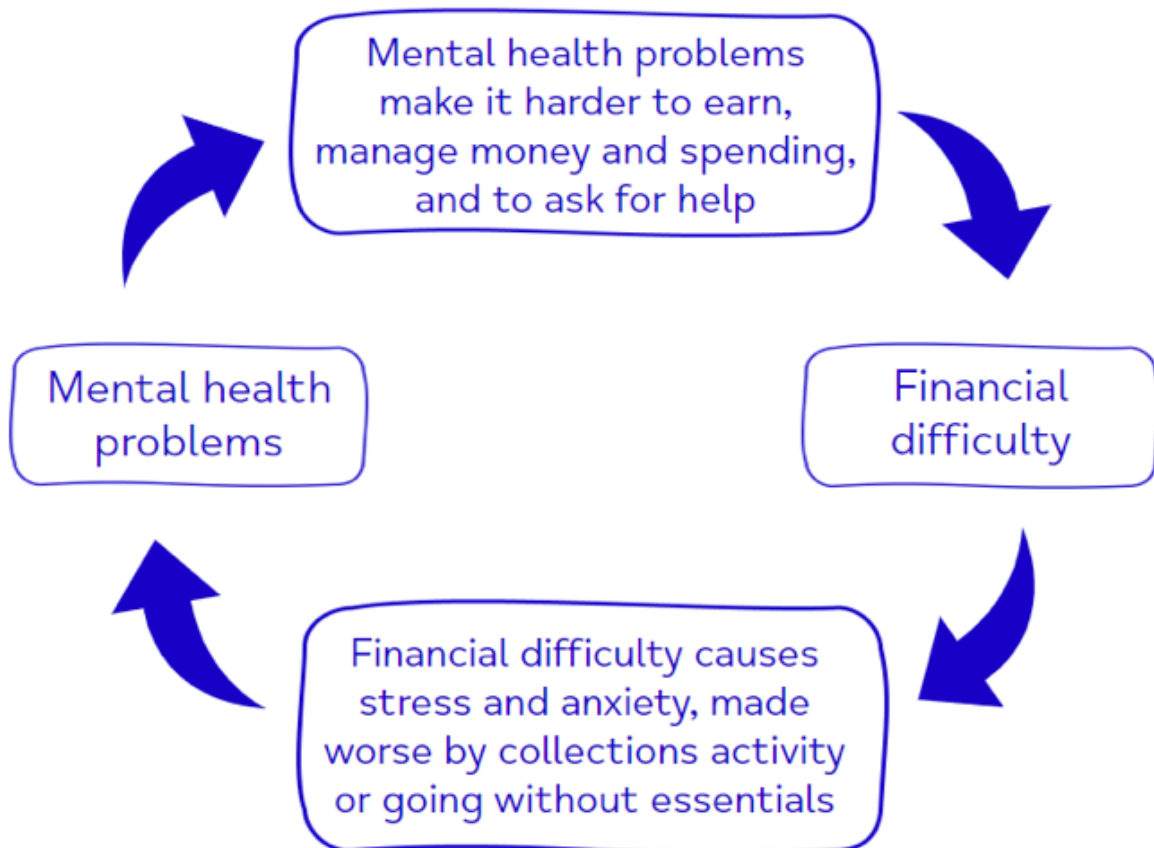
Stress is one of the main contributing factors for mental ill-health. Too much stress can cause someone to develop a mental health problem like anxiety or depression and can exacerbate pre-existing conditions. It is therefore essential that we are aware of our stress levels and that we take steps to reduce them if they are becoming too high.

Mental Health & Money

When we talk about mental health in the ‘here and now’, we cannot understate the impact that money can have on people’s wellbeing.

Mental health and money problems are often intricately linked and can feel like a vicious cycle. People with problem debt are significantly more likely to experience mental health problems whilst those with a mental health problem are more likely to be in debt.

The below diagram is designed to help you to visualise the intrinsic connection between mental health and money.



What Can Help?

It is important to practice Self-Care.

