



LET'S

TALK ...

mental health

Student workbook



SOLENT
UNIVERSITY
SOUTHAMPTON

The **Let's Talk Mental Health** workbook has been created by and for the use of the Solent University Mental Health & Therapy Team as part of Step into Success .

Contents

- Mental Health 4
- Wellbeing Seesaw 7
- Self-Care- MAGIC 10
- Mindfulness 11
- Activity 13
- Generosity 14
- Interested 16
- Connected 17
- How can I get support? 21
- Urgent support 21

Life can be challenging, and it's natural to sometimes feel angry, lonely, sad, worried and anxious.

Mental health is about having emotions that make sense in the context we are in and handling those feelings well.

Our emotions can feel very uncomfortable, which makes us want to ignore them- however when we ignore or suppress our feelings it intensifies those emotions over the long-term.

Giving yourself time to acknowledge and experience your emotions can be beneficial and help you understand yourself more.

If you feel like you are struggling, it could be worth getting some support. You can speak with the GP, ask your teacher what support may be available at school or chat with an adult you trust.

If you want to find out more about mental health, visit: www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person

Talking about your mental health with the people you trust is often the first step to feeling better.



SUN club
day

Wellbeing Seesaw

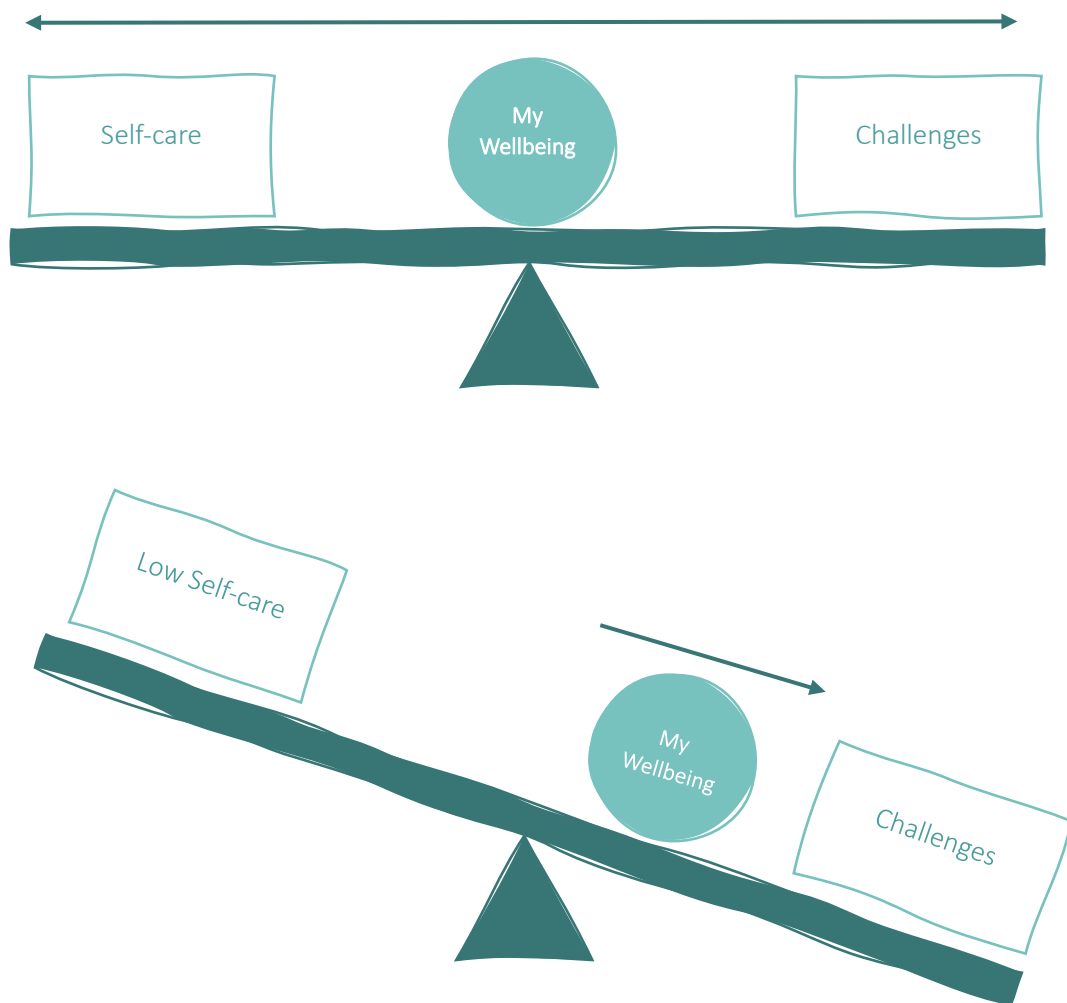
The wellbeing seesaw is a visual picture of how we can balance the challenges life throws at us with good self-care, and how this effects our overall wellbeing.

