

PROTECTING YOUR EMOTIONAL HEALTH

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE

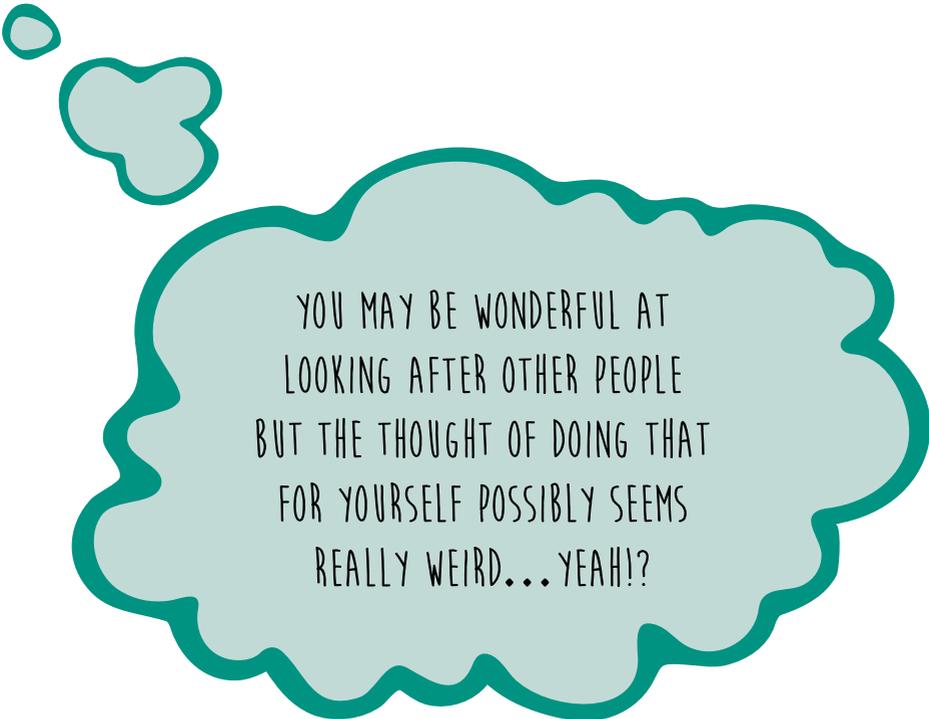
 POSITIVE
REALITIES

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THE IMPORTANCE OF CARING FOR YOURSELF

THAT'S WHAT THIS BOOKLET IS ALL ABOUT!



YOU MAY BE WONDERFUL AT
LOOKING AFTER OTHER PEOPLE
BUT THE THOUGHT OF DOING THAT
FOR YOURSELF POSSIBLY SEEMS
REALLY WEIRD... YEAH!?

Looking after yourself isn't selfish or uncaring. It's actually the opposite. You have the right to be healthy and happy too.

In fact, if you don't look after yourself your health, relationships, confidence and lots of other things could suffer.

If you take time to look after yourself then it's good for your life and gives you more energy to look after others too.

You can flourish by learning about yourself, knowing it's okay to ask for help and taking a wee bit of time out.

WHEN YOU ALREADY HAVE A CARING ROLE

Perhaps you're a young carer looking after a friend or relative with a disability, illness, drug or alcohol dependency or a mental health condition? If so, you'll know that helping with money, shopping, cooking and having someone rely on your physical and emotional support requires commitment, resilience and skill.

There are good bits about caring for someone you love but there can be some not so good things about your important and challenging role.

Some of the ways you can be affected are:

PHYSICALLY tiredness due to lack of sleep; headaches due to pressure; changes in diet or appetite due to stress; aches and pains.

MENTALLY tearfulness; anger; stress; depression; anxiety; withdrawal.

SOCIALLY not having enough time to yourself, to see friends, meet new people or try new things; difficulty coping with school/study/work; feeling like people don't 'get it'.

THERE ARE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOU COPE
BETTER, FEEL BETTER AND ENJOY BEING YOU

WHAT IS WELLBEING?

