

WELLBEING

The Little Book of Wellness



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Introduction

Hello and welcome to your 'little book of wellness'. We hope this book is a helpful resource for you to work towards being kinder to yourself and putting yourself first when you may be facing difficult times as a student now or in the future.

This book has been designed to act as simple tool for you to reflect on practical ways to build upon your resilience to cope when times are tougher than usual and make suggestions to help promote your well-being and happiness.

You may have just started your journey as a student or perhaps you are in your final year and looking to the future. Most students will at some point experience situations that challenge and test their emotional resilience because challenge, unexpected changes and stress is inevitable in the fast paced lives we live.

As a student you will leave home, live independently, make new friends, relationships, balance uni work with a part-time job, go out and socialise, which are all aspects of your transition to student life.

Please keep this book safe and feel free to use it at times when you most need to remind yourself of your own strengths and make a plan to keep yourself well.

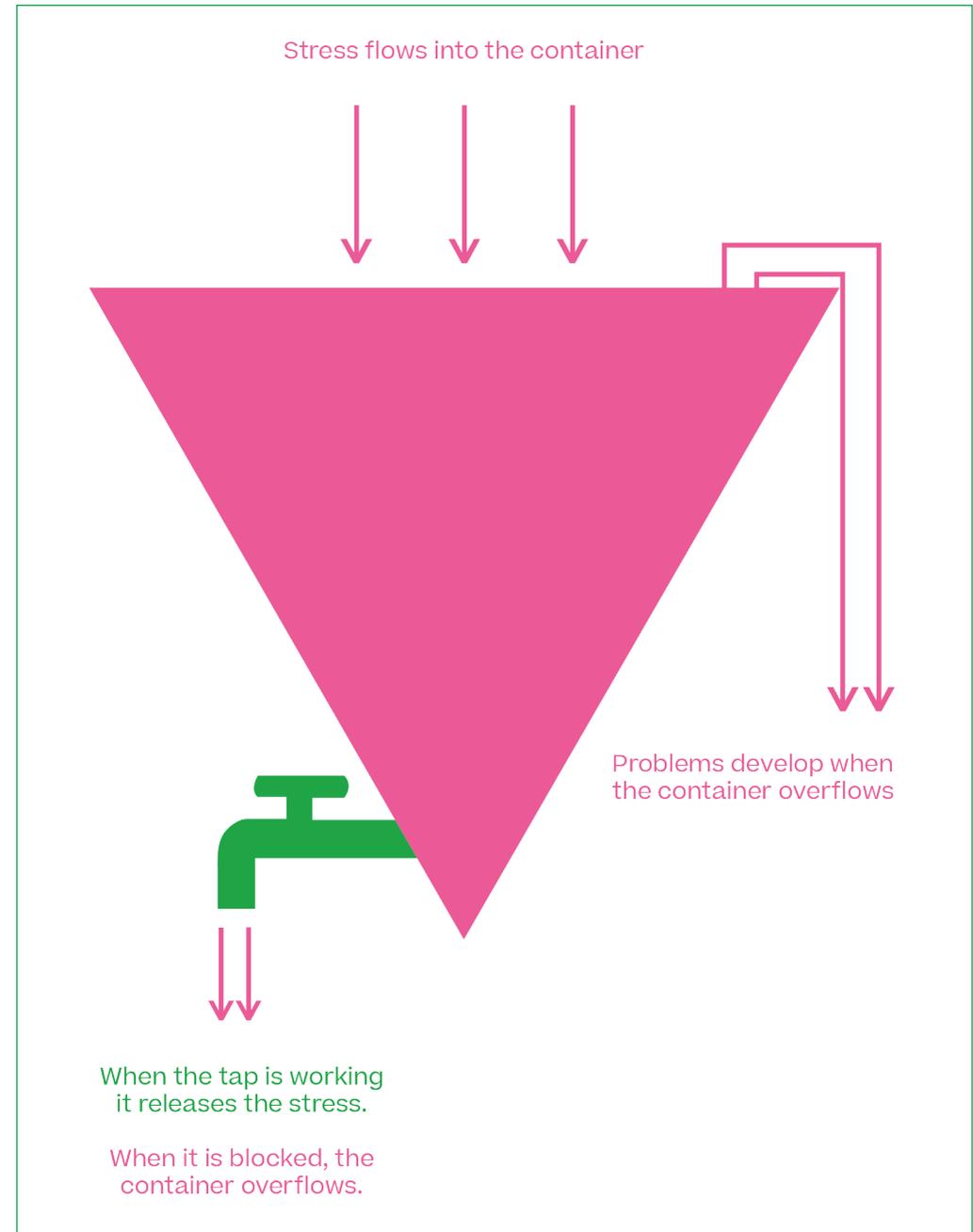
“Happiness is not something ready made, it comes from your own actions.”