When we improve our self-care, it can help us cope when things are difficult.

When we ignore our self-care, the challenges can weigh us down more easily.

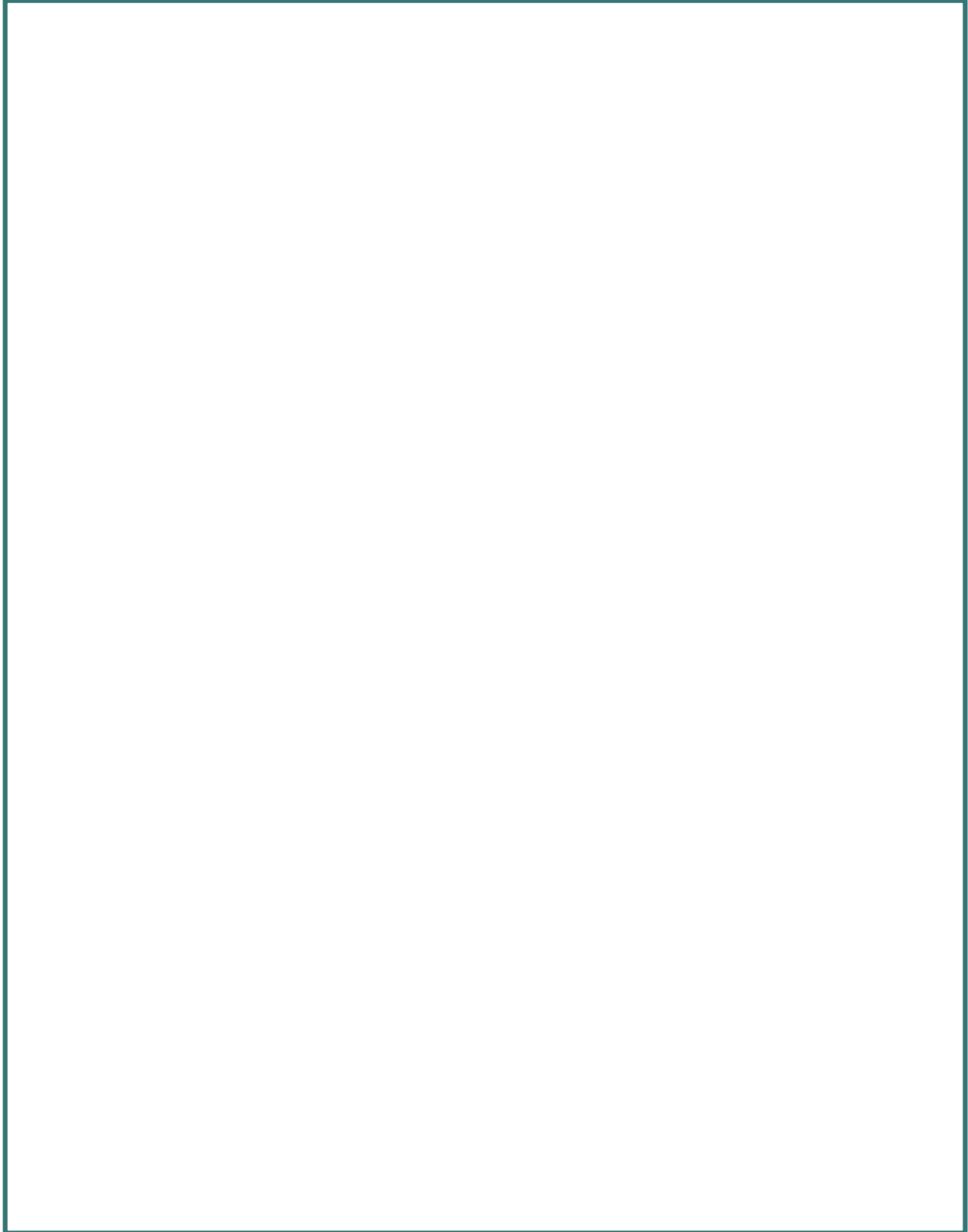
The seesaw image is a way of recognising when things are feeling off kilter, however it is natural for our seesaw to move in and out of balance as we go through life.