- **Be active** - regular exercise can be as effective as anti-depressants for those experiencing mild to moderate depression.
- **Eat healthily** – This can improve our mood, give us more energy, and help us think more clearly.
- **Get enough sleep** – poor sleep can have a negative impact on our mental health and make it more difficult to cope with daily life.
- **Try to find time to relax** – this can give you a mental break from feelings of stress or worry and help you refocus.
- **Build your support network** - Research shows that having a good support network can help to build resilience and make stress easier to manage.



How can we support others?

If someone lets you know that they are experiencing difficult thoughts and feelings, it's common to feel like you don't know what to do or say – but you don't need any special training to show someone you care about them. Often just being there for someone and doing small things can be really valuable.

- **Listen.** Simply giving someone space to talk, and listening to how they're feeling, can be really helpful in itself. If they're finding it difficult, let them know that you're there when they are ready.
- **Offer reassurance.** Seeking help can feel lonely, and sometimes scary. You can reassure someone by letting them know that they are not alone, and that you will be there to help.
- **Stay calm.** Even though it might be upsetting to hear that someone you care about is distressed, try to stay calm. This will help your friend or family member feel calmer too and show them that they can talk to you openly without upsetting you.
- **Be patient.** You might want to know more details about their thoughts and feelings or want them to get help immediately. But it's important to let them set the pace for seeking support themselves.
- **Try not to make assumptions.** Your perspective might be useful to your friend or family member, but try not to assume that you already know what may have caused their feelings, or what will help.
- **Keep social contact.** Part of the emotional support you offer could be to keep things as normal as possible. This could include involving your friend or family member in social events or chatting about other parts of your lives.

Helpful Resources & Support Services

Release the Pressure – 0800 107 0160 or text the word Kent/Medway to 85258. This free and confidential 24/7 service is there for anyone in Kent and Medway who is feeling anxious or worried.

Samaritans - [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org) or call 116 123. Samaritans are open 24/7 for anyone who needs to talk.

CALM – www.thecalmzone.net or 0800 58 58 58 (5pm – midnight, 365 days a year). Offers support to anyone who is struggling via their helpline and webchat.

The Mix - www.themix.org.uk or 0808 808 4994 (4pm – 11pm, 7 days a week). Provides support for anyone aged 25 or under who is experiencing any painful emotions or is in crisis.

Sane - [sane.org.uk](https://www.sane.org.uk) or call 0300 304 7000 (4pm – 10pm, 365 days a year). Offers emotional support and information for anyone affected by mental health problems.

With You – www.wearewithyou.org.uk. Offers a range of support relating to health and wellbeing including free talking therapies like counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

Mental Wellbeing Hub - www.kentandmedwayccg.nhs.uk/mental-wellbeing-information-hub. Provides information, advice, and support for anyone feeling anxious, stressed, or low.

Live Well Kent – <https://livewellkent.org.uk/>. Call 0800 567 7699. Provides free mental health support for people aged 17+.

Kent and Medway Safe Havens – www.mhm.org.uk/kent-safe-havens. Provides out-of-hours mental health support to anyone aged 16+ in the Kent area.

Mind - [mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk). This National Mental Health Charity provides information and advice about self-harm.

Young Minds - youngminds.org.uk . Provides information and advice, including support for parents and carers.

Citizens Advice - www.citizensadvice.org.uk or call 0800 144 8848. Citizens Advice provides free, confidential information and advice to assist people with money, legal, consumer and other problems.

Turn2us – www.turn2us.org.uk or call 0808 802 2000 (9am – 8.30pm, Monday – Friday). This national charity helps people in financial hardship gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants, and support services.

StepChange - www.stepchange.org or call 0800 138 1111 (8am – 8pm, Monday – Friday, 8am -4pm on Saturday). Provides free debt advice to help people deal with their debt and set up a solution.

National Debtline - www.nationaldebtline.org or call 0808 808 4000 (9am – 8pm, Monday to Friday and 9.30am – 1pm on Saturday). This organization provides free, independent and confidential advice about debt.

