



Getting your
oomph back
when your
energy feels
flat!

This is a self-help workbook aimed at mental wellbeing promotion and does not replace mental ill health intervention. Where appropriate, it could be used alongside professional help. Its aim to offer some hints and tips to bounce back when life has been challenging. There is a lot in it, so please take time to work through it. You deserve time to think about what matters to you.

Produced by COPE Scotland www.cope-scotland.org  @COPEScotland

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Introduction

Sometimes in life sad, bad and disappointing things will happen, things will change, and we may not like it. This workbook is about how we can learn to accept these things as a point in time rather than the totality of our whole life! Not a permanent condition or a worse 'new normal'.

It will not stop sad, bad, or disappointing things from happening nor will it stop things from changing. Everything changes sooner or later. You have the power to help see the positive side of change and make lemonade when life hands you lemons. Do you see change as a door slamming in your face or, a new door opening with lots of possible new directions? Surviving and thriving depend, in part, on how we adapt to changes.

If you are in crisis at the moment, it may not be the time to use this booklet. When you are not feeling so much in crisis, this booklet can help you - on your own or with a professional - to reflect on your own thinking and experiences in ways that help you feel better and improve the quality of your life.



“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.” Charles Darwin

Changes life can throw at us



Our experiences and how we think about, and deal with, them shape our lives. If we learn coping strategies to handle stressful changes, we may still be unhappy for a while, but can eventually recover. The COVID19 pandemic created big changes and hard choices that were neither predicted nor prepared for. We never expected such radical changes to our way of life. Everyone has been upset and confused by the harm it has caused and the changes it has brought.

That doesn't mean bouncing back is quick or easy-peasy. As the poet Maya Angelou wrote: *We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty.*



Internal and external changes

External changes are often the changes we have the least control over. COVID19 is an example of a stressful, harmful external change no one wanted or created. It has impacted where we could go, who we could be with, our work, our income and for too many people, there have been terrible impacts on their lives, their physical health and mental/emotional wellbeing. Even without this pandemic, there are many things, such as someone leaving us, which are largely beyond our control. Even when we have been doing all the right things, external changes we don't want or like can still occur. Life happens.

Again, Maya Angelou offers words of wisdom: "You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them."

Internal changes are ones over which we have more control. How we speak to ourselves and the kinds of messages we allow our minds to dwell on are the ones we can try to adjust in ways that would be helpful to our mental/emotional wellbeing. Whether we choose to exercise, maintain social distance, wash our hands, wear a face covering while COVID19 remains a reality reflects our internal thinking and decisions. So is opening up to a trusted person, showing kindness to others, as well as being compassionate toward ourselves. Even during hard times, we have the power to think and act in ways that improve our own lives and the world around us.

If you have experienced any of the situations mentioned or other events that have happened in your life that have been sad, bad or disappointing, then please record your thinking, feelings and actions in the box below. This may be difficult, but keep in mind that you survived this experience and are still here to write down what's true for you. If recording it triggers you to think you need some assistance, then seek it. Help is available and there is no shame in asking for what you need to keep going forward.

How well do you think you have coped with the experiences/situations you recorded above? No one copes perfectly all the time. Thinking back, what would change about your own thoughts and actions? Moving ahead, what do you believe will help you cope better?

Coping with change

Even if you think you didn't cope you survived it as you are here now. May be it was the passage of time that got you this far, what matters is, you survived, so please keep in mind that you have coped well enough to survive. That counts as good news. Be kind to yourself. Too often, we beat up on ourselves for the things we should have done but didn't - as well as the things we should not have done but did anyway! No one is perfect. We all at times have regrets and "what ifs". Don't let the disappointments of yesterday hold you back from the promise of a better tomorrow. How we speak to ourselves has a huge impact on how we feel and treat ourselves. The tips below can help you find, and use, that kinder inner voice. Further tips are available on the COPE Scotland website - www.cope-scotland.org

wee changes can make a **big difference** in helping you feel better
Steps to a friendlier inner voice which helps you achieve your goals

What is your inner voice like?

We all have one, speak to yourself as you would to someone you love and don't want to hurt, someone you want to see succeed and you care about



Drop I can't or I won't

Sometimes we set ourselves up to fail even before we start, if you want to feel better and it's in your interests to act use a motivating inner voice to say I can do this, even when its hard; as that's when you need an inner motivating voice the most

Start a new story in your head

Instead of worrying about what may happen when you try something new, focus instead on how wonderful it will be trying something new and how great you will feel after you have done this, even if it's a scary thing, even more important you tell yourself an upbeat story



Avoid people who pull you down

Sometimes the inner voices we hear reflect the unkindness of how others have treated us. Limit contact with people who pull you down, find new people who inspire you and you too be an inspiration for encouraging others

Remind yourself every day of things you are grateful for

Don't get caught up in all that is wrong or you fear; it changes the way you view the world, look for the good...it is there



Remember consult with your GP before making any lifestyle changes. For more information contact **COPE** on our website: www.cope-scotland.org



It may be useful to think about going through life as being on a journey, if you think about being on a journey in a car then sometimes we can either be a passenger or a driver? If you are the passenger then you can make requests about where you would like to go and which road you want to take to get there, but if the driver is not listening or doesn't agree with that request then you may find yourself going somewhere totally different!

If you are the driver, then you have control which destination to head for and which route to take. That means you have a great deal of both power and responsibility. It is usually wise to include passengers in the planning and decision-making. They might have good ideas about where to go and how best to get there.

The middle ground between a dominant driver and a passive passenger is to team up as a driver and navigator. That spirit of 'being in this together' often benefits everyone involved.

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." - African Proverb

It may be due to health or other challenges you need someone to help drive your car, if that's the case, then agree where you can go. We all need help sometimes, however, people also need to remember, we still have the right to choices. You may not be the driver, but you can be the driver/navigator.

Driver/Navigator or passenger

If you decide to be the passenger then that's ok, but be aware that you may end up in some very nice places that perhaps you would never have seen, but you may also find yourself in some not so nice place that you would have preferred not to have experienced.



What do you think may be disadvantages to being a passenger in your own life's journey?

What do you think may be the advantages to being passenger in your own life's journey?

What do you think may be disadvantages to be the driver/navigator in your life's journey?

What do you think may be the advantages to be the driver/navigator in your life's journey?

It may be thinking about the answers to these questions you wonder about making some changes, but find change is hard, here are some tips that may help:

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How to change your mind....



Start the day with a positive thought

May sound obvious but starting the day with a smile and thinking about something positive can make a huge difference to how you feel, tell yourself this is going to be a good day, tell yourself you are awesome, may seem strange at first but get into the habit and you will be amazed how much better you feel

There is no perfect day but they can be good enough

Okay, we all know the problems around just now and the challenges we can face in our lives, we aren't saying these aren't important of course they are, but, if we focus on everything that is wrong this will only make us feel miserable. Instead also look for what is good in the world, our lives and other people. Taking time to appreciate even the small goodness that's in the world, can make overcoming the obstacles just a little bit easier

Use laughter

There is a saying laughter is best medicine and humour can be a real survival strategy even for situations which can be very challenging, a smile or laugh even for a moment can lift us out of our suffering, so have a look at how you can introduce more humour in your life. Try laughter yoga, have a funny book, video, favourite TV programme or even just smile, especially when you don't feel like it as that is when you need a smile most



Be aware of how you talk to yourself

Because you are listening! We can all indulge in negative self-talk and it really does not do our mindset any good at all. Sometimes we need to improve at something and that's okay we are kind and recognise we maybe need to practice at something more. This is totally different from beating ourselves up and being unkind, speak to yourself the same way as you would speak to someone you love and would never want to hurt

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How to change your mind....