Top Tip! *It is unhelpful to compare your seesaw with someone else's. It may seem that other people are coping more easily, however they may not be facing the same challenges as you!*



Wellbeing Seesaw

How does your seesaw look at the moment? Have a go drawing it out below....

A large, empty rectangular box with a dark teal border, intended for drawing a seesaw.



Self-care is the practice of taking action to support our wellbeing and happiness, particularly during periods of stress and difficulty.

5 ways to wellbeing is an evidence-based approach that helps to improve our wellbeing, both physically and emotionally. This supports us to feel good and function well!

The 5 ways to wellbeing are MAGIC!

Mindfulness

Activity

Generosity

Interest

Connection

Mindful- Mindfulness is about acknowledging what is going on around us and within us without judgement of what is happening, it relies on our body's senses. Mindfulness has been proven to be an effective tool against stress and is a great method to become more self-aware.

Top tips:

1. Tech free times to be more present.
2. Journalling can be an excellent way of processing emotions and finding patterns in emotions and behaviour.
3. Meditation- can help you to focus more.
4. There are several apps that help you to become more mindful: **Calm, head space, Mindshift, Mood gym, smiling mind, chill panda, 1 giant Mind.**
5. PMR (progressive muscle relaxation) Can help you to relax and become more mindful of your body. It is a good technique to help with sleep.



Being active and exercising releases stress-busting endorphins (the happy hormone) and lowers the body's production of stress hormones. It improves thinking and memory skills, which help in school and social situations.

Exercise also reduces the risk of depression and helps us feel more energetic and have a positive outlook on life.

Top Tips!

1. **Make screen time count-** Build in movement. Do some crunches or other exercises while watching Netflix. Keep some dumbbells or elastic bands next to the TV to use during advert breaks. Schedule activity breaks from gaming.
2. **Ditch the lifts-** choose to take the stairs whenever possible
3. **Get inspiration online-** Lots of sports people and fitness experts put out regular videos on Instagram and YouTube, often requiring no equipment except comfortable clothes.
4. **Find something you enjoy-** dancing with friends, having a kick about.. have fun!
5. **Get a mate involved-** research shows that we are more likely to keep doing activities long term when someone else does it with us!

There's been lots of research about the effects of taking part in social and community life. Some studies have shown that people who help others are more likely to rate themselves as happy. By being generous it can help to create positive feelings and a sense of reward and give you a feeling of purpose and self-worth.

Top Tips!

1. **Offering to help someone** – having the ability to support someone with a simple task/activity can often make their day and leave you feeling good too!
2. **Give to your community** – volunteer, donate to charity, contribute something to a foodbank, make up a Christmas shoebox
3. **Give your time**- Being generous with giving your time to others is often free yet priceless
4. **Try and do one kind thing each day**

**Sometimes life gets tough
and it can be difficult to cope
with how we're feeling. But
remember, you are not alone.**

We're always learning new things – often without even realising it. Sometimes when we're learning so much on a school day, we might feel like we have little space left in our brain for other interests, but learning about the wider world can help to make you feel more in control of your life.