Dali Lama



What's in your stress container?

A tool to help you understand and manage stress.



MY WELLNESS TOOLBOX

One thing we do have control over is our thinking, which has an impact on our attitude and behaviour. There are aspects of our life that we can change to improve our level of well-being. These things make up what keeps us well and you can choose what you need for you to feel more in control of your wellness.

Gratitude journal

A journal to note one thing to be grateful for each day. You can then reflect on these when you are feeling less positive. Another way of shifting negative over thinking is to think of three good things that have happened each day just as you settle to sleep. This can shift the focus from the negative to positive and increase happiness.

Keep learning

Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Get creative: draw, compose music, write poetry, act, dance, paint, cook, knit. The Student's Union has lots of events and groups to join and take part in. Learning new things will make you more interesting and more confident as well as being a chance to connect with other people.

Take notice

Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Take time to breathe, unwind, meditate, listen to music, read a book. Reflect on the positives in your day. Write down three good things about each day to help you appreciate what matters to you. Some days it's hard to think of something but you will feel better when you do!

Reaching out/Giving

You may not want to be with people but you can still have a laugh with your mates online or speak to family, which usually helps to feel better. Practice random acts of kindness-even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Larger acts, such as volunteering for an event, can improve your mental well-being and help you build new social networks.

Getting active

What you do with your body can have a powerful effect on your mental well-being. Mental well-being means feeling good. It is what we 'do' rather than who we are. Leave your room-take a walk in the fresh air, go cycling or try something new i.e exercise class. One of the fastest ways of to shake of stress is to exercise.

Sleep well

It is normal to struggle to sleep if you are worried about something. If you are tired your worries can feel enormous. Set regular times for going to bed and getting up. Having a sleep routine can really help you feel mentally well, concentrate better and feel motivated. Once in bed, focus on relaxing using relaxation exercises or breathing techniques. Try not to keep your phone by your bed once you have started to settle for the night, it is too tempting to scan social media.

Relaxation

Breathe in a way that serves you. 7-11 belly breathing in an environment that you feel comfortable in. Watching your favourite TV shows or listen to music that relaxes you.

Connecting

Sometimes when we're under too much pressure or feeling low, we find it hard to connect with others. We feel isolated, insecure and afraid of what other people might be thinking about us. Spend time with family, call a friend, look after pets, group activities, talk to family or friends online, what's app groups.

Food and mood

Your diet can affect your mood. To keep your brain working you need healthy fats such as omega 3 fats in fish, chicken, seeds, milk, eggs. Protein is important to regulate your mood. Drinking lots of water helps our concentration. Too much caffeine i.e coke, coffee, chocolate, tea can make you feel more anxious. Limit this stuff if you can.

Create a playlist

To try and experience a range of feelings. Songs for times you have felt really happy and positive and definitely ones you can sing along to.

Be mindful

Be more aware of the present moment, including taking notice of soft and loud sounds, passing thoughts and feelings, different sensations in your body and the world around you. Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

Daily Plan

Describe yourself when you were your happiest
What was my routine like at that time?

Things I should do to maintain my wellness
What I need to do daily to continue to feel happy and well
What was my routine like at that time?

- ☺ Develop a sleep routine
- ☺ Eat regularly
- ☺ Reach out and meet up with a friend
- ☺ Gratitude diary
- ☺ Go for a walk along the beach
- ☺ Find a different space to study in
- ☺ Believe in you
- ☺ Listen to music
- ☺ Shower
- ☺ Re-frame the negatives to a positive