Learn to be Mindful



Being present in the moment can be good for our state of mind and wellbeing, often when we are sad we are thinking of something which has happened or when we are anxious we are thinking of something we fear may happen. Learning to be present and in the moment, doesn't mean we don't feel sad or anxious but we deal with these feelings in a new way and suffer less. Something as simple as focusing on our breathing, being aware of our surroundings can all help bring us into the moment. There is new colouring in books for adults again a technique to help you focus and switch off for a while and unwind

Be around upbeat people

Being around others who are upbeat and optimistic can help lift our mood, so look for opportunities to be involved with others who have a can do attitude and be the kind of person others seek out as a fellow can do kind of person who does know the world isn't perfect but would rather focus on what works and how that can work better than what's wrong, we all know what is wrong, be someone who decides they want to do something about that and help make it right



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Maintaining your vehicle

Being the driver does mean you have a little more responsibility i.e. filling the car with petrol, putting air in your tyres, choosing a route for the journey, keeping the windscreen clear and also learning to be flexible. What started out as a great idea may turn out to be a bad (or at least more challenging) one. There may be major roadworks you didn't know about, or long detours that were not announced or a destination that ends up being very disappointing because it is not at all what you expected/wanted.

This reflects the journey of life. Ultimately, you have a say in whether to be the driver, navigator, or passenger. May be because of health challenges, or, for other reasons beyond your control, you may need to give up driving solo and have to seek assistance (temporary or long-term) in getting where you want to go. Adjusting to a new reality can be hard. But, needing help sometimes doesn't mean you are no longer you. It just means you must make some adjustments in your thinking, planning and actions.

This workbook has been designed for people who can, and want to be, either drivers or navigators. This workbook is around supporting you to make some changes, a process you need to feel ready to engage in.

Our bodies are our cars; that is, they are how we move through the physical world. Both cars and bodies must have good and regular maintenance to keep going and perform well. And, of course, our minds and our emotions are as much a part of ourselves as our limbs and organs. Maintenance is usually achieved by what we do ourselves and what others do to aid us. Even professional racers depend upon mechanics and a team of helpers!

If keeping your body and your mind well maintained seems too hard right now, then please seek the support available to you right now. This booklet might be much more useful once you are 'back on the road' - and that is fine. It will still be here whenever you're ready.

If you are keen to be the best driver or navigator you can be right now, then this booklet is for you! Please continue to use this resource at your own pace.



Please write in the box how you look after yourself?

How to look after yourself

If you are looking after yourself well then good for you! You are ready to go on any journey you choose.

If you are not looking after yourself that well, then we can learn from here how to do this.

There are 8 points that we should consider for helping look after ourselves. Think about the car analogy again, a car needs regular care and servicing for it to run well, so do we. However, we aren't just a physical being; we are also emotional and psychological. The following tips, if practiced on a regular basis, can help us be more balanced on all levels. This balance will help us manage change. Think of it like suspension, sometimes the road is rocky but, in a car, with good suspension the bumps don't feel so bad.



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please put this where you can see it every day

 **Keep stimulants to a minimum**
Stay away from excessive amounts of tea, coffee, fizzy drinks with high caffeine levels and alcohol

 **Drink at least 2 litres of water a day**
Drink water or diluted juice from morning to evening this is important to keep your body hydrated.

 **Eat a healthy balanced diet**
Eat 3 meals a day never missing breakfast and have fruit or vegetables or fruit juice with every meal

 **Take time to relax every day**
Listen to a relaxation tape everyday or relaxing music, practice slow regular breathing techniques.

 **Take regular exercise be active**
Do some sort of exercise or activity at least three times a week, walking, swimming, housework anything which keeps you active.

 **Have fun on a regular basis**
Make an effort to have fun if you haven't in while after a time it will be effortless to have fun. Watch a funny video, go out with people who make you laugh, smile just for the fun of it.

 **If something or someone is bothering you do something about it**
If someone or something has upset you and you are holding onto this deal with it, don't just ignore it and allow it to fester.

 **Discover your stress trigger buttons and learn to self-manage them**
Some things we have no control over, however, we do have control of how we react. Being aware and mindful of what causes you distress can help you manage stress better

Remember consult with your GP before making any lifestyle changes. For more tips on managing stress and promoting wellbeing visit: www.copedigital.org

Please write how you will achieve putting the 8 points in place/what you are doing already on a regular basis

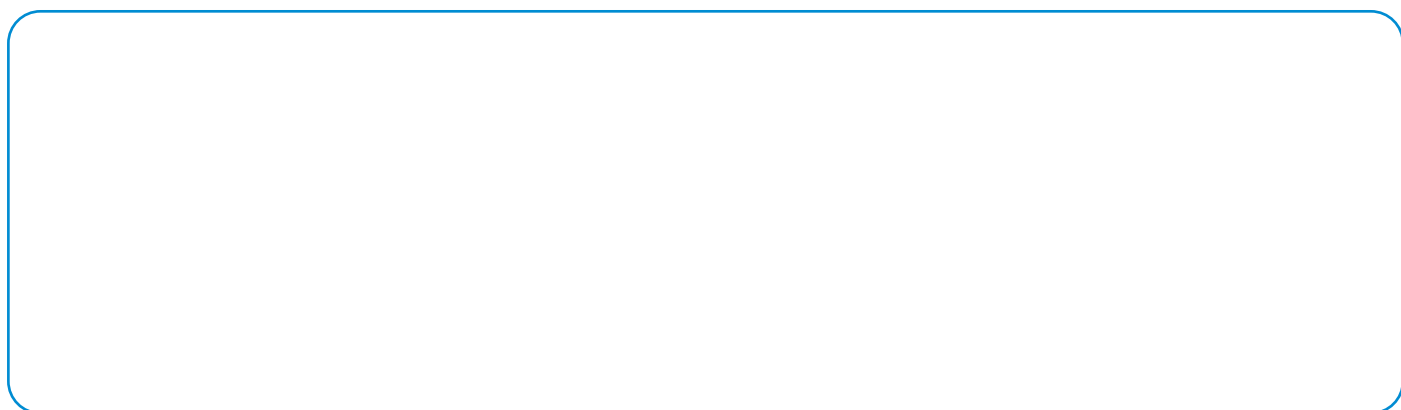
How will I reduce the amount of stimulating drinks I have such as tea, coffee, cola? Should I also think about reducing the amount of alcohol I drink?

How will I increase the amount of water based drinks I have?

