

Help is  
at hand

**U can cope!**  
**How to cope when  
life is difficult**



The Royal College of Psychiatrists

## What do we mean by coping?

When life is difficult, it's important to be able to cope without feeling emotionally overwhelmed. Another word for this is 'resilience'. In other words, resilience is the ability to cope with upsetting or difficult life events and...

Be the best we can be

- deal affectively with difficulties
- become stronger and feel OK
- bounce back
- learn from mistakes and bad experiences and then be able to leave them behind.

We can improve our ability to cope. This leaflet will give you some ideas about how to do this.

## Some things around us that can help our ability to cope and be resilient are

- thinking and learning about who we are
- having caring relationships with people
- knowing what to expect from others, and ourselves
- joining in with the people we live with, our friends and family, in school, college or work and in our local community
- knowing that people 'believe' in us.

**Not all of us have everything in the list above, but we can still do things for ourselves to help our situation.** It might be difficult to see how you could change some of these things for the better, but you can.

We can learn to understand and work through feelings of anger, sadness or rejection and get beyond them.

- **Learning who we are** and what we want from life.
- **Learning what we need** – knowing how to speak to others politely while still getting our message across, and knowing that what we do can make a difference.
- **Be interested in yourself!** – your feelings count, they are important and valuable, so pay attention to them!
- **Learning what we want to do** – the belief and understanding that our life has meaning and we can make a difference to other people and other things.
- **Developing a purpose in life** – having specific plans or dreams for ourselves.
- Trying to find ways to think positively so we can:
  - **Feel good about our future** – which is more likely to help positive things happen.

It might be difficult to see how you could change some of these things for the better, but there are some tips in this leaflet for that. There are also things you can do within yourself...



These are some of the things about you that you could work on to develop your resilience and become good at coping with difficulties. These include practical things such as:

- make time to enjoy life and have fun!
- meet up with friends
- join a youth club or activity group
- have a hobby
- take part in a family activity you enjoy
- take part in sports or go for a walk with friends
- listen to music that makes you feel happy, play an instrument, 'air drums', sing
- watch TV, use a computer or play on a 'gadget' for a short time
- phone or text a friend
- read a magazine or book, or write something yourself
- look after a pet, walk a friend's dog
- be kind to yourself... find new ways to relax and have fun
- be kind to someone, help someone, just because you can...!! Nothing feels quite as good as knowing we have a purpose in life!

## Look after yourself – act early

Get help if you feel that you are getting more worried. Try doing something you enjoy to help see you through. Write a 'worry list' of what's bothering you – break it down into small and manageable parts and tackle each one at a time.

If you are worried or sad, it may feel like a lonely time, but there are people who want to help you, even if just by listening.

## Why not think about this **BEFORE** you have a problem?

- Keep a reminder of the people and things you love on your mobile or in your pocket, wallet or purse to remind you if you ever need cheering up.
- Make a list of people you trust who would want to listen and help you. Can you share your feelings with your Mum and Dad or your carer? Think about family, other trusted adults and friends you can talk to.
- Make a plan about who you can tell, if needed. Remember, we all need to talk about things sometimes. If we know who we can talk to before we need them, it makes it so much easier.
- Keep this leaflet in a safe place. You never know, you may be on someone else's list and this could help them to build their resilience.



## MY PERSONAL PLAN

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

## Helpful suggestions to think about

- Thousands of people are overwhelmed every day but find ways to get through these intense feelings – like them, you can get through it.
- You just have to cope with one day at a time.
- Your distress can be a sign that you need to change something in your life.
- Keep this leaflet in a safe place. You never know when you, or someone you care about, might need it.

## Support organisations for people who are distressed, are experiencing suicidal thoughts or who self-harm and their families

Anything you tell them will be completely confidential. The volunteers are ordinary people who won't judge you. Some of the most popular organisations are listed below. You may contact as many or as few as you like – it's up to you and it's OK to contact more than one.