It's when basic needs (like food, water, sleep, shelter, security, physical health, friendship, family, respect) are met and you feel comfortable, healthy and happy.

WELLBEING CAN INCLUDE:

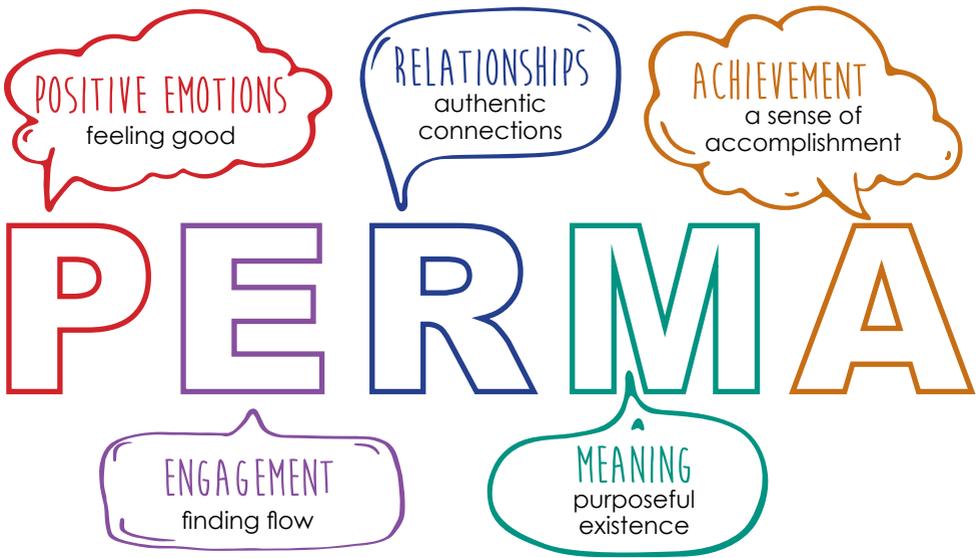
- Feeling good
- Feeling in control
- Feeling happy in your own skin
- Being able to do things that matter to you
- Being able to cope with normal stresses of life
- Being able to 'bounce back' when things change or go wrong
- Having a sense of purpose
- Feeling able to achieve your goals and reach your potential
- Being part of society

WE HOPE THIS BOOKLET HELPS
YOU FIND YOUR OWN WAY TO
FEELING GOOD!

WORKING ON WELLBEING

People talk about the pursuit of happiness and that happiness is the journey, not the destination - and they are right! It doesn't happen overnight and it isn't easy...but while we work towards it, we find moments of joy.

The most famous research on wellbeing was conducted by Martin Seligman who is a founder of positive psychology, which focuses on peoples strengths rather than weaknesses. It's called the PERMA model.



Professor Seligman believes that by following these five elements everybody can enjoy a life of fulfilment happiness and meaning.

SO, NOW WE'RE GOING TO WORK ON OUR PERMALICIOUSNESS!

We'll find out what each part means and how we can make it happen by taking steps towards your better wellbeing...

Are you ready?!

POSITIVE EMOTIONS

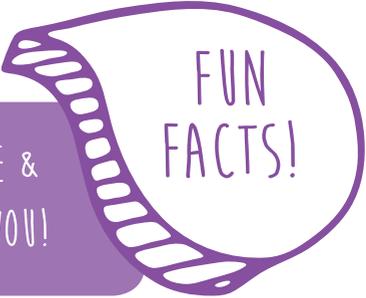
Happiness isn't the only positive emotion. Others are love, gratitude, compassion, amusement, joy, hope and contentment. Sometimes when we're not in a good place, those seem like fairy-tale feelings. BUT we can create positivity.

We all have ups and downs and our brains tend to focus on the downs, but you can help train your brain!

When we recognise that good things and more positive emotions are happening, we can focus on making them stronger...kinda like lifting weights at the gym. Not only do we find more enjoyment in life, but our relationships, physical health, work and study, ability to take chances, and hope for the future all improve.

FEELING GOOD IS CATCHING!