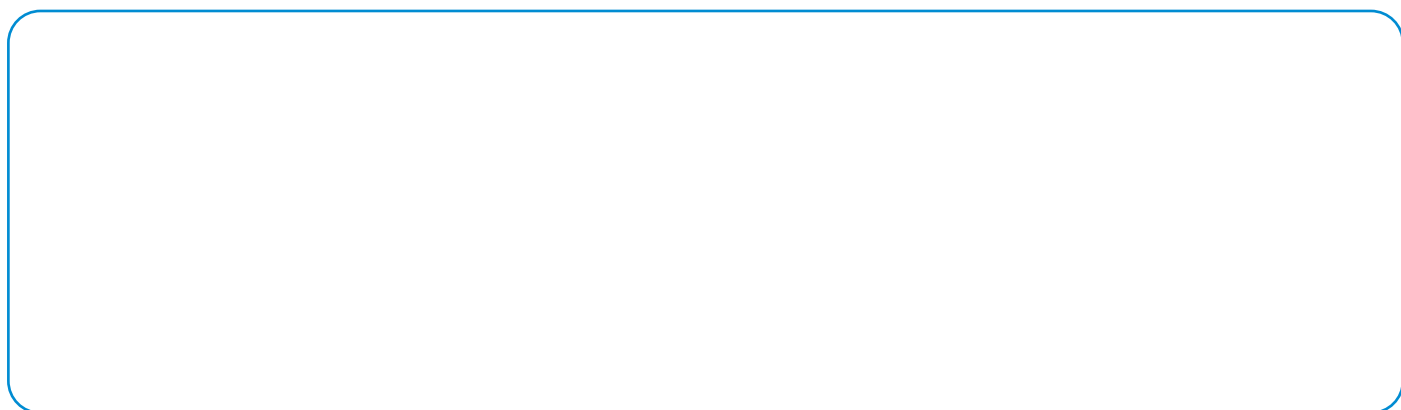
How will I ensure a healthy balanced diet?

Am I using unhelpful coping strategies, like gambling? Is this having a negative impact on me and/or my family and what am I going to do about it?

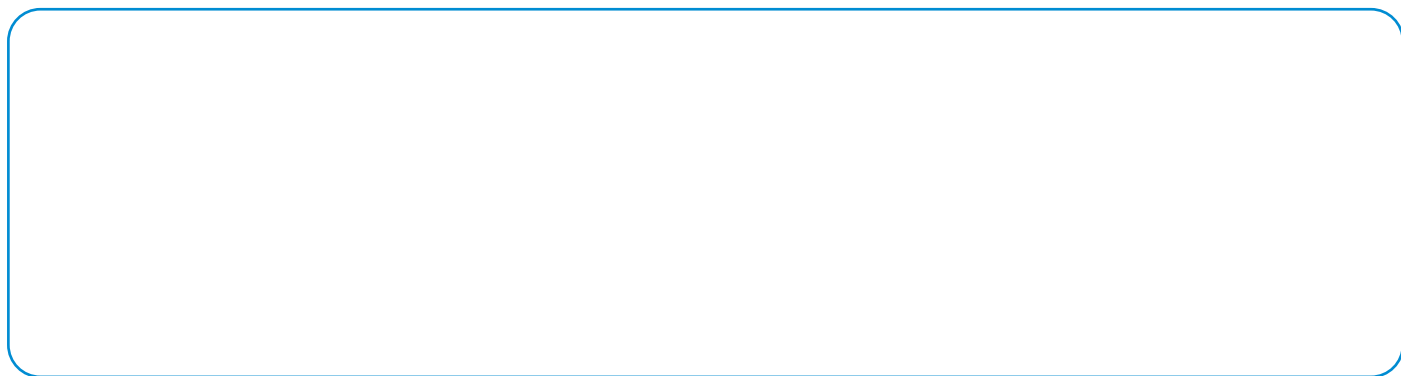
What will I do to relax? (May be visit COPE Scotland website check out the 3minute relaxation Video)



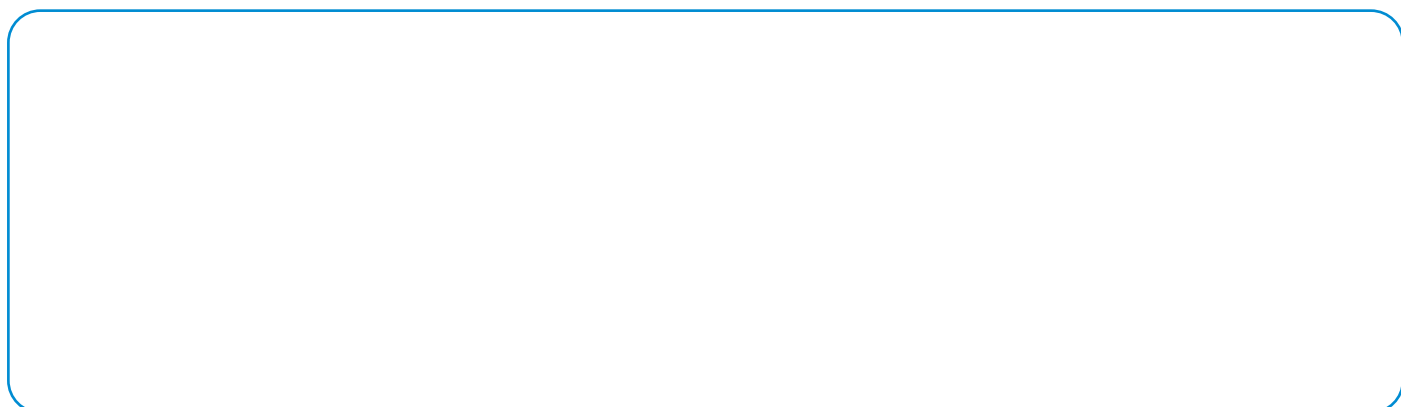
What will I do to get some/more exercise?



What will I do that will make me laugh? (May be visit the piece on COPE Scotland website on laughter and the laughter yoga video)



Who will I talk to if I have something on my mind?



What's the stress/worry/anger triggers I have?

What will I do to calm them down or better deal with them?

It's also really important to have a good night's sleep. Here are some tips on what to do to have a better night's sleep

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Tips for a better night's sleep



Make your bedroom a place to unwind

De-cluttering your bedroom, using relaxing colours, positioning your bed in a way works best for you can all help get a better night sleep

Leave social media out of the bedroom

If you want a good sleep don't have mobile phones, iPad, anything which pings to let you know you have mail or updates on social media this is a time to relax and unwind not socialise



Get into a routine

A routine before bedtime sends a signal to your mind you are getting ready to go to sleep, also, going to bed at a regular time helps programme your mind for sleep, work out a routine which is helpful for you and try and stick to it

No stimulants

Trying to get to sleep means you want to unwind, coffee, cigarettes, fizzy drinks can all be stimulating and make it harder to sleep so avoid at least an hour before bed. Also, using alcohol is not a healthy way to get a good night's sleep and overuse can just lead to more problems. Also try and not eat anything heavy to digest before going to bed as this too can keep you awake



Be active during the day

Exercising, going a walk, being active during the day all makes you more likely to feel tired so be more likely to go to sleep and have a good sleep once you are in bed



Remember consult with your GP before making any lifestyle changes. For more information contact **COPE** on our website: www.cope-scotland.org



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Tips for a better night's sleep

If you can't sleep get up

If you find you're lying thinking about not sleeping get up and do something boring, lying worrying about not sleeping will make it harder to sleep, get up and do something boring which will help make you feel tired and more likely to go back to bed and sleep, don't be tempted to have a cigarette or coffee this will only wake you up more



Talk to someone

If there is something on your mind keeping you awake then maybe speak to someone about that, your GP should be able to signpost you to support



Is your bed, mattress and pillows comfy?