Top Tips!

1. **Learn something new regularly** - a new word each day, a new recipe- Learn about something just because it interests you not because you need to know the answer for an exam
2. **Find out more about your classmates** – you may sit next to a peer every day and know next to nothing about them. Challenge yourself to have a conversation to find out more about who they are
3. **Try learning a different language**- learning languages helps to give a window into different cultures, helps to know some helpful words for your holidays and improves your cognitive abilities

Connecting with other people is important for our wellbeing. Spending time with friends and family can help us:

- feel like we belong,
- get support when needed
- build confidence
- share positive experiences.

When you are struggling or feeling down, it may not always feel like it but there are people in your life who you can reach out to for support.

Use connection to help you through difficult times.

Top Tips!

1. **Write down all of the people you speak to in a normal week** (from the bus driver to your parents, there will be quite a few!). Next, list the ones who make you smile the most, and who you find the most helpful- Remember these people, as connecting with them is really important for your wellbeing.
2. **Ask for help:** It is okay to not feel okay. Note down the three people that you can call or message if you ever feel lonely or upset.
3. **Remember what you can control.** Sometimes we can't control the things that are happening around us, which can be upsetting and frustrating. To help yourself feel better and more in control, focus on what you can change. For example, how could you make someone else's day better- could you call them to check how they are, or send them a funny meme to let them know you are thinking of them.
4. Find an activity that makes you feel good and join a club- at school or outside of school!



What Does Your MAGIC Look Like?

	What do you currently do?	What else could you do?
Mindfulness		
Activity		
Generosity		
Interest		
Connection		



If you are struggling you can speak with the GP, ask your teacher what support may be available at school or chat with an adult you trust. Below are some other organisations that can help.

Young Minds- www.youngminds.org.uk

The mental health charity for young people. They can help you understand more about how you're feeling, give information about a mental health condition and help you to find out what support is available to you.

Students Against Depression- www.studentsagainstdepression.org

Students Against Depression is a website offering advice, information, guidance and resources to those affected by low mood and depression.

The Mix- www.themix.org.uk

Essential support information on all aspects of life for people under 25.

Anxiety UK- www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Advice and support on an array of anxiety disorders.

FRANK – www.talktofrank.com

Confidential support, advice and information about drugs, their effects and the law.

Hub of Hope – www.hubofhope.co.uk

A UK-wide database of mental health charities and organisations offering advice and support.

Kooth – www.kooth.com

A free safe and anonymous place for young people to find online support and counselling.

No Limits – www.nolimitshelp.org.uk

No Limits is a charity offering free and confidential information, advice, counselling, advocacy and support to children and young people under the age of 26 in Southampton and Hampshire.

Teen Safe House – contact via www.nolimitshelp.org.uk

Support group for young people aged 13 to 17 suffering from confidence or anxiety issues. This can be anything from feeling different, invisible, misunderstood, hearing voices, depressed, struggling to cope, lonely, wanting to hurt yourself, stressed, anxious. The group meets weekly in a safe Southampton city centre location and is a great way to make new friends and talk about things that really matter to you.

Emotional Resilience – contact via www.nolimitshelp.org.uk

Emotional Resilience is a 9-week group for anyone aged 11-25 and living in the SO14-SO19 postcode. This group covers understanding and identifying emotions, the responses to stress and physical effects of emotions, negative thinking, triggers, self-esteem, and self-compassion. This is a safe place to meet people with similar feelings and experiences.

Urgent Support

If you're feeling overwhelmed and like you can't cope, you can:

Ring HOPELINEUK on 0800 068 4141 or the Samaritans on 116 123

Text THEMIX to 85258 for free, 24/7 support.

If you feel like you may attempt suicide, or you have seriously hurt yourself, you can:

Call 999 and ask for an ambulance.

Tell an adult you trust and ask them to call 999

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