WHEN YOU SMILE, OTHERS WANT TO SMILE &
WHEN YOU LAUGH, OTHERS LAUGH WITH YOU!



FUN
FACTS!



TOP TIPS!

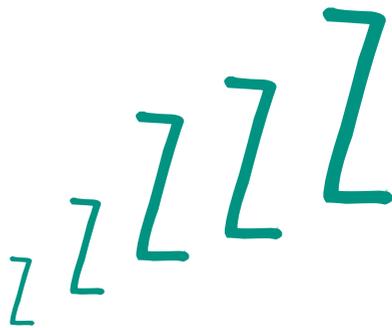
- **Talk to someone you trust.** They care about you. It's okay not to feel great all the time but talking about it will help.
- **Keep a daily gratitude journal:** write down 3 things you are thankful for before bed.

- **Be brave** and ask yourself why you might not be experiencing enough positive emotions...sometimes the answer is there, we just don't want to see it.
- Don't try to stop negative thoughts. Instead notice you are in a negative cycle. **Be okay with it.** Ask yourself what you can do to change it.
- **Reset a bad mood** by crying, practicing yoga, taking a shower or whatever makes you feel good.
- When you're angry...take a moment to **breathe**, focus and step away if you need to.
- Try a **random act of kindness** such as sending a thank you card, paying someone a compliment, smiling at strangers, offering your help or being in touch with someone you haven't spoken to in a while.
- **Enjoy positive thinking exercises** like writing down the things you like about yourself (this can be tricky at first but even just one thing a day) or think about the nice things you have done for other people.



- Think about **what makes YOU feel good**. It might include spending time with friends and family, fresh air, being in nature, reading a book, eating great food, painting, listening to music, playing music... Now make time to enjoy one of your favourite things!
- **Your alcohol and drugs intake**. Remember - alcohol or drugs don't remove pain or sadness. They can make it worse.
- **Eating right** can make you feel emotionally stronger. It helps your brain and body work well and boosts your confidence.
- **Exercise** releases happy chemicals in your brain. Do something you enjoy. Do it with someone. Do it with music! Thirty minutes three times a week.
- Have you heard of sleep hygiene? It consists of helpful habits to help you **get a good night's rest**. During the day: get some exercise and fresh air.

Create a before bedtime routine so you begin to relax: no heavy meals, coffee or cigarettes but a warm shower, a book to read, herbal tea, gadgets and bright lights off, meditation or some alone time...



ENGAGEMENT

You might have heard of this as 'flow'. When you are completely in the moment, absorbed in what you are doing, not thinking about anything else, truly focused, in the zone, and when hours pass like minutes. It means you are enjoying the task but you are also challenged. Sounds lovely, eh!?

It's important to find things that sweep us up and away. They help us learn, grow and nurture our uniqueness as well as happiness.

What are you good at? What do you enjoy? Maybe it's playing an instrument, playing a sport, dancing, colouring-in, writing, gardening, walking along the beach, practicing yoga, learning about the stars, cooking, painting... Those are the kind of things you will find flow in!



TOP TIPS!

- **Try mindfulness.** Focus on your breath for relaxation.
- **Take notice:** be curious, look for the beauty in things, notice little changes, be aware of what's happening in the world around you and inside your body – thoughts, feelings, sensations.
- **Keep learning and exploring!**

RELATIONSHIPS

"WE ARE SOCIAL CREATURES AND POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON OUR WELLBEING."

Seligman, 2012



Time alone can be lovely but other people provide balance, perspective and essential human connection. Our friends, loved ones, family, colleagues and people in our community are a very important aspect of life.

Each additional friend you have increases your likelihood of being happy by about 9%...wow!

TOP TIPS!

GOOD RELATIONSHIPS INVOLVE...

- **Develop your listening skills** and think before you speak.
- **Connect:** take an interest in people around you.
- **Think about** what relationships you would like to prioritise.
- **Create time** to see friends.
- **Re-establish relationships** with people you have lost touch with.
- **Manage your energy levels** (by not overdoing it) to make good things happen.
- **Be positive:** people enjoy being around others who energise.