It can be an expense we don't need, but, a good night's sleep is priceless, if your bed isn't comfy then getting a good night's sleep will be a challenge, if a new mattress is too dear maybe start with new pillows or a mattress topper



Wind down

To help get in the mood for sleep, have some wind down activities you do before bed, this may even include listening to a relaxation CD, there are a few to choose from on **COPE Scotland's** website just visit the sharing section www.cope-scotland.org or learn how to give yourself a hand massage and use some hand cream or essential oils again all part of a pre sleep ritual which can help you feel more rested and get a better nights sleep



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Doing all the things listed above can help us better look after our minds and bodies. that will help us deal more effectively with the challenges we have right now and those that will arise in the future.

Acting on these tips will equip you with terrific tools for triumphing over changes in your life or in the world around you that make you sad or angry; or leave you feeling either too wound up or too exhausted to take positive steps forward. If someone didn't take good care of their car, then how surprised should they be when it doesn't perform well or take them on a safe and smooth journey? Getting our minds and bodies in good shape is both possible and wise.

Here are some tips for feeling better. Change for the better starts with being kind to yourself and self-care, as well as acting kindly and helpfully toward others.

wee changes can make a **big difference** to help you be kind to yourself

Reading

Find a book you enjoy and read for at least 6 minutes each day, or, listen to a talkingbook. Pop into your local library which has a great selection of books and materials which are free.



Relax

Make time every day to do something to relax e.g. here is a link to a 3min relaxation video.
W: www.cope-scotland.org/index.php/videos/video/relaxation-in-just-3-minutes



Distract yourself

Find something which helps you get distracted from negative or anxious thoughts e.g. playing a game of patience, or many people have found Mindful colouring in very good for helping to switch off for a few minutes.



Diet

Make sure and drink enough water and eat regularly. Try and include fruit and veg every day in your diet.



Music

Listen to music which you find uplifting. Maybe make your own playlist to inspire you? This is an interesting site to visit:
W: www.seemescotland.org/young-people/resources/campaigns/run-your-feels-fmactivity/



Recycle, repair, reuse, upcycle

Find new uses for old items can be fun and caring for the planet can produce feel good hormones for us also.



Movement

Every day try and find some time to do a bit of movement, this can be: Dancing to your favourite song, walking the dog, playing with the kids, housework, gardening, chair exercises. Anything which helps you stay active.



Nature

Get out in nature, even looking at pictures of nature can be good for us, there is a lot of work now looking at Ecotherapy have a look here for more info.
W: www.ecotherapy-scotland.co.uk



Joy jar

Make a joy jar, or appreciation jar? Write things to inspire or offer joy on little bits of paper. Pop these bits of paper into a jar; you can also decorate the jar. Whenever you feel the need for inspiration, take one of the pieces out and have a read. Please make sure, whatever you put in the jar is something which brings you joy or inspiration when you take it out.



Hugs

Give someone a hug, cuddles are good for us. If you don't have a person to hug just now, hug a pet if they would like that. If no one to hug is in your life just now, hug a cushion, or cuddly toy, maybe invest in a weighted blanket. Maybe begin to explore ideas for building more connections in your life with other people. There are many opportunities to find and connect with new people, sometimes we just have to take the chance of going out and meeting them.



Be kind

Being kind to others is also good for us, there is a lot of work now looking at the benefits of kindness, including books on the subject. Why not visit your local library and read up on the incredible power of kindness, to ourselves, each other and the planet and all who inhabit it. Together we can build a kinder world.



Consult your GP if you have any health conditions before making any lifestyle changes. Find other tips for wellbeing at:
www.cope-scotland.org and maybe follow us on @COPEScotland for updates



You don't need to make changes for the better all at once. A wee step at a time can make a huge difference. This booklet was created by COPE Scotland because we know from personal experience and years of working with others that life can be tough and feeling overwhelmed or hopeless can be the result. We also have learned that positive changes do matter and are possible for all of us.

The personal promise postcard below is one way of capturing your own good intentions. Take a moment to think about a promise you want to make to yourself and capture it in the postcard.

We hope you will also take the time to watch the video "COPE Scotland message to the world" on the COPE Scotland website www.cope-scotland.org. It reveals what's behind this booklet. Most important, please believe that: **You do matter and we do care!**



To me,

This is to remind me, I count and have the right to make my own plans and have my own dreams. I made a promise to myself to:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Even if I forgot, this card is a gentle reminder of the promise I made to myself. To remind me of the opportunity to take steps; no matter how small, each day to help me achieve my goals.

Lots of love,

Me xxx 

Change happens

Quite often in life things can change and change without us even noticing. We look out the window and the sun is out. We decide to wear nice summer clothes, but by the time we get ready and leave the house it is raining. The weather person said it was to be sunny so why is it raining?

As discussed earlier, some things and events are *beyond* our control. In those cases, we have the power to change how we react to them. At the same time, there are things and events *within* our control. We then have the power to decide what will happen (for instance, will I eat in a healthy way today?).

If we think about life as a car journey, then we can expect that a flat tyre will happen somewhere sometime. If we are not able or don't know to change that tyre ourselves, then we will need to ask for assistance.

That can feel uncomfortable to many people. May be they are concerned they will be a 'bother' or a 'burden' or will be rejected or feel embarrassed about what they don't know or cannot do alone. While understandable, these reactions only make life more difficult than it needs to be. The tips on this page offer simple, practical ways for you to get past the barriers keeping you from asking for help. Everyone needs help sometime.

The other side of the coin is being sensitive and available to listen effectively and kindly to people seeking your help. Communicating - that is, talking and listening carefully - is a key to increasing everyone's good health and sense of wellbeing.

So, when we talk about change it would be much easier for ourselves if other people or things would change to suit us...But this is really unrealistic thinking, usually we have to change or learn to adapt.

wee tips on the art of conversation, how to open up and share and how to listen when someone wants to open up to you



Decide what it is you want to say and if possible pick a time and place where you can be heard e.g. deciding to phone a friend whose attention may be focused on their kids at that moment may not be a good idea, arranging a time where you can both chat undisturbed and privately may work better.

Practice some relaxation, it's easier to talk about how we feel if we are relaxed, something as simple as a 3min relaxer or some mindful breathing can make all the difference. There are examples of this on COPE Scotland's website.

Be kind if the person listening asks a question, this means they are listening and are trying to understand. Effective communication happens when both parties respect each other, trust each other, and feel safe to be open and honest about how they feel.

Recognise this is the beginning of opening up. It may take time to work through what is causing you distress. Sometimes things happen which take time to resolve, or, it may be you need time to come to terms with what is happening. But before any journey to a better place can begin, we need to find a starting point, and that can be as simple as letting someone know, "I am not fine, this is why". Recognising there is an issue, makes it easier to explore what next and this is easier when shared with someone else.

