



Maintain Positive  
Health and  
Wellbeing ...



An Occupational  
Therapy Guide

This wellbeing booklet provides information and tips on how to maintain your health and routines. If you require specific advice please do not hesitate to contact your named health professional, General Practitioner or refer to the websites given in this booklet

We hope that you enjoy reading our booklet and find the information useful!

This booklet is created and owned by the Inverclyde Mental Health Occupational Therapy Service. It is advisable that use should be supported by an Occupational Therapist utilising the guidance attached. Any requests to edit, amend or use elements of the booklet require permission.

Permission should be sought through email to Lead Occupational Therapist:  
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# What is Occupational Therapy and How Can It Help?

As Occupational Therapists specialising in the area of mental health we are well equipped to help you maintain your health and wellbeing and now, more than ever, we need to look after ourselves.

We are often asked what our role involves so here is a brief overview; Occupational Therapists are health professionals who aim to support the health and wellbeing of the individuals we work with. We have a broad understanding of the word 'occupation' using it describe everything that you need to do (like looking after yourself), want to do (like engaging in a hobby/ interest) or are expected to do (like going to work or appointments).

Changes that affect our lives, such as illness, can have a negative impact on our ability to engage in occupation. Occupational Therapists, can work with you, through the help of this booklet, to explore other options that might help you re-engage in an activity or engage in something new that will help maintain your overall wellbeing.

SMALL CHANGE  
**BIG IMPACT**

# The Importance of Routine

We have all found it tempting to stay in our pyjamas all day and lose sight of our regular routines, however, having a routine is important for our identity, self-esteem and confidence levels as well as our overall feeling of purpose.

Try to start your day at the same time as you would normally and plan to set aside time each day for exercise, relaxation, connection and reflection.

On the next 2 pages you will find an Interest Checklist with activities.

This is a good opportunity to re-engage with old hobbies or to try something new!



<b>Activity</b>	<b>I do this often</b>	<b>I never do this</b>	<b>I would like to try this</b>
<b>Self Care</b>			
Take a bath			
Paint nails			
Put on make up			
Wear a facemask			
Do your hair			
Put on perfume or aftershave			
Pedicure			
<b>Relaxing Activities</b>			
Relaxation exercises			
Deep breathing exercises			
Meditation			
Mindfulness			
Listening to soothing music			
<b>Physical Activity</b>			
Stretching			
Walking			
Jogging			
Dancing			
Yoga			
Aerobic exercises			
Cycling			
<b>Games</b>			
Scrabble			
Chess			
Jigsaws			
Crosswords			
Word searches			
Lego/construction kits			
<b>Technology</b>			
Watching TV			
Playing computer games			
Emailing a friend			
Online games			
Blogging			
Phone a friend			
Listen to an audiobook			
Listen to a podcast			
Do online learning courses			
Set up an online quiz with family			

<b>Activity</b>	<b>I do this often</b>	<b>I never do this</b>	<b>I would like to try this</b>
<b>Creative Activities</b>			
Drawing			
Painting			
Colouring in			
Photography			
Sewing			
Knitting			
Crochet			
Jewellery making			
Cooking			
Making cakes			
Card making			
Writing letters			
Writing poetry			
Writing short stories			
Playing an instrument			
Listening to your favourite songs			
Singing			
Reading a book			
Reading a magazine			
Write a journal/diary			
Make a time capsule			
<b>Around the Home</b>			
Gardening			
Wallpapering			
Painting furniture			
Declutter items			
Clear out old clothes			
Organise paperwork			
<b>External</b>			
Gym			
Cinema			
Community Groups			
Church			
Library			
Shopping			
Cafe			
Museum			

Filling out this daily planner may help motivate you to stick to a routine throughout the day. Don't feel that you need to fill out all the spaces. Having some unstructured time is good too.

# Today's Plan

Date: .....

	:00	:30	Today's Goals
5am			1.
6am			2.
7am			3.
8am			4.
9am			5.
10am			
11am			ToDo
12am			
1pm			
2pm			
3pm			
4pm			
5pm			
6pm			
7pm			
8pm			

Notes	Meal Plan
	Breakfast
	AM Snack
	Lunch
	PM Snack
	Dinner
	Water Intake      S S S S S S S S S S

# Self Care

The term self-care refers to the activities you engage in in order to take care of your overall wellbeing, such as attending to your personal care needs or eating healthily. It can also refer to the activities you engage in to look after your emotional wellbeing such as making time for relaxation and practising self-compassion.

Keep in touch with your mental health support (keyworker/support staff), face-to-face contact may have reduced over recent years and changed to telephone contact only.

However, it can still be good to chat and discuss any worries you may be having.



Having a shower or a bath and getting dressed can make a big difference to how you feel.



It is important to keep in a routine of going shopping for food regularly.

It might be tempting to rely on takeaway food at this time however over a period of time this will be costly and a much less healthy option. Aim to prepare balanced, nutritious meals. They do not need to be fancy - pull out a recipe book or watch an online video

The Foodbank can also be accessed if required.

\*Contact details at the back of this booklet





Physical activity has a beneficial effect on our overall wellbeing, for example it can help to reduce stress levels, increase energy levels and concentration and help us sleep better at the end of the day.

Have a think about different ways you could add movement and activity to your day, focusing on things that you find enjoyable and work best for your level of fitness/ability.

Even within your house there will be lots of different ways to keep your body moving!



Dance to music in your livingroom!

Going up and down your stairs

Doing housework burns calories and works muscles

Get outside for your daily exercise.  
Walking is a great way to improve your mood!



There are lots of online fitness videos that you can do for free.

No equipment needed!

\*details at the back of this booklet



# Sleep

Changes to daily life and issues that affect your wellbeing can in turn have a negative impact on your sleep pattern.

Some people may start turning night into day without a daily routine in place. However, there are many things you can try to help yourself sleep well:

- Aim to go to bed and get up at the same time each day, even at the weekend if you can, and try to get some natural sunlight by opening your curtains and windows if possible.
- Exercise regularly, but at least three hours before bedtime.
- Avoid tea, coffee and other caffeinated drinks before going to bed and also avoid consuming a lot of alcohol.
- Establish a regular, relaxing bedtime routine that lets you unwind and sends a signal to your brain that it's time to sleep. Avoid using your phone, tablet, computer or TV for an hour before bed.

\*Links to websites with more information on these techniques can be found at the back of this booklet.

# Relaxation

Relaxing and focusing on the present can be a great way to improve your mental health and decrease levels of anxiety and negative feelings. There are different types of relaxation techniques available. It is important to find what techniques you find most beneficial.

- Taking in slow deep breaths can help reduce feelings of anxiety. Try breathing in for 4 seconds. Hold your breath for 2 seconds, then breathe out for 5 seconds. Ensure you breathe all the way out. The out breath is the most important!
- One of the body's reactions to fear and anxiety is muscle tension. This can result in feeling "tense", or can lead to muscle aches and pains, as well as leaving some people feeling exhausted. Try tensing different muscles in your body for 5 seconds then releasing for 10 seconds.
- Colouring in - the 'left to right' motion of colouring in helps us to regulate our emotions. It's the same motion used to sooth a crying baby!
- Mindfulness and Grounding techniques allow us to remain in or return to the present moment and to be more aware of our surroundings.

Ensure you make time each day to reflect on what has gone well; it is important to acknowledge your achievements and the things you are grateful for, no matter how small you may think they are.

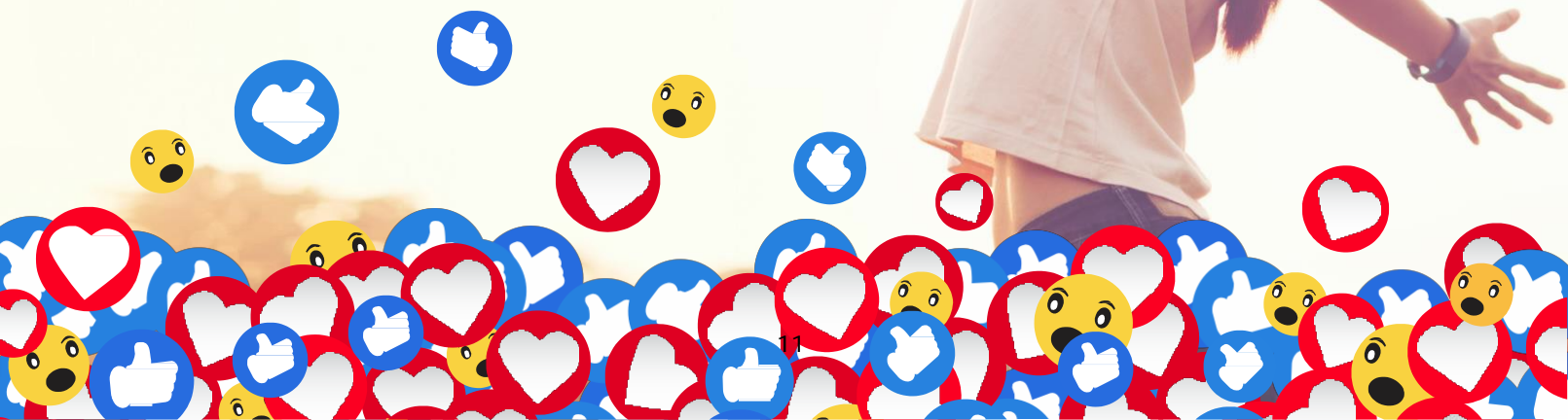