Mental Health & Money Advice - www.mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org. Clear, practical advice and support for people experiencing issues with mental health and money.

Kent Support and Assistance Service (KSAS) - www.kent.gov.uk/kent-support-and-assistance-service. Emergency welfare scheme for people experiencing a short-term crisis with no other means of support.

Local food banks - www.kent.gov.uk/find-a-foodbank. Search for food banks by postcode.

Kent Advocacy - seap.org.uk/kent-advocacy or call 0330 440 9000 (10am – 5pm, Monday and 9am – 5pm, Tuesday – Friday). Provides independent, qualified advocacy support across a range of issues.

Active Kent & Medway - Everyday Active

This training session was born from conversations with the team at Active Kent & Medway - who were keen to integrate some kind of shorter-duration training session on mental health as a part of the work they are doing with sports organisations across Kent & Medway.

This has been done in part to shine the light on their 'Everyday Active' campaign - showing that mental health and physical activity are linked. There is plenty of evidence to highlight the intrinsic link between our physical and mental health - with many people finding that sports and other physical activities can be hugely beneficial for their wellbeing.

Everyday Active aims to encourage people to get out and engage with physical activity by sharing different resources and opportunities for people across the area. The Everyday Active website collates a wide variety of different activities which people can engage with. We are delighted to be a small part of this campaign - and hope this training helps to highlight the connection between mental & physical fitness to more people in our communities.

To learn more about Everyday Active Kent, visit:
<https://www.everydayactivekent.org.uk/>



Other Training Opportunities

We really hope you have enjoyed your time on our 'Everyday Mental Health' course. We would like to thank our funders for making this shorter-duration training session possible.

If you would like to access more training from us, then there are two sessions available for free as a part of this programme which are outlined below for you:

Adult Suicide Prevention & Awareness Training

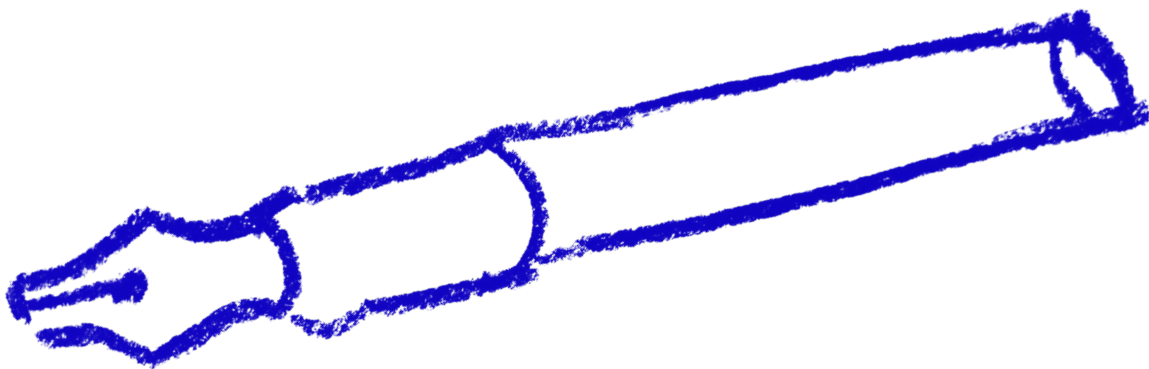
A free, 3 1/2 hour course looking at how we can support adults who may be experiencing suicidal thoughts. This training is available across Kent and Medway.

Youth Suicide Prevention & Awareness Training

A free, 3 1/2 hour course looking at how we can support young people who may be experiencing suicidal thoughts. This training is available across Kent and Medway.

For more details on either of these sessions, please e-mail [**training@midkentmind.org.uk**](mailto:training@midkentmind.org.uk).

We hope to welcome you on more training with us in the near future!



For enquiries regarding any mental health training
please contact MK Mind on:

tel: 01622 592383

email: training@midkentmind.org.uk



Our Charity Registration Number is 1167328