Let the person know what your intentions are. Sometimes people worry they need to fix things and so don't know how to listen as they are thinking about solutions. If you start by saying, "I don't need you to fix anything or jump in with a solution, I just need someone to listen then help me decide what next". You are setting the scene and letting the person know you want to talk and what you ask of them is to listen to you.

People aren't mind readers, so you need to take responsibility for being understood. Don't worry if you feel what you are saying is maybe all over the place. Sometimes when we do open up for the first time, we have so much to say it comes in a rush. Just be patient with the person who is listening and say "I know this may not seem to make sense, bear with me". Sometimes we need that space of just letting it all pour out so we ourselves can start to make sense of what we are thinking and feeling. This is why its important people know we want them to listen not solve anything, as sometimes we just need to be heard, even when what we are saying doesn't always make sense, even to ourselves.

It maybe what you are going through needs more than someone just to listen. They may suggest you also speak to someone else. Please don't feel that doesn't mean they don't want to listen, or, don't care, it just means they have heard and recognise it maybe helpful for you to share with someone else too. Talking to that person, may help you decide its maybe time to talk to someone who can offer professional help. Remember, its important people offering professional help are good listeners too.

How to listen when someone needs to talk to you as we can all at times have people want to share with us too

You are focused on the person you are listening too, not thinking about what you are going to reply, or, have for dinner, what else you need to do at work etc. At this moment your focus is on listening to the other person.

You are patient. Sometimes when someone has held things in for a long time they don't know where to start or seem to be all over the place. An effective listener will understand this and be patient realising it can be hard to talk and not forcing others to explain or go over things or hurry up. Giving the person space to realise they are being listened to and as result, may feel more relaxed and safer to share how they really feel.

Don't get angry or defensive an effective listener won't get angry or defensive with you if you challenge something they will reflect and will patiently try and work out what they misunderstood so you are both back on the same page. This is why sometimes we find it hard to talk to loved ones, and why sometimes we do need to speak to someone else about how we feel.

An effective listener is empathic as opposed to sympathetic. Empathy is about understanding the feelings of another and sharing them, it is around a shared connection about what it means to be human. Sympathy can be more around pity and sorry for someone else's misfortune and many of us don't want someone's pity, we do not want anyone to feel sorry for us, we want to be understood.

The person knows you are giving them your full attention with your eye contact and body language and perhaps occasional words of encouragement to continue, the person senses you are interested and want to hear more.

Non-judgemental, an effective listener knows, this isn't about their views, or what they think this is about. They want to listen to what we have to say, what is important and matters to us.

Don't bombard with questions. Effective listeners encourage us to talk. They don't bombard us with questions but to show they are listening may say things like "tell me more about", or, "I sense this has made you feel angry, sad, confused". Their words help you realise they are paying attention and they are trying to understand, and it also gives us a chance if they aren't understanding for us to say e.g. "no I am not angry I am just very frustrated"

Sometimes someone needs more support than a listening ear and knowing local support and services to help link the person can help you feel more confident to listen. Sometimes someone is so despairing they may think of suicide. Attending a suicide first aid workshop can help you be ready willing and able to offer a suicide first aid intervention.

Samaritans Freephone 116 123
Zero Suicide Alliance Online
Suicide Awareness Training
www.zerosuicidealliance.com



You matter, your wellbeing matters
Produced by COPE Scotland
www.cope-scotland.org
@COPEScotland



Deciding to change

Do you want to make a change? Remember by not changing anything it is like saying everything is perfect as it is!

YES ☐ NO ☐

Am I motivated to change?

Being motivated means that you think you see the benefits of change and are up for taking the next step.

YES ☐ NO ☐

Change takes effort. It's important to consider the change which matters to you. This will help you find the motivation to go for it. What's the change I want to see? Is it within my control? is it realistic? When (and how) do I plan to get started?

Sometimes it is helpful to think 'out of the box' about making changes. On COPE Scotland's website we have affirmation cards on the following:

Confidence | Life purpose

Wellbeing for young people | Life long learning

Picking a card at random might help spark new thoughts. This might lead you to pay more attention to something that has been overlooked or to discover a new way of thinking and acting.

These cards can be printed, and we do have hard copies. However, if you are using them online, then try closing your eyes and slowly moving down the list until you decide to stop. If that one doesn't speak to you, then close your eyes and try again. Since there are 52 cards, you are certain to find at least one that's right for you. We hope many of them will be useful to you. You can pick one whenever you need it, or, one each day, or, one each time you want to reflect on something. Find what works for you, enjoy.



Do you feel in control?

To change, we need to feel we have some amount of control over our own lives. This also means seeing, and believing in, our own power to make the changes we want.

It's great if you already feel some of your own power and control. If not, then think about why - and what might increase your sense of control.

That starts with seeing the difference between the things where you do, and do not, have any real power to decide. For example, you cannot control the weather, but you can decide what to wear outside. (and may be get in the habit of taking an umbrella if you are not sure!)

What are some things that matter to me, but I cannot control?

What things really matter to me that are mostly within my control (that is, my power to decide and do)?

Most of us don't like uncertainty. Often it is because change might seem too risky (what if it all goes wrong?) or we don't yet have the confidence to try something new when the path ahead cannot be seen clearly (what if I make a mistake?).

We never encourage people to be reckless. However, there are many choices between being reckless and being frozen in place (especially when that place does not make us happy or healthy). Sometimes, the main thing blocking our way forward is our own fear, negative thinking, and lack of confidence and self-belief. These are barriers we can learn to get past.

For instance, think about driving a car at night. Can we see the whole road ahead before we leave? No, of course not. However, we can plan our route in advance; accept there may be potholes or detours along the way; and, pay careful attention to what is happening as we keep moving in the right direction. Almost always, we end up getting to our chosen destination . . . safe, sound, and happy to arrive.

The journey of life is - or should be - much the same. Setting goals can help. That means thinking about where you want to go and how best to get there. Most journeys take place in our minds first -- before we try them in the world. Having goals and a path clearly in mind increases our sense of control. The tips sheet offers some ideas for goal setting.

wee changes can make a **big difference** in helping you feel better
Tips to setting better goals

Is it your goal?

Might sound obvious BUT achieving goals take motivation and if it's not really a goal you would choose for yourself then it's hard to get motivated so make sure any goal you set is your goal and something you really want to achieve



Is it realistic?