- Reframe situations to **see opportunities** instead of challenges.
- Think about who makes you feel good and **try to create time** for them.
- **Step out your comfort zone.** Visit new places. Try new things.
- **Join** a class or take up a hobby.

RELATIONSHIP MAP



On the next page there is a relationship map for you to fill in. Put in everyone you know and see regularly...with you in the middle!

Don't worry if you don't fill all the bubbles...we're at the beginning of your journey. And if you need more, wow, add some more bubbles!

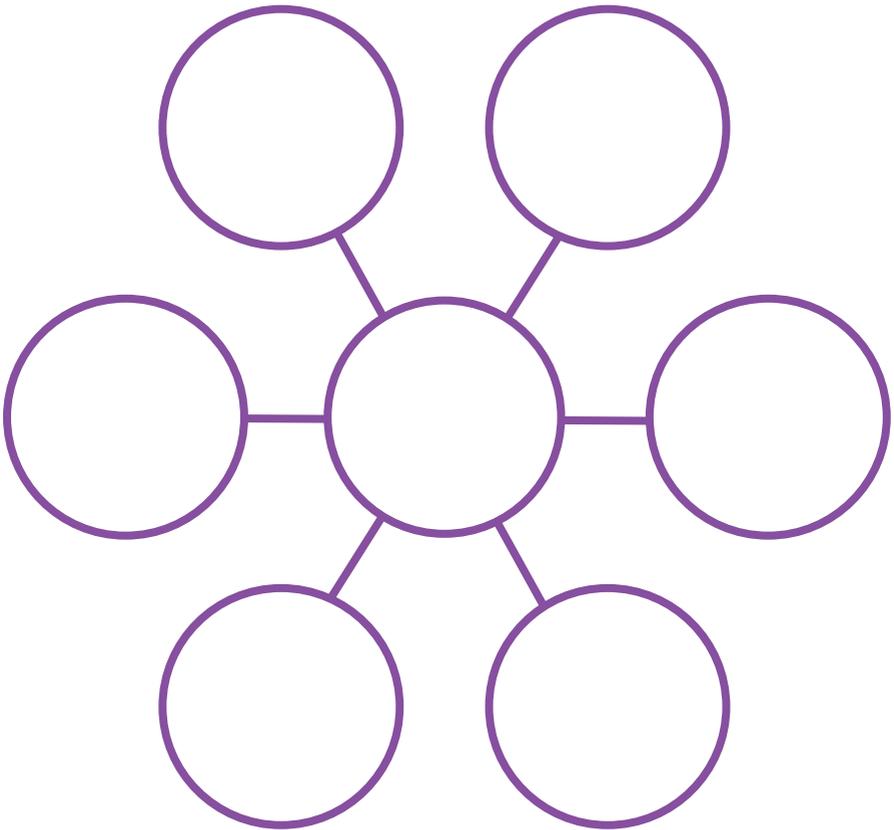
Think about the people you put in your map –

- Do they have your best interests at heart?
- Do you enjoy their company?
- Are you happy with the way you act towards them?

Start to think about how you can improve your relationships with little changes.

You might have to be brave to make that happen but remind yourself of the benefits. You can do it!

RELATIONSHIP MAP



MEANING

Life's not about things. Humans search for meaning. It's about finding your passion and working at it!

What's your passion? Maybe it's something you feel strongly about, your work, or an activity you feel destined to do.

You might find meaning in family, or learning, or spirituality. Perhaps you feel strongly about caring for animals, helping disadvantaged people, or protecting the environment.

If you don't know your passion yet...think about this: how will you change the world?!

PABLO PICASSO (THE ARTIST DUDE) SAID THAT
"THE MEANING OF LIFE IS TO FIND YOUR GIFT.
THE PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO GIVE IT AWAY."

FUN
FACTS!

