

Wellbeing for Parents and Carers

As parents and carers, our own wellbeing is so important, but in a busy life it can be difficult to find time to look after ourselves. **We cannot 'pour from an empty cup,'** so the more we can 'fill our own cups,' the more we can 'pour' for others.

Here, we have a collection of wellbeing ideas to support busy parents and carers. Some are short, some take a bit longer, some can form part of a proactive wellbeing routine, and some can be used when you feel stressed or overwhelmed.

We have tried to create a variety so you can find some that work for you.

Parents and carers – these resources have been picked just for you!

This resource list has a complimentary list for Children, Young People, and families. The Children and Young People's list includes some activities to do jointly with your children and some for them to have a go at independently.

Breathing Techniques

There are several different breathing techniques and exercises that can support you to feel calmer and less overwhelmed.

Here are a couple to try out:

- **Square breathing** – breathe in for the count of 4, hold for the count of 4, breathe out for the count of 4, hold for the count of 4, and repeat, and repeat...
- **Hand breathing** – With a relaxed hand held out in front of you and fingers slightly apart, breathe in and trace up the outside of the thumb pausing at the tip. Then breathe out and trace down the thumb pausing at the hollow between thumb and index finger. Breathe in again and trace up the index finger pausing at the tip, breathe out and trace back down pausing at the hollow. Continue with all the other fingers.



Gratitude Practices

Reminding ourselves of what we are thankful for can be a powerful way of encouraging positive thinking.

Here are some gratitude practices to try out:

- **10 (or 5) finger gratitude exercise** – hold each of your fingers in turn and count out the things you are grateful for today. They could be 'big' things like your family or your home, or 'small' things like seeing a robin sitting on a fence or laughing with a friend.
- **Gratitude Journal** – write or draw 3, 5 or 10 things you are grateful for each day in your journal.



Wellbeing Baskets

Creating your own personalised wellbeing basket (or box) can help in several ways. By keeping together things you know help your wellbeing, it can encourage more frequent use.

By adding or rotating items in the box, you can keep the ideas fresh and engaging.

You could include calming things:

- To **look at** – like lights, books, and mindful colouring
- To **touch** – like crystals and worry stones
- To **listen to** – like music and chimes
- To **smell** – like essential oils and room sprays
- To **taste** – like herbal teas and dark chocolate

We have examples of wellbeing baskets at our drop-ins for you to have a look through.



Music

Music can be a powerful boost to our focus, productivity, and mental health.

- Try playing your favourite uplifting tunes next time you feel stressed or overwhelmed (and perhaps sing along!)
- You could also create different playlists – for example, one to uplift/energise, one to focus, and one to feel calm.

Follow the link below for ideas for playlists to support focus and productivity:

[Music for Healthy ADHD Brains: 8 Songs for Focus](#)

Five senses grounding

The 5,4,3,2,1 grounding technique can help when you feel stressed or overwhelmed.

- Begin with deep breathing through your nose and mouth then name:

5 things you can **see**
4 things you can **feel** or **touch**
3 things you can **hear**
2 things you can **smell**
1 thing you can **taste**

- Or follow the link to be guided through this process on a virtual walk through the woods: **[Try this 54321 grounding exercise on a nature walk.](#)**





Mindful eating or drinking

In our busy lives, we often pay little attention to what we are eating and drinking. This activity encourages us to eat and drink something we really enjoy with 'a beginner's mind' (imagining this is the first time we have come across this item) and using all our senses.

Below is a link to a guide to mindful eating of a raisin, but you can do this with any food or drink you choose.

Mindful Eating Exercise

Body Scan

The body scan is a mindfulness meditation practice focusing on each part of your body in turn. The link below guides you through a 15-minute body scan.

Mindfulness Meditation Body Scan

Yoga and Mindful Movement

Moving in a mindful way can reduce physical, emotional, and mental stress.

Below are links to two of Yoga with Cassandra's yoga challenges:

Morning Yoga Challenge: 10 min of Morning Yoga for 30 DAYS! (DAY 0 MORNING YOGA MOVEMENT) – YouTube

EVENING YOGA CHALLENGE: 15 min of Bedtime Yoga for 30 DAYS! (DAY 0 EVENING YOGA MOVEMENT)



The 3 Minute Breathing Space

This short mindful meditation can be used proactively or at time of stress and overwhelm. It has 3 steps – noticing what is happening now (thoughts, sensations, etc.), narrowing the focus on to the breath alone, and finally widening the attention to the body as a whole.

Follow the link below for a 3 Minute Breathing Space guided by Jon Kabat Zinn (founder of Mindfulness based stress reduction).

The Breathing Space by Jon Kabat Zinn



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