Now there is always a balance between confidence and having a go and not setting yourself up to fail, we can all set goals which are set so high they are unobtainable and then we feel disheartened, so once you decide on your goal maybe ask advice from others who can help you achieve it or a step towards it as sometimes its wee steps which get you there, dream big and go for it while balancing that with not putting yourself under undue pressure



Write it down



Take the time to really think about your life now and what you want to change, this can help you decide on your new goals, once you have decided to write it down, even do an inspiration board with pictures something to look at which will help motivate you to achieve that change

Timeline

Moving from dreaming to having dreams come true requires more than talk it requires action, having a timeline helps achieve goals as it focuses you on what you need to do within a specific time. Now it may be a big goal, no problem, just break it into smaller goals each with their own timeline



Remember consult with your GP before making any lifestyle changes. For more information contact **COPE** on our website: www.cope-scotland.org



wee changes can make a **big difference** in helping you feel better
Tips to setting better goals

Have a goal buddy



Having someone to share your goals with can help motivation, also it means there is someone who you can keep up to date with progress this helps in making sure you keep to your timeline. This is a buddy someone to offer support and encouragement

Don't fear to fail

We all fail all the time, we learn from what didn't work to try again, so don't worry if it all doesn't go to plan first time, review the plans for next time



Get advice



There are so many agencies, groups, and maybe people you know who can help you set and take steps to achieve your goals so find out what and who is in your area that can help you achieve the goals which are important for you

Focus on the positive

Imagine how good you will feel even taking steps towards your goals, believe they can be achieved and see it in your mind's eye how good that will be, remember, success isn't measured by the position we achieve but the obstacles we overcome seeking to achieve, sometimes we need to go back to the drawing board, doesn't mean we give up. If we need inspiration of what we can achieve think about others who have overcome significant obstacles to pursue a life dream



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Are you ready to change

Are you ready to take this journey?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Do you have any fears?

YES ☐ NO ☐

What are your fears?

Please remember, this is a guided self-help workbook. If you have serious physical or mental health issues, then please speak to, and seek help from, a health professional. **This workbook does not replace medical or other health care professional advice.**



Confidence and Self Esteem

Sometimes when we have fear about doing something it can be because our confidence or self-esteem is a little low.

Think of the car analogy. If you didn't believe the car you were about to travel in was able to make the journey, would you jump in?

If confidence is an issue for you please visit our confidence workbook and affirmation cards on the website.

Confidence Workbook



Developing a CAN DO attitude

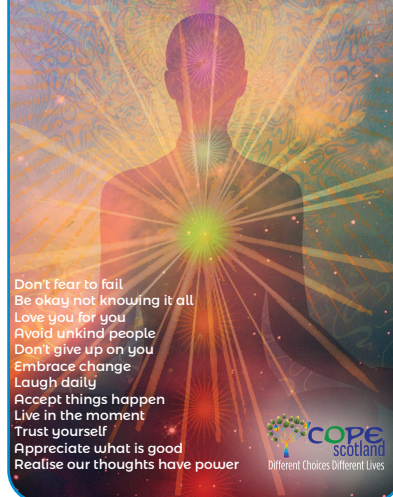
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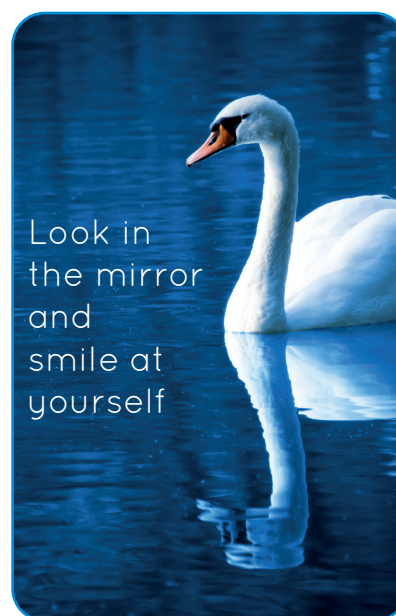
Be kind to your self confidence



Don't fear to fail
Be okay not knowing it all
Love you for you
Avoid unkind people
Don't give up on you
Embrace change
Laugh daily
Accept things happen
Live in the moment
Trust yourself
Appreciate what is good
Realise our thoughts have power



Look in
the mirror
and
smile at
yourself



Completing this page can help you see whether the way you see yourself is holding you back or making your life journey better. Please write whatever is really true for you in the two boxes below.

What do you think it is to be confident?

What do you think it means to have 'self-esteem' or self-respect'?



Things you like about you

If you are not used to saying nice things to yourself, remember and visit the **'what are you saying to yourself, because you are listening'** video on the COPE Scotland website and the **kinder inner voice tips sheet**. Learning to accept things you like about you, is very powerful for improving feelings of wellbeing.

Spend a few minutes thinking, and then writing, about things you like about you! This can be very powerful, for helping us feel better and achieve our goals.

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1) | 6) |
| 2) | 7) |
| 3) | 8) |
| 4) | 9) |
| 5) | 10) |

If you are finding it hard to name 10 things you like about you, then just write one or two now and come back later to fill in the rest. If even one or two feels too hard, please remember, and record good things other people have said to, or about, you. What have you said that someone else appreciated? What have you done for which you were thanked?



You don't have to do this workbook all at once, it's a tool you can dip in and out of, it's about learning more about you and how you can bounce back when life has been challenging, or is being challenging and you want to find ways not to feel overwhelmed

It's nice when others say something positive about us. However, it is at least as important to give yourself positive messages. Some people tend to ignore the positive, while taking negative comments and unkind words to heart. If how you feel about yourself is defined mostly by other people, then you are giving them too much power. Recall what's good about yourself - and don't keep those happy truths a secret from yourself!

Qualities of a confident person

Now can you write 10 qualities you imagine a confident person with high self-esteem/respect to have?

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

7)

8)

9)

10)

Take control of the negative chatterbox inside our own heads! AND learn not to be limited by what others think of us.

Negative Chatterbox

What is the same - and what is different - between the 10 things you wrote about yourself and the ten things you think are true for confident people? This offers you a starting point for changing what you tell yourself about you. You matter and you can develop the same qualities you see in people who are confident and have strong self-respect.



The negative chatterbox is an expression that refers to the thoughts we have about ourselves, events or situations that are critical and negative. Begin to learn to pay attention to what this negative inner voice is saying and how that affects your confidence and self-esteem. It is your own inner voice; you can learn to change it to a kinder one. This may take time, if, for a long time you have been critical of yourself, felt guilt or regret over paths taken, or, choices made, or, believed the unkind words of others. There are many reasons why we may have a critical inner voice. However, learning to use a kinder inner voice can make a difference to rebuilding our confidence to try again, and where necessary forgive ourselves for things we may have done differently, if we had a second chance. Bouncing back from adversity, gives us a second chance and if we made mistakes before, learn from them as we move forwards.

Managing your self talk

The following questions aim to help you become more aware of your inner voice. To begin to notice the positive things you say to yourself, or, to help you begin to notice the way in which you may be put yourself down. Consider these questions carefully to identify what negative things you say to yourself and what effect this is having on you, your confidence and self-esteem.

What do you say to yourself when things don't go to plan?

What do you say to yourself when you find yourself in a new situation? What effect does this have on you? Does it hold you back from feeling good about yourself? In what way?

What do you say to yourself when you look at yourself, for example, when trying on new clothes?

What effect does this have on how you feel and think?