Triggers

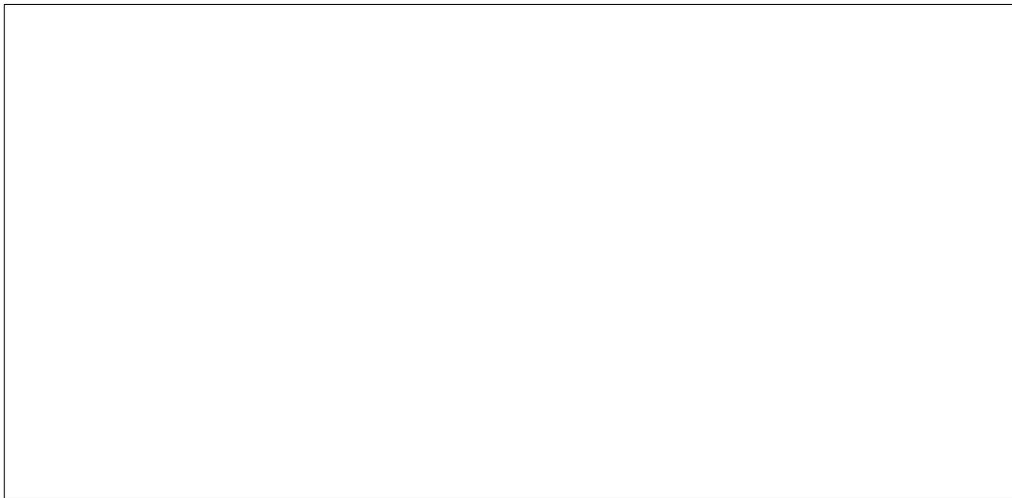
Triggers are things that happen to us, environments or situations we face that make it more difficult for us to stay emotionally balanced.

Stress, loneliness, inactivity, lack of sleep can have a really negative impact on our mental well-being and other times there is no clear reason for why we feel the way we do - which can be frustrating.

Things to avoid because they make me feel worse



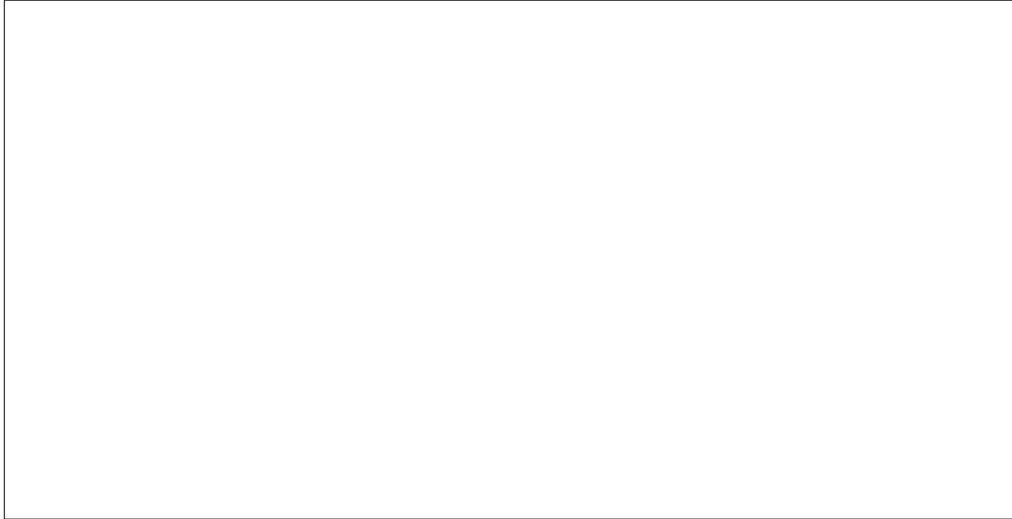
What would stop me from doing these things?



- ⊕ Locking yourself away in your room limiting workspaces and sleep
- ⊕ Staying in bed all day
- ⊕ Being alone for long periods
- ⊕ Excessive use of social media
- ⊕ Comparing yourself to others
- ⊕ High expectations of yourself
- ⊕ Fear of failure
- ⊕ Feeling physically unwell
- ⊕ Moving away from home
- ⊕ Friendship breakdowns
- ⊕ Feeling isolated
- ⊕ Worrying too much
- ⊕ Getting angry at people
- ⊕ Doubting people want to spend time with me
- ⊕ Being negative