### PAPYRUS HOPELineUK:

Tel: 0800 068 41 41 (Mon to Fri 10am – 5pm and 7pm – 10pm & Weekends 2pm – 5pm).

[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

PAPYRUS aims to prevent young people taking their own lives. A professionally staffed helpline provides support, practical advice and information both to young people



worried about themselves, and to anyone concerned that a young person may harm themselves. POPYRUS has a range of helpful resources including HOPELineUK contact cards or call 01925 572444 or Fax 01925 240502 for a sample pack.

## **SAMARITANS**

### **Samaritans:**

Tel: 08457 90 90 90 (24/7); email:

jo@samaritans.org. [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

A 24/7 helpline service which gives you a safe space where you can talk about what is happening, how you are feeling, and how to find your own way forward. Samaritans volunteers are ordinary people from all walks of life who understand that there are sometimes things that you just cannot talk about to the people around you. They know that very often, with some time and space, people are able to find their own solution within themselves.

## **Specialist help for people who self-harm**

### **Get Connected:**

Tel: 080 8808 4994 (1pm to 11pm).

[www.getconnected.org.uk](http://www.getconnected.org.uk)

Offers help by telephone and email for young people (under 25) who self-harm.

**TheSite.org:** [www.thesite.org](http://www.thesite.org)

TheSite.org offers information and support to all the UK's 16-25 year-olds. It includes specific support and advice about self-harm.

**RecoverYourLife:** [www.recoveryourlife.com](http://www.recoveryourlife.com)  
Internet Self-Harm Support Community.  
It also provides support for any emotional problems, in addition to self-harm.

## Support specifically designed for children and young people

**Beatbullying:** [www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org)  
Works with children and young people across the UK to stop bullying. We help young people to support each other.



**ChildLine:** [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
Tel: 08000 111

If you are worried about anything, it could be something big or something small, don't bottle it up. It can really help to talk to someone. If there is something on your mind, Childline is here for you.

**Selfharm.co.uk:** [www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk)  
Email: [info@selfharm.co.uk](mailto:info@selfharm.co.uk). Website for young people aged 11 to 19 affected by self-harm.

**YoungMinds:** [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)  
YoungMinds is committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people. They have lots of information.



## Other sources of support for young people



**Big White Wall:** [www.bigwhitewall.com](http://www.bigwhitewall.com)

A safe, online, anonymous service for people over the age of 16. Get the support of others who feel like you, 24/7, and learn ways to feel better and how to get on top of your own troubles.



Community Advice & Listening Line  
Mental Health Helpline for Wales

**0800132 737**

Llinell Gyngor a Gwrandio'r Gymuned  
Llinell Gymorth Iechyd Meddwl ar gyfer Cymru

**Call Helpline (Wales):**

Tel: 0800 132 737. <http://callhelpline.org.uk>

A 24/7 service offering free emotional support and information/literature on mental health and related matters to people in Wales.

Text 'help' to 81066.



**CALM: Campaign Against Living Miserably:**

Tel: 0800 585858. [www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)

Offers help via the website and a helpline for men aged 15-35 who are feeling depressed or down. Callers are offered support and information. Calls are free, confidential and anonymous. The helpline is open from 5pm –

midnight, Sat, Sun, Mon and Tues, every week of the year. London callers may also call 0800 585858 or text 07537 404717, begin the first text CALM1.

**Consumer Counselling Credit Services:**

[www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org)

Free online support service providing anonymous and practical advice about money matters and debt.

**CRUSE Bereavement Care:**

Helpline: 0844 477 9400; email:

[helpline@cruse.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cruse.org.uk).

[www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk)



**Depression Alliance:**

Tel: 0845 123 23 20

[www.depressionalliance.org.uk](http://www.depressionalliance.org.uk)

Information, support and understanding for people who suffer with depression, and for relatives who want to help.

