

April 2024

Stress Awareness Month is held each April, to increase public awareness about both the causes and cures of stress. This year The Stress Management Society has chosen the theme 'little by little, a little becomes a lot'. For more details [click here](#).



We all know what it's like to feel stressed – being under pressure is a normal part of life. But becoming overwhelmed by stress can lead to mental and physical health problems or make existing problems worse.

Millions of people around the UK are experiencing high levels of stress, if you are one of them, it may be damaging your health.

Stress isn't a mental health condition, but it can cause a mental health problem, like anxiety or depression or it can cause an existing one to get worse. Stress can also affect you physically, it can cause headaches, insomnia, tiredness, or stomach problems.

Individually we need to understand what is causing our personal stress and learn what steps we can take to reduce it for ourselves and those around us. National Stress Awareness month is a great opportunity to take a moment to do this and think about our own wellbeing.

What you can do to help manage worries and stress

There are various steps you can take to cope with being under pressure, remember, different things work for different people.

Breathing exercises – stop and take a breath, learn a new breathing technique like box breathing or baby breath.

Write down your worries and concerns – this may help process your thoughts and emotions. You can then read the worries back and try to think of them from a different perspective.

Keep a daily routine – our overall wellbeing relies on our daily routines, these also help with sleeping & eating patterns. This is why it's important to ensure you and your family have structure in your day. They can also include things to look forward to.

Identify your triggers and take control – working out what triggers your stress can help you anticipate when you may feel stressed and what you could do about it in advance.

Organise your time – making some adjustments to the way you organise your time can help you feel more in control and able to handle the pressure you are feeling.

Keep active – exercise can help clear your head and then let you deal with your problems more calmly. Go outside to exercise, as fresh air and spending time in nature can really help.

Stay healthy – as well as exercise it's important to maintain a healthy diet and ensure you are getting enough sleep.

To read our sleep guide [click here](#)

To read our Healthy Eating guide [click here](#)

Talk to other people – friends, family & colleagues can help support you through the stress you

are feeling, you may even have a laugh and start to relax. You may also want to consider talking to a professional counsellor.

Do something you enjoy – spending time doing something you enjoy will take your mind off how you are feeling. Everyone needs to take time for themselves, it can be as simple as having a bath or reading a book.

Avoid unhealthy ways to cope – many people use alcohol, smoking, chocolate and gambling to try and relieve the stress they are feeling, none of these things will help in the long term, use healthy coping strategies like going for a run, listening to music or walking the dog.

Challenge yourself – learning new skills and setting yourself new goals will help build your confidence and make you feel good about yourself.

Help others – think of others in your local community, who may need help with small tasks, like shopping or volunteer to help a worthwhile cause, like litter picking or the local food bank. People who help others tend to be more resilient.

Keep informed – whilst it's important to keep up to date with the latest news, it can be overwhelming, so in order to manage any feelings of stress and anxiety consider only checking the news and social media once a day. Ensure you stick to trustworthy sources for the latest information.

Dealing with change is hard for everyone and can be extremely stressful.



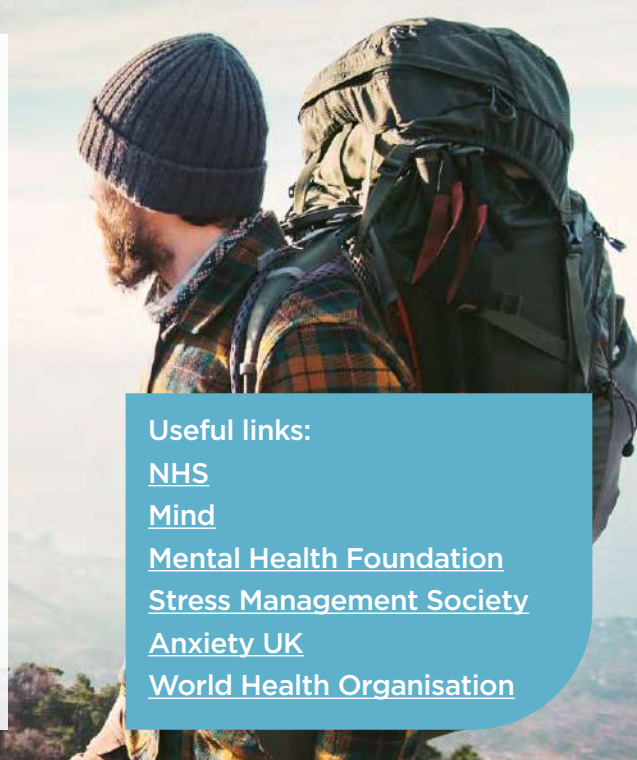
Keep positive – it's very easy to focus on the negatives of a situation. But it's important to stay positive. You could also think of all the things you are grateful for, write down or say out loud 3 things that went well each day. Use these positive statements to create a positivity jar with your family.

Try Mindfulness – mindfulness can help reduce stress, it can also give you the space to respond calmly under pressure. For more details click [here](#).

Address some of the causes – where possible improve some of the issues that are putting pressure on you.

Accept the things you can't change – it's not easy, but accepting that there are some things happening to you that you can't do anything about will help you focus your time and energy elsewhere.

Be kind to yourself – don't be too hard on yourself, look for positives in your life and make time for self-care.



Useful links:

[NHS](#)

[Mind](#)

[Mental Health Foundation](#)

[Stress Management Society](#)

[Anxiety UK](#)

[World Health Organisation](#)

Worrying about money can be extremely stressful and may lead to mental health conditions. Police Mutual are here to help. We want to break down the stigma surrounding debt and get people talking about money.

We've teamed up with **PayPlan***, one of the UK's leading free debt advice providers, who offer free and confidential advice to anyone in serious financial difficulties.

They're able to advise you on a range of debt solutions suited to your individual circumstances, helping to protect you and your family with a sustainable way to manage your debt.

Get free and confidential help to combat your debt, call **PayPlan*** on **0800 197 8433**.

Police Mutual Services

Our Care Line Service provided by Health Assured can offer advice and information, helping with a range of concerns including emotional support.

Wisdom App



Download the **Wisdom App** provided by Health Assured and register today – your code is **MHA107477**



To read more of our wellbeing guides take a look at our **Wellbeing Hub** [here](#).

Call us **0151 242 7640** Visit policemutual.co.uk
We're open from **9am - 5pm Mon - Fri**

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