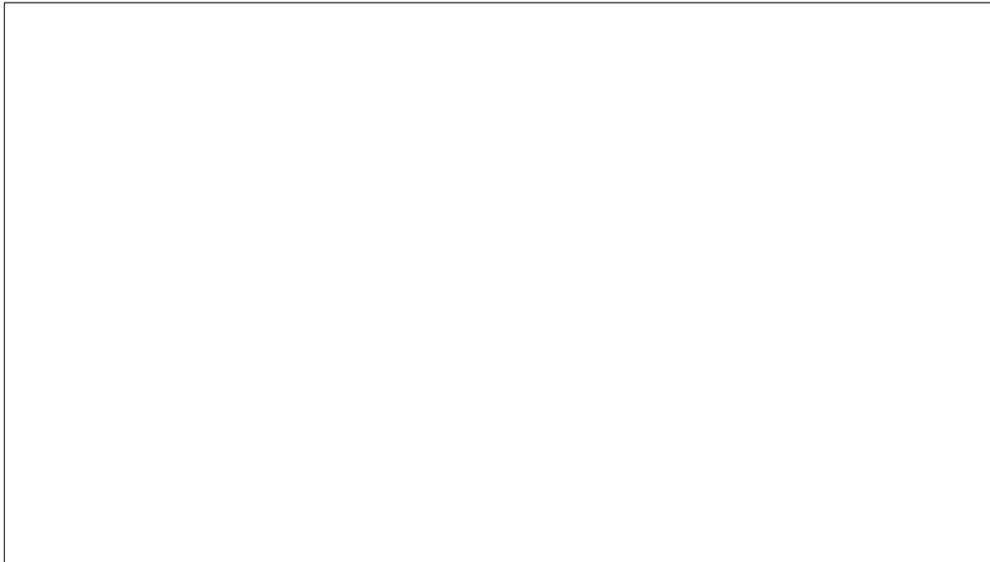
Crisis Plan

What am I like when I am feeling well



Symptoms that indicate other professionals needs to get involved?

i.e not sleeping, not getting out of bed, not taking care of myself, planning and rehearsing suicide plan, destructive behaviours, refusing to eat or drink.



- ☺ Confident
- ☺ Able to express myself
- ☺ Good relationships
- ☺ Able to feel connected with people
- ☺ Eating regularly
- ☺ Good sleep routine
- ☺ Able to cope with stress

Warning signs

Friends can normally spot when things are not going so well. It is not always so easy to see warning signs yourself. Friends can really help when you need to access support.

Things I must do if I experience early warning signs:

- Admit there is a problem
- Talk
- Make a plan
- Connect with a supportive friend /family
- Call a helpline/refer to online resources recommended in this booklet
- Contact the AUB Well-being Officer/Counsellor at Student Services
- Make an appointment with the GP

Are there any early warning signs that others may notice when you are starting to feel stressed/ mentally unwell?

Recognising the signs in your thoughts, feelings and behaviour can help us know when we need help.

Thinking about this can also help us recognise when a friend might need our support too.

- ☹ Mood swings
- ☹ Feeling low, angry, stressed, crying incessantly
- ☹ Tiredness-rarely feeling refreshed after sleep
- ☹ Avoiding social situations
- ☹ Not attending lectures or Uni
- ☹ Not listening or caring
- ☹ Forgetfulness
- ☹ Neglecting the way you look
- ☹ Self harm
- ☹ Overwhelmed
- ☹ Uploading worrying photos or status updates on social media
- ☹ Unusual behaviour

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							
Priorities							

Small steps

Allowing time to care for ourselves can be a challenge. You have already made a good start to write down your intentions and goals in your wellbeing plan. If you want to combine your wellbeing and study goals it maybe helpful to devise a weekly planner.

An example:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	Breakfast	Bring breakfast to Uni Go to library	Lecture	Studio session all morning Break and walk around campus		Connect with a friend family from home online	
Afternoon	Walk at lunch for 20mins		After lectures do a food shop	Start blog and structure essay			
Evening	Meditation try app	Try an exercise class	Have a shower and listen to my favourite playlist	Invite a friend around or ask a house mate to watch a film	SU social event		
Priorities							

This can really help us see where we have succeeded, but also, when we don't achieve these goals. We can think specifically about what was difficult and how we can adjust these goals to make it easier to try again. It is best to anchor your goal to a time or other commitment e.g. 'after my crit today'.

Sometimes, making changes can feel daunting. If this describes your situation, don't punish yourself.

The great thing about taking small steps is that it doesn't matter how small your goal is.