- You've heard it before but... **step out your comfort zone.**
- **Listen to your intuition** and be self-aware.
- **Know what's important for you.** Write down the 5 most important things in how you want to live your life. Maybe it's 'family time' or 'sing every day'. It could also include things like 'honesty' and 'simplicity'.
- **Reflect on your values e.g. your principles and qualities you believe are important like kindness, honesty, enthusiasm.** These are your inner compass in life so set time aside to understand what yours are.

TOP TIPS!

ACHIEVEMENT

The fifth and final element is '**I did it and I did it well!**'

This means setting a goal and working to reach it – then celebrating your achievement!

GOALS ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE THEY:

- motivate us
- help us be our best possible selves
- develop our self-belief, patience and hope for the future
- increase our self-knowledge
- increase our wellbeing when we achieve them

Remember the goals you've already achieved! Celebrate your achievements, and use the confidence to help you reach your next goal!

And if you struggle to reach your goal?



Bad times don't last. Things always get better.

Other people can help if you talk to them.

Unhelpful thinking makes you more upset.

Nobody is perfect – not you and not other people.

Concentrate on the positives (no matter how small) and use laughter

Everybody experiences sadness, hurt, failure, rejection and setbacks sometimes, not just you. They are a normal part of life. Try not to personalise them.

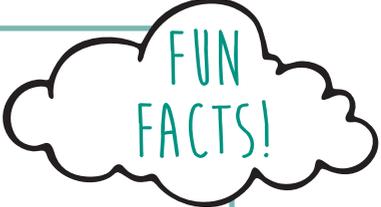
Blame fairly. How much of what happened was due to you, to others and to bad luck or circumstances?

Accept what can't be changed (but try to change what you can first)

Catastrophising exaggerates your worries. Don't believe the worst possible picture.

Keep things in perspective. It's only part of your life.

Studies have shown small steps towards a goal are often just as, or more, beneficial to our wellbeing than the end result. Knowing you've tried to achieve your goal will make you feel good! And when you finally get there, it will feel even better!!!



FUN
FACTS!



TOP TIPS!

- **Set yourself real goals**, and keep them in sight. Make sure it's **SMART** Check out the exercise below to set your next goal!
- **Work out what you need to do** to get there...
- **...ask someone you trust** to support you with this.
- **Break it down into small chunks!**
- **Enjoy your achievements** – all of them! How will you recognise them and how will you celebrate?!
- **Remember the power of 'not yet'**. If you don't succeed, learn from it, you're just not there 'yet'.
- When working through problems, **decide what specific problem you will work on** and ask yourself: What steps can I take? Who can I ask for help? When can I do this?



S.M.A.R.T. GOAL PLANNER



SPECIFIC	What exactly do you want to happen?	
MEASURABLE	I will know I have reached my goal when...	
ATTAINABLE	With hard work, is it possible to reach the goal within the deadline?	
REALISTIC & RELEVANT	My goal is important enough to put a plan in action. I will follow the specific plan to reach my goal:	
TIME-BOUND	I will reach my goal by:	

SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Will you use some of these tips and tricks to work on your wellbeing?
What's the most important thing you've learned?