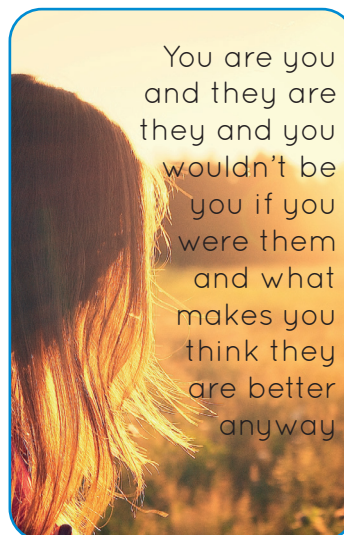
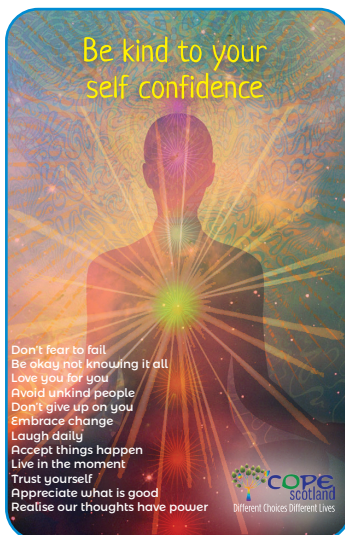
Why is it important for you to become aware of your negative self-talk (chatterbox)?

Positive Affirmations

Being aware of our negative chatterbox is the beginning of changing what we say to ourselves and how we feel about ourselves. Positive affirmations are statements we make to ourselves that are encouraging and positive. Positive affirmations help us to put things into perspective and build a sense of trust in ourselves.

This is often difficult to do to begin with, but with enough practice you will learn to believe positive things about yourself and your abilities, just the same way you have learned to believe negative things.

It is fine for you to use the affirmation cards presented earlier. You might even enjoy creating an 'affirmation jar' that you fill with positive messages about yourself - and dip into whenever you're feeling low or letting your chatterbox get the better of you. There are instructions on the COPE Scotland website, www.cope-scotland.org how to make your own affirmation jar. Also please make time to listen to the video 'what are you saying to yourself, because you are listening, on the site and, read the kinder inner voice tips sheet for ideas. Lots of wee changes can lead to a big difference in feeling better.



Okay now we have recognized negative self-talk isn't helpful how can we learn to have a kinder internal voice?

Examples of positive self talk (affirmations)

- ❖ I gave it my best.
- ❖ I can overcome this.
- ❖ I can handle this.
- ❖ I can beat this, I will not be beaten.
- ❖ Every day I am becoming more and more confident.
- ❖ I am a beautiful person.
- ❖ I am good company.
- ❖ I am a pleasure to know.
- ❖ I can change this situation.
- ❖ I can think positively about this situation.
- ❖ I have a lot in my life to be thankful for.

Now practice replacing negative with positive thoughts.

My negative thoughts	Positive thoughts to replace the negative thoughts

Relationships

Sometimes we allow others to hold us back from making positive changes in our lives that contribute to our sense of well-being, self-esteem, and confidence and how we feel about ourselves and what we believe ourselves to be capable of. That means we also have the power to reduce their influence and replace their negativity with our own positivity.

Relationships matter to everyone. They shape our lives, and our futures, for better or worse. Therefore, we need to consider what positive value other people in our lives bring to us and what positive value we bring to them. How much control of our life do we give to others? When we aren't driving or navigating our car who is? And are they a driver you would trust to get you where you want to go safely?

Are these people lifting you up or putting you down? Is their influence mostly positive on your own wellbeing or mostly negative? If you were starting over, then would these still be the people you choose to be your friends and your key relationships? Why or why not? Sometimes when its family, things can be more complicated, and while this workbook doesn't go into family dynamics in detail. If this is an issue for you, it may be something worth exploring through speaking to an appropriate health care professional.

Think of the friends and relationships you have in your life. Are these people “go for it “ friends or “be careful” friends?

Are they behind you encouraging you or do they put you down and criticize?






Do you spend a lot of time with friends complaining or do you spend time together seeking out new opportunities to share with each other?

Have a think about what a supportive friend means to you and capture that in the box

Think about the kind of friend you are to others

Remember, for a friendship to be in balance there are times when you both need to be there for each other.

Some things to think about

-  **A good friend likes you for being you.**
-  **There are other people who feel good by making others feel bad.**
-  **If you need to bounce back from a life challenge, what kind of friend will help and who may hold you back?**
-  **A good friend will tell others positive things about you e.g. how much they enjoy your company.**
-  **There are other people who like to share secrets with others, may be even gossip, be unkind on Facebook, or they make mistakes and don't take responsibility so try and deflect blame onto others may be even onto you**



Think about the people in your life. It's great if they are all true friends who improve your life (while you improve theirs) just by being there in a positive way for each other. Do you also have 'friends' who really aren't friendly or who are making your life difficult and stressful? You have a choice about who you spend time with - and you have the power to end harmful relationships and begin better ones.

Being alone doesn't have to feel lonely. After all, it can also feel lonely in the middle of a crowd, especially if the people there don't really care about each other and treat one another well. Are the groups you are part of now, the ones you want to stick with moving forward?

Please use the box below to jot down some ideas to remind yourself what you are seeking in a friend



Check out your current friendships

Now ask yourself: Do the people in my life have the qualities I am seeking from my friends?

YES

☐

NO

☐

If you have answered yes, that's great. These people will help you through the journey of life, and help you bounce back from difficulties.

Remember to regularly observe, and do a reality check, on their behaviour toward you - and also on your behaviour toward them. It is just as important to be a good friend as it is to have a good friend. Good relationships are a two-way street in which kindness, trust, respect, and enjoyment flow in both directions.

Are you at a time in your life when you would like to make new friends? If so, then please consider and write about what kinds of people you have in mind.

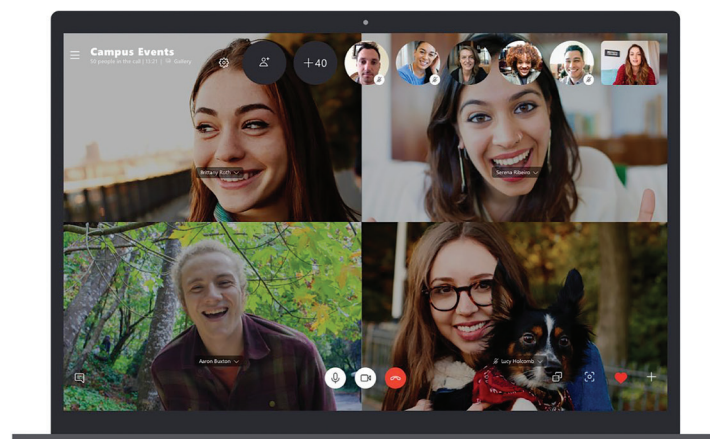


Making new friends

Where would you go to meet these people?

How would you be able to identify these people?

While social distancing measures are in place, this may be a challenge, but think how can you overcome this and still stay safe?

[illegible]

Relationships at work

It's important to recognise that the people we work with may - or may not - also be personal friends. Choosing our work colleagues is not as much in our control as choosing our friends. Yet, they can also influence our health and wellbeing, especially during hard times when we are trying to bounce back and not get flattened.

Here are some tips about the qualities you may want to find or nurture among the people with whom you work. They may also be qualities you are seeking in personal friends. And, of course, they are qualities you should try to show to others in your life:

- ❖ Reliable
- ❖ Flexible
- ❖ Caring and kind
- ❖ Sharers, not users
- ❖ Problem solvers, not troublemakers
- ❖ Responsible, not people who avoid blame and 'pass the buck'
- ❖ Respectful and worthy of respect
- ❖ Fair and good at 'give and take', not keeping score or holding grudges
- ❖ Clear communicators and really good listeners
- ❖ Team players

These may be useful to share at team meetings and even in family discussions. During social isolation with COVID-19 people may find they are spending more time than usual with others in the family. Having a conversation, about how everyone can pull together and be kind to each other can help. Remember blame just makes people feel defensive and can mean they take less responsibility for fixing things as they distance themselves from the problem.