It is up to you what you want to achieve and what is realistic. That way, the completion of any task – no matter how simple it may seem, is your achievement! To remind yourself how you felt while doing it why not draw a face of how it made you feel, or add pictures.

Stress often arises when we are not meeting our physical and emotional needs in healthy ways

Go to people

These are my 'go to' people I trust and or will be able to help me in a crisis.

Name:	Tel:
Name:	Tel:
Name:	Tel:

What I want people to do to make me feel more comfortable or help to reduce my symptoms?

You could think here about what you want to happen if you are in a position where you unable to say what you want – or need – or you are aware that others don't necessarily understand that how you are acting does not match how you are feeling and so can be misunderstood.

The people I don't want involved in any way

Signs that my crisis plan is no longer needed. How will my supporters know?

Medication and/or treatment

What if things are not going so well with Uni?

Often, university can be the first time we face challenges without our normal support network. This can feel overwhelming when there are other layers affecting our mental wealth, for example, study, friendships, relationships, health issues which can sometimes tip the balance and move us towards feeling less in control which can then in turn affect the way we function day to day.

If you are experiencing a long term condition affecting your wellbeing or you are having particular difficult circumstances, you might want to consider requesting an extension of your project under the mitigation policy.

There are always options to help you overcome your situation. Perhaps have a think about the following:

You could apply for a one week extension by contacting by Course Leader. You should briefly explain your circumstances and ask if they approve the extension.

If you need longer than a week, you will need to complete a mitigation form that can be found on viewpoint. You will also need to provide evidence from your doctor/hospital, counsellor or wellbeing (if you are getting support from the wellbeing officer) with this form. You will need this evidence to support your claim and your request must be received before the unit assessment deadline. Don't leave your request until the last minute!

How can AUB Wellbeing help you?

- Wellbeing sessions to explore solutions to your problems with you.
- Liaise with academic departments
- Link in with other support at AUB
- Liaise with local services-doctors and mental health teams

What if it feels too much and I need a break from University?

Taking time out-Intermission

This may also be referred to as interruption or suspension of your studies. It refers to a period of time out after you have started your studies which maybe for a whole or part of the academic year. Requests to intermit are usually initiated by the student but may be suggested by a tutor, for example if you are experiencing difficult personal circumstances or ill health.

The end of year examination board can impose intermission if you have not passed a number of unit assessments-please refer to your handbook on the assessment regulations for further information.

If you intermit from your course and re-join at a later date, you may have unit assessments that have not yet been completed.

Financial implications

You should speak to the Student Records team with Registry or Finance. You will also need to think about:

*How to fund your accommodation and living costs as you will no longer be able to claim student loan and may need to stay in student housing until you finish your course.

*At present students who intermit are not entitled to Welfare Benefits unless in one of the exempted categories (e.g. single parents, disabled students, pensioners, student couples with children etc).

*You will not be eligible for council tax exemption during the time away from your course and this may have implications for your accommodation.

Academic implications

If you intermit from your course and re-join at a later date, you may have unit assessments that have not yet been completed. Make sure you understand what work (if any) you need to undertake and any deadlines for submission. Upon your return you will be joining a new year group but you should also be aware that the structure and content of a course may change from one year to the next. Registry will send you a letter confirming arrangements for your return, outlining any work you need to complete with the deadline for submission and any changes to the curriculum.

What next?

If you spot these signs that things are going less well for yourself or a friend, where do you start to seek help?

It's really common to feel unsure about seeking help about a mental health problem and to feel like you should wait a bit longer until you have a better hold on it. It is ok to seek out help even if you are not entirely sure that you have a mental health problem.

People who can help?

Seeking help for a mental health problem can be a really important step towards getting and staying well, but it can be hard to know how to start or where to turn to. This is very normal.

Wellbeing Service

If you're finding things really difficult, you might want to book a session with the Wellbeing Officer at AUB: wellbeing@aub.ac.uk or **01202 363106**. These sessions can offer you practical support to help you build upon existing things you already do to look after yourself. Do check out the student services news feeds with upcoming wellbeing events and information on: twitter.com/aubsupport

Counselling

You may want to consider counselling here at AUB with counsellors, who can provide a therapeutic space to share your thoughts and feelings.

Alternatively, talk to your doctor about any support from a medical view point. GPs can be the first point of contact for many people – they can offer treatment and advice and can make referrals for more specialist support.

