

TOP TIPS

Top Tips and Resources to support your wellbeing

1 Be alert for signs of stress: staying self-aware at this time and noticing the symptoms, whether emotional or physical, is key. These can include: reduced concentration; less able to complete tasks; body aches; headaches, trouble sleeping or digestive problems. Mood changes may manifest as feeling more irritable, anxious or even angry. Talk about how you are feeling with friends, family, peers, colleagues - whoever you feel comfortable talking with - and ask them to be honest about any changes they might notice in you

2 Understanding and recognising the impact of Vicarious Traumatism (VT). New understanding of how trauma affects the mind and body has highlighted how the repeated empathic connection with people who are in pain or distress, can recreate symptoms very similar to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in the helper. To find out more about VT visit our Emotional Health and Wellbeing Hub.

3 An important step in self-care is to '**acknowledge your thoughts and feelings and open up**'. This is discussed as part of the FACE COVID approach [FACE-COVID-by-Russ-Harris.pdf](#). FACE COVID forms part of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. Being supportive and caring towards yourself is important and enables you to show compassion to others. You can find more information on this on our [website](#).

4 **Consider ways of switching off from work at the end of a shift**, this might include reflecting on the day, what went well, what didn't, if possible, talk to other people and de-brief before you leave. Some people find it helpful to have clear boundaries between work and home life, switching off computers, not taking work home as well as showering and changing into non-work clothes when at home. **Try to stick to daily routines at home** which can help you feel more in control and bring some normality and balance to your day. Make sure your routine includes **time for you to relax in a way that works for you**. Finding **things you're grateful for** and making a note of them every day, is known to enhance wellbeing.

5 Mindful moments: taking a few moments to pause and reset throughout your day, at work or at home, can make a real difference to feeling calmer and more centred. Try the STOP practice when you're feeling overwhelmed or need to take time out: This can take just a few seconds

- Stop what you are doing
- Take 3 deep breathes
- Observe – what you're feeling in your body, emotions, thoughts; relaxing or softening as you need
- Proceed with what you are doing

There are also some popular Mindfulness apps that you might find helpful such as [Headspace](#), [Insight Timer](#), [Pause Mindful moments](#) and [Calm](#)

6 Exercise and Mental Health: Find out how everyone can look after their mental health using exercise. This podcast is narrated by Dr Jonty Heaversedge, one of the BBC's Street Doctors. <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/podcasts-and-videos/exercise-and-mental-health>

7 **Sleeping well and eating healthily** are essential elements of wellbeing and resilience. Good sleep helps with clarity of thought, overall mood and decision-making. The [Sleep Charity](#) has many excellent suggestions for improved sleep at: <https://sleepcouncil.org.uk/> Eating regularly and healthily helps our mood, energy levels and overall wellbeing. The [Eatwell Guide](#) on the NHS website has advice to help you achieve a healthy, balanced diet.

8 **Make the most of your downtime to nourish yourself** outside the workplace. Even on the darkest of days try to find some enjoyable activity, such as physically distanced connection with others, spending time in nature or finding the joy in creating something new

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