Self-help groups, information, and raising awareness for depression. Email:

[information@depressionalliance.org](mailto:information@depressionalliance.org)



**Depression UK:** [www.depressionuk.org](http://www.depressionuk.org)

A national mutual support group for people suffering from depression. Email: [info@depressionuk.org](mailto:info@depressionuk.org)

**Drinksmarter:** Helpline: 0800 7 314 314.

[www.drinksmarter.org](http://www.drinksmarter.org)

Call free and at anytime to talk to someone in confidence.

**Mind:** Infoline: 0300 123 3393 (Mon-Fri 9am – 6pm). [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

Provides information in a range of topics including types of mental distress, where to get help and advocacy. They are able to provide details of help and support for people in their own area. Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

**National Debtline:**

Tel: 0808 808 4000

[www.nationaldebtline.co.uk](http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk)

Free confidential and independent advice on how to deal with debt problems.

**NHS Direct:**

Tel: 0845 46 47. [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

For health advice and reassurance, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

**SANE:** SANEline: 0845 767 8000

(6pm – 11pm). [www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk)

Emotional support and specialist information to anyone affected by mental illness, including families, friends and carers. SANE offers 1:1

support via helpline and email services and peer support via an online Support Forum where people share their feelings and experiences of mental illness, as well as exchanging information about treatment and support options.

**Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (SOBS):**  
Helpline: 0844 561 6855 (9am – 9pm daily).  
[www.uk-sobs.org.uk](http://www.uk-sobs.org.uk)

**UK National Drugs helpline:**

Tel: 0800 77 66 00

A 24/7 service offering free and confidential telephone advice and information for anyone who is concerned, or has questions, about drugs.

**Support Groups:**

[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

Details of UK patient support organisations, self-help groups, health and disease information providers, etc... Each entry is cross-referenced and details are checked annually.

## Specific support for people living in Scotland

**Action on Depression** Tel: 0808 802 2020  
(Wed 2-4pm) E: [info@actiondepression.org](mailto:info@actiondepression.org)  
The national Scottish organisation working with and for people affected by depression.



**Breathing Space** Tel: 0800 83 85 87 open 24/7 at weekends (6pm Fri - 6am Mon) 6pm to 2am on Mon – Thurs – phone & web based service for people in Scotland experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety.

### **CRUSE Bereavement Care Scotland**

Tel: 0845 600 2227

W: [www.crusescotland.org.uk](http://www.crusescotland.org.uk)

**NHS24** – [www.nhs24.com](http://www.nhs24.com)

and 08454 24 24 24

Open 24/7 356 days a year.

### **SAMH – Scottish Association for Mental Health**

Tel: 0800 917 3466 E:

[info@samh.org.uk](mailto:info@samh.org.uk);

[www.samh.org.uk/home.aspx](http://www.samh.org.uk/home.aspx)

Info on how and where to find support, including help in your own area.

Online version of this leaflet providing support for people in distress and those trying to help them

[www.connectingwithpeople.org/ucancope](http://www.connectingwithpeople.org/ucancope)



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## The Royal College of Psychiatrists produces:

- a wide range of mental health information for patients, carers and professionals
- factsheets on treatment in psychiatry, such as antidepressants and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- many of our leaflets and factsheets have been translated into other languages including Arabic, Urdu, Polish and French.

A range of materials for carers of people with mental health problems has also been produced by the 'Partners in Care' campaign. These can be downloaded from [www.partnersincare.co.uk](http://www.partnersincare.co.uk).

For a catalogue of our materials, contact the Leaflets Department, Royal College of Psychiatrists, 17 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PG. Tel: + 44 (0)20 7235 2351 ext. 6259; Fax: + 44 (0)20 7 235 1935; Email: [leaflets@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:leaflets@rcpsych.ac.uk).

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## NO HEALTH WITHOUT MENTAL HEALTH



[www.rcpsych.ac.uk/info](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/info)  
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