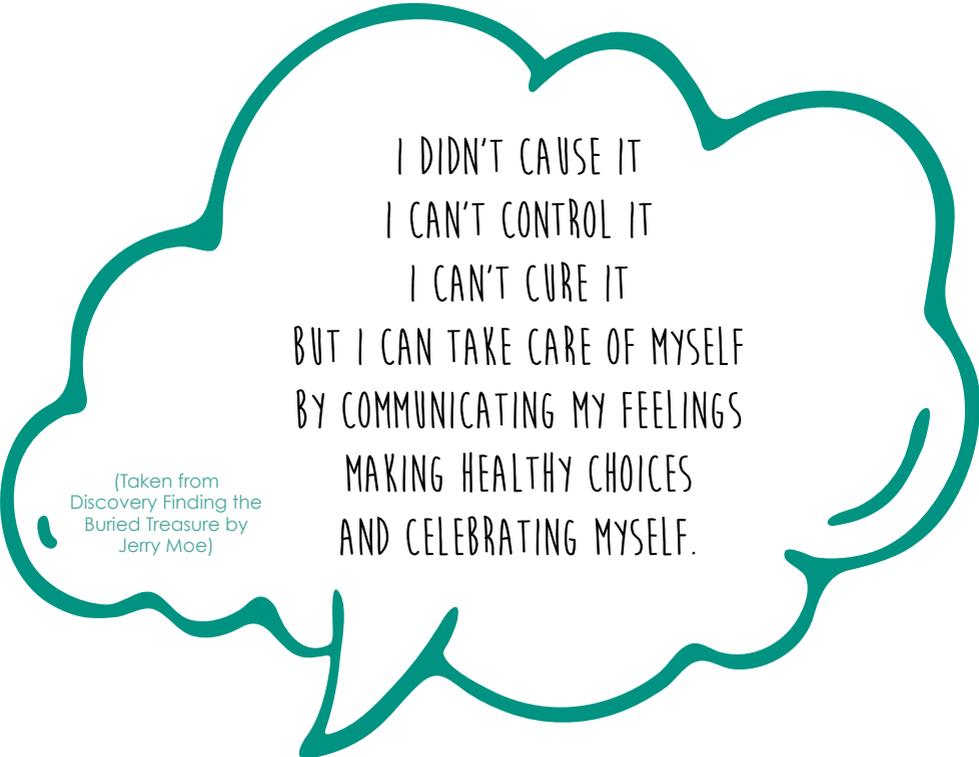
AS WE WRAP UP, WE'D LIKE YOU
TO REMEMBER:



REMEMBER

1. YOU'RE NOT ALONE.
2. YOU'RE NOT WEAK.
3. THE PAST CANNOT BE CHANGED.
4. EVERYONE'S JOURNEY IS DIFFERENT.
5. THOUGHTS ARE NOT FACTS.
6. POSITIVE THOUGHTS CREATE POSITIVE THINGS.
7. HAPPINESS IS FOUND WITHIN.
8. SMILES ARE CONTAGIOUS AND KINDNESS IS FREE.
9. YOU CAN SHAPE YOUR FUTURE
10. YOU ARE ALWAYS WORTHY OF LOVE, ESPECIALLY SELF-LOVE.

Finally, when caring for other people, perhaps say this to yourself when you need it most:



I DIDN'T CAUSE IT
I CAN'T CONTROL IT
I CAN'T CURE IT
BUT I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF
BY COMMUNICATING MY FEELINGS
MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES
AND CELEBRATING MYSELF.

(Taken from
Discovery Finding the
Buried Treasure by
Jerry Moe)

Positive Realities is somewhere you can get support to help you achieve your goals and be the very best you!

And, we hope the tools in this booklet are the beginning of your journey to your very best self; that you always know how important you are; and that **you can make a difference.**

A-Z OF HELPFUL PLACES & PEOPLE

Beat: b-eat.co.uk

Support for anyone affected with eating disorders or related difficulties.

Befriending Network:

befriending.co.uk

A service that focuses on finding friends for otherwise isolated people.

Breathing Space: 0800 838587

breathingspacescotland.co.uk

A free, confidential, service for people experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety

Broomhouse Centre:

broomhousecentre.org.uk

Information, advice, support and weekly activity groups to meet other young and young adult carers in Edinburgh.

Canongate Youth Project:

canongateyouth.org.uk

Support, training & fun for 5-25 year olds.

Care for Carers: care4carers.org.uk

Support service for carers 16+

Carers Scotland: carersuk.org

Provide information and advice about making life better for those with a caring role.

Carers Trust Scotland: carers.org

For online communities suited to you and your age group

Childline: 0800 1111 or childline.org

Online, on the phone, anytime you need advice or support

Citadel Youth Centre:

citadelyouthcentre.org.uk

Opportunities for fun, meeting friends, trying new things and talking to youth workers. 6-21 years and living in Leith.

Citizens Advice Edinburgh:

citizensadviceedinburgh.co.uk

Provides free, confidential and impartial advice on money matters such as debt, employment, benefits and tax.