Be curious about what the people in your life are feeling and experiencing. Build on what works with them and find even better ways forward in harmony with each other. Be an example of the kind of friend, co-worker, and family member you want to see in others.



How balanced is your life?

Below is the wheel of a balanced life. It is divided in equal parts. Although they may not be equal in your life, people who experience a sense of wellbeing tend to have something positive happening in each part of the wheel.

Please record below how much enjoyment or sense of achievement you have experienced over the past several months. For each wedge, 0=none, 5=some and 10=heaps. The places scoring zero might be the places to give some thought and take some action to improve the balance within your own life.



What do you need to focus on to get your life in balance?

I can get more sense of enjoyment or achievement through learning by?

I can get more sense of enjoyment or achievement through friends by?

I can get more sense of enjoyment or achievement through spending time with family by?

I can get more sense of enjoyment or achievement through spending time on work by?

I can get more sense of enjoyment or achievement through relaxing by?

I can get more sense of enjoyment or achievement through looking after my health by?

I can get more sense of enjoyment or achievement through spirituality by?

You have the power to start making these changes. One way to get going is to use the 'personal promise' postcards introduced earlier. What promise will you make to yourself today? Be sure it is one you intend to keep. Remember that even small steps can make a big difference.



NOTE TO SELF

- * Smile once a day
- * Make time to relax
- * Learn to let go
- * Keep hydrated and eat well
- * Stroll outdoors when you can
- * Speak kindly to yourself
- * Find joy in the simple things
- * When life is hard, remember this too will pass

To me,

This is to remind me, I count and have the right to make my own plans and have my own dreams. I made a promise to myself to:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Even if I forgot, this card is a gentle reminder of the promise I made to myself. To remind me of the opportunity to take steps; no matter how small, each day to help me achieve my goals.

Lots of love,
Me xxx


www.cope-scotland.org

Hobbies and Interests

Bouncing back from life's bumpy road, think about the benefits of having a hobby or new area of interest. They can help you find a focus that brings you relief and gives you a break from stresses beyond your control. Just like a body needs, sleep, a mind needs a chance to recover and pay attention to something positive.

New hobbies and interests can be useful tools for building an internal shelter from life's storms. They can create a rewarding routine, as well as becoming a new source of pleasure and accomplishment. Both help restore confidence and raise self-esteem. It can also be a way of discovering potential new friends and sources of support among others sharing the same hobby or interest. Please use the boxes below to capture your thinking and wishes.

Think of something you have always wanted to do?

Obstacles to new hobby or interest	What I am going to do to overcome the obstacles

What do you have to do to achieve this?

When will you do this? It's important to have a timeline, so that your good intentions don't all disappear into the pit called 'Someday'. You can, and will, find time for whatever truly matters to you.

Making time and being grateful

When life's road gets bumpy or we hit a big pothole, it is easy to feel overwhelmed and for our minds to fall into a dark place. One excellent way of getting back up is to count your blessings - and take time to focus on all the people, things, and parts of your life for which you feel grateful.

Appreciating life's treasures makes us feel better. When the world around you seems very challenging, it might seem difficult to seek and remember the good. But, you can do it and you will see it is worth the effort.

Below, please write the 25 -- yes, 25! - people and things you feel grateful for right now.

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1) | 14) |
| 2) | 15) |
| 3) | 16) |
| 4) | 17) |
| 5) | 18) |
| 6) | 19) |
| 7) | 20) |
| 8) | 21) |
| 9) | 22) |
| 10) | 23) |
| 11) | 24) |
| 12) | 25) |
| 13) | |

One way to fill that list is to think about what, and who, you would miss if they were no longer part of your life. Some of life's simple pleasures get taken for granted - from all the people whose labour made it possible for you to have tea to the joy of walking outside on a beautiful day. When your attitude is gratitude, the world starts to feel less scary and more welcoming.



Create your own journey, write your own map

Thank you for sticking with it and completing this workbook. It can remain a tool bag to carry with you - and revisit from time to time - as you continue the journey of your life. We hope it will help face life's challenges with a stronger sense of your ability to cope and eventually succeed in reaching the destinations of your choosing.

Sometimes life is challenging and things are beyond our control, however, if we look after ourselves, be aware of the choices we do have, seek help when we find we need it, appreciate the simple things in life, we may find we can bounce back and feel better, even if the challenges are still there. In the car of life, sometimes there are bumps, sometimes we lose the map of where we are going. But learning to look after ourselves, improving our resilience to life's bumps and asking for directions when we feel lost can help.

The final tool to offer you is mindfulness. Mindfulness can help you be in the moment; find what was is good; be aware of what is true for you; and, prevent you from feeling overwhelmed. COPE Scotland's website can provide many ways to be and stay mindful along your journey. If you choose mindfulness, then you have secured the grounding and firm foundation from which you can bounce back and gain a better life.

You do matter. People care. I care

Hilda

"Thanks to all those who offered their insights and comments in the production of this booklet including our partners at QNIS. Working together we achieve more than we can alone."



Learn to Live in the moment
wee changes can make a **big difference** in helping you feel better

Mindful breaths
A few times a day observe 5 Mindful breaths, just normal slow breaths but bring your full attention to your breathing.

Whatever you do give it your full attention
Take your time don't be thinking about what you plan to do next or what you have or haven't done, be in the moment.

Decide what is important to you
Weed out that which isn't kind to you or others. Let your children and those close to you know they are loved, find new ways to let you know you also love and care about yourself.

Learn to be calm in situations
Try not to react defensively and with anger, find solutions don't focus on problems and blame.

Pace yourself
Don't have huge to do lists cramming every minute with activity, give your life a chance to pause and breathe rather than always be panting.

Learn to live in the moment
The past is a different country we don't live there anymore, and the future has still to be, so plan for it, don't worry about it. Realise it's hard to be content in the moment when you worry about the future or get upset and angry by the past.

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Learn to Live in the moment
wee changes can make a **big difference** in helping you feel better

If you hurt or are angry find out what needs to change for you to let this suffering go
Learn the art of deep listening, when you talk to someone be with them, give them your full attention, listen to your children and actually hear what they say.

Eat slowly and savour your food
Drink water feel how cool and refreshing it is, bite into fruit and appreciate how sweet and juicy it is. Give what you are eating your full attention, don't talk between bites just take it slowly and enjoy.

Be in the moment
Savour life and eat it with your eyes and ears, become aware of bird singing, flowers, the noise of wind in the trees, the world is a magical place full of interest and beauty learn to see that.

Make any chore a chance to meditate
Do the chore slowly, methodically and with the activity as your sole focus, this can be from working on a report to cleaning the toilet. Be there in the moment giving it your full attention.
Make focusing on the present a habit, remember it's called the present because it's a gift.

Visit the use your senses to relax and be in the moment for more tips and ideas on www.cope-scotland.org.

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