If you are a bit unsure about going to talk to someone

- Write down what's wrong and how you have been feeling as a result. If it helps, show a friend or trusted person.
- If it's still too difficult to contact a helping professional, you can email people who can help who are based in Students Services on: wellbeing@aub.ac.uk

Urgent Help

In an emergency if you feel overwhelmed and feel concerned for your immediate safety (i.e you may be experiencing suicidal thoughts/self-harm) you can speak to someone on the phone or via email night or day:

Dorset Healthcare Connection helpline 24/7
0300 123 5440 or access via NHS **111**.

If you don't feel you can keep yourself safe right now, seek immediate help.

The Retreat

The Retreat is open to anyone aged 18 or over who self-defines as in crisis, or who wants to avoid a crisis occurring. It is also open to carers and supporters.

Currently The Retreat is working online during the COVID situation.

Please visit their website for more information:

[dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/our-services-hospitals/mental-health/retreat](https://www.dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/our-services-hospitals/mental-health/retreat)

Immediate Help

- Call **999** and ask for an ambulance, or ask someone else to contact **999** for you
- Go to any hospital A&E department (sometimes known as the emergency department). Your local A&E departments are:

Poole Hospital

Longfleet road,
Poole,
BH15 2JB
Tel: **01202 665511**

Royal Bournemouth Hospital

Castle Lane East,
Bournemouth,
BH7 7DW
Tel: **01202 303626**

If you need some support immediately, but don't want to go to A&E, here are some other options for you to try:

- contact your GP for an emergency appointment or the out of hours team.
- call NHS **111** (England)
- contact the Samaritans on freephone **116 123**, they're open 24 hours.
- PAPHYRUS-HopelineUK: **0800 068 41 41**

“40% of all GP consultations are about a mental health problem.”

Mind, 2018

Useful Contacts

- **The Samaritans:** samaritans.org or tel: **116 123**
- **Papyrus: Hopelink:** **0800 068 41 41** is a confidential support and advice service for young people under the age of 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide or anyone concerned that a young person could be thinking about suicide.
- **Hearing Voices network:** info@hearing-voices.org
- **Voice Collective:** voicecollective.co.uk or tel: **020 7911 0822**. Voice Collective is a UK wide London-based project that supports children and young people who hear voices, see visions, have other 'unusual' sensory experiences or beliefs.
- **NHS Self help guides:** ntw.nhs.uk/pic/selfhelp
- **Get Self Help:** Information and tools on mindfulness, relaxation, music and imagery: getselfhelp.co.uk
- **MIND:** is a national charity to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. You can contact them through their national helpline or website address: mind.org.uk. Alternatively get in touch with our local MIND- Dorset Mind-website address is: dorsetmind.uk or tel: **01202 55166**.
- **Moodjuice:** help towards managing emotional problems moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** the lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you.
- **Student Minds** is the UK's student mental health charity. This service is to support student mental health, support others and create change. Visit: studentminds.org.uk
- **Students against Depression Resources** to move away from depression studentsagainstdespression.org
- **Dorset NHS Eating Disorders Service** is a local service designed to help individuals and their families overcome different types of eating disorders, including Anorexia and Bulimia Nervosa and a typical versions of these disorders. You can refer yourself. Adult Service (over 18's): **01202 492147**. Email: eatingdisorders@dhft.nhs.uk
- **BEAT** (is a local charity to help individuals with eating disorders) Helpline **0808 801 0677** or online support: b-eat.co.uk/support-services
- **Relate** (the relationship people) relate.org.uk or tel: **01202 311231**
- **EDAS** offer one-to-one support for 11-25 year olds who are experiencing drug and alcohol issues. **01202 733322**. Our opening times are Mon to Fri 8.30-16.30
- **Alcoholics Anonymous:** alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk or tel: **0845 769 7555**
- **Narcotics Anonymous:** ukna.org or tel: **0845 373 3366**
- **Student Space:** studentspace.org.uk



Apps



Calm

Calm is the #1 app for mindfulness and meditation to bring more clarity, joy and peace to your daily life.



Headspace

Headspace is the simple way to reframe stress. Sleep trouble? Meditation creates the ideal conditions for a good night's rest.



Elefriends

A supportive online community from the mental health charity MIND. Online community to listen, share and be heard.



SAM

An app that helps you understand and manage your anxiety.



Wellmind

A wellbeing app designed to help you with stress, anxiety and depression.



Calm Harm

Calm harm provides tasks that help you resist or manage the urge to self-harm.



5 Ways to Wellbeing

A practical way to help you feel good and function well in the world.



Mindfulness

A mindfulness app for anyone looking to improve mental health and overall wellbeing.

Further Resources

Trouble with sleeping?

The Sleep Council: [sleepcouncil.org.uk](https://www.sleepcouncil.org.uk)

Pzizz - Sleep application: pzizz.com

Experiencing panic attacks?

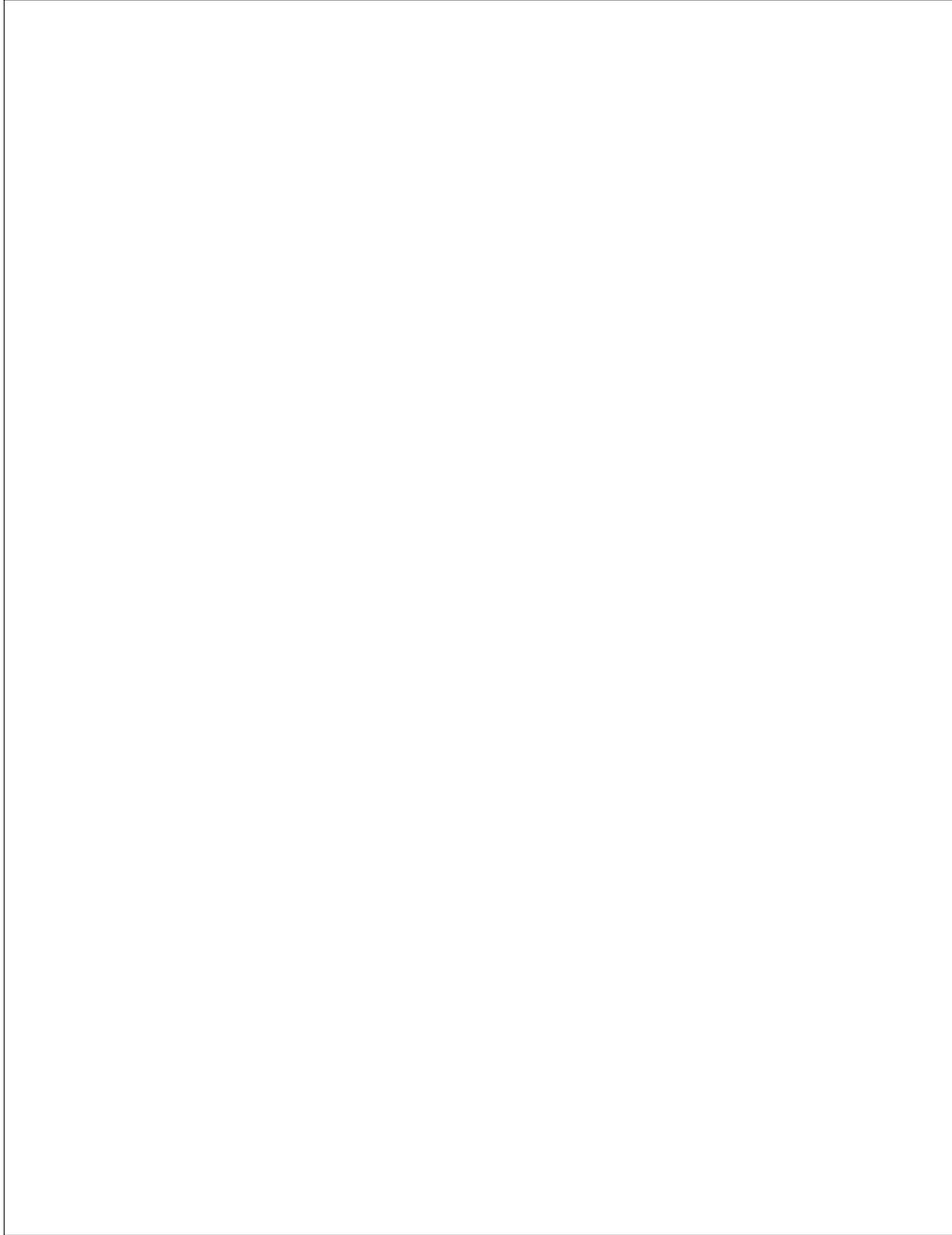
7/11 Breathing to manage panic attacks and for everyday emotional regulation:

in8.uk.com/information-resources/7-11-breathing

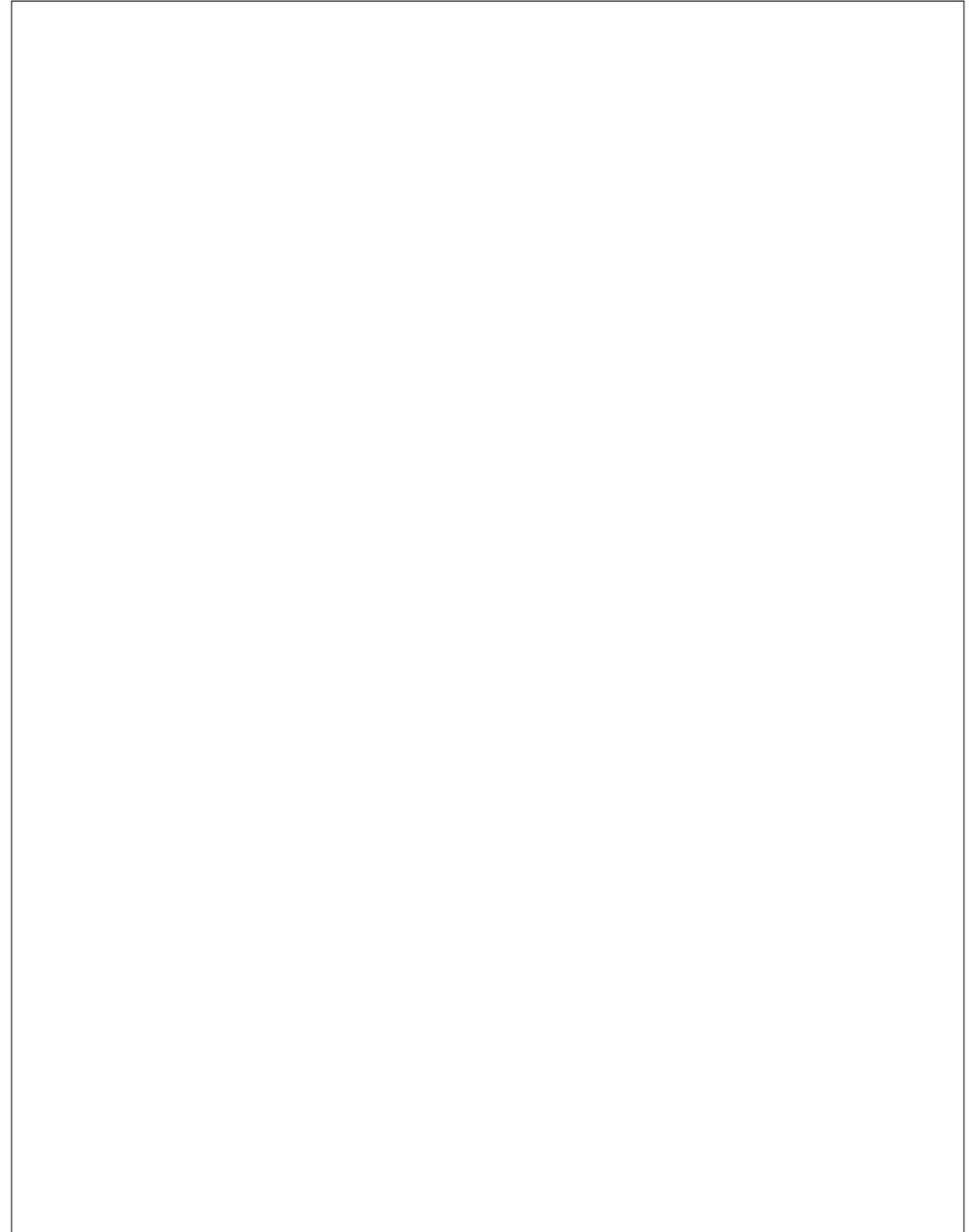
Thinking about food/nutrition and mood issues?

British Nutrition Foundation: [nutrition.org.uk](https://www.nutrition.org.uk)

Personal wellbeing notes



Personal wellbeing notes



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