Edinburgh Carers Council:

edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk

Provide information, support and advocacy

Edinburgh Guarantee:

edinburghguarantee.org

Employment advice and support

Edinburgh Young Carers Project:

youngcarers.org.uk

One-to-one support; young carer groups, residential and day trips; useful information; and involved in the young carers' forum.

EdSpace: edspace.org.uk

Edinburgh's online source of mental health and wellbeing information

Granton Youth Centre:

grantonyouth.com

Counselling, employability, volunteering and other services for 12-25 year olds

Health in Mind: health-in-mind.org.uk

Leading charity promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in Scotland

Healthy Respect: healthyrespect.co.uk

Sexual health, relationships information, advice and support for young people.

It's Good to Talk: itsgoodtotalk.org.uk

Website to help find a counsellor to support you

Join In Edinburgh: joinedinburgh.org

Information on clubs/groups for young people in Edinburgh

Kindred: kindred-scotland.org

Advocacy, support and information on supporting someone with complex needs.

Know the Score: knowthescore.info

Provide information and advice about drugs and how they affect people.

LGBT Youth: lgbtyouth.org.uk

Advice, support, peer education for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Scotland.

MECOPP: mecopp.org.uk

Provide services to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) carers.

MeetUp: meetup.com

Find people who like to do the same things as you...and do it!

Mind: mind.org.uk

A fabulous website filled with all sorts of helpful information.

Moodjuice: moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk

Website designed to offer information and advice when experiencing troublesome thoughts, feelings and actions

Move On: moveon.org.uk

A service including mentoring, befriending, employability, training, etc.

Muslim Youth Helpline: 0808 808 2008

A free, confidential, culturally sensitive helpline when feeling vulnerable, distressed, etc.

My Crew: mycrew.org.uk

Impartial drugs information, support and advice

NHS24: 08454 24 24 24 nhs24.com

Comprehensive up-to-date health information and self-care advice for people in Scotland.

NHS Living Life 0800 328 9655

This is a telephone counselling service based on a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) approach. Available to anyone over the age of 16 suffering low mood, mild to moderate depression and/or anxiety.

North West Carers Centre:

nwcarers.org.uk

Activity groups and information for young carers in Edinburgh.

Open University Caring for Carers

and Caring Counts: Two free courses written for carers by carers open.ac.uk/scotland/partnerships/community-organisations/caring-carers and open.edu/openlearncreate/course/view.php?id=1688

Penumbra: penumbra.org.uk

1:1 and group support as well as drop in services

Pilton Youth and Children's Project:

pypc.co.uk

Clubs, groups, individual support for 5-18 year olds.

Positive Realities: positiverealities.org

For 12-25 year olds wanting to improve their mental wellbeing through life coaching, groups or emotional support.

Scottish Association for Mental Health:

samh.org.uk

Provide support services and information on mental health issues.

Saheliya: saheliya.co.uk

Mental health and wellbeing support for black and minority ethnic women and girls.

Samaritans: 08457 90 90 90

samaritans.org

They believe everyone should have someone to talk to, no matter their situation.

Sikh Sanjog: sikhsanjog.com/youth.html

Provide a range of opportunities for Sikh and wider Ethnic Minority women and their families

Steps for Stress: stepsforstress.org

A booklet to help identify and manage stress

Talk to Frank: 0800 776 600

talktofrank.com

For friendly, confidential and non-judgmental advice about both legal or illegal drugs or peer pressure to take them.

The Junction: the-junction.org

Confidential support for young people aged 12-21 in Leith and North East Edinburgh

The Mix: themix.org.uk

Essential support for under 25s

Young Carers Alliance: youngcarers.net

An online support service for young people aged 18 and under who look after a family member.

Young Minds: youngminds.org.uk/for_children_young_people

A London based organisation but with useful resources on many mental health concerns.

Your Edinburgh: youreidinburgh.info

A website full of activity, learning and fun ideas around Edinburgh

CALL US ON 0131 629 4800

OR VISIT

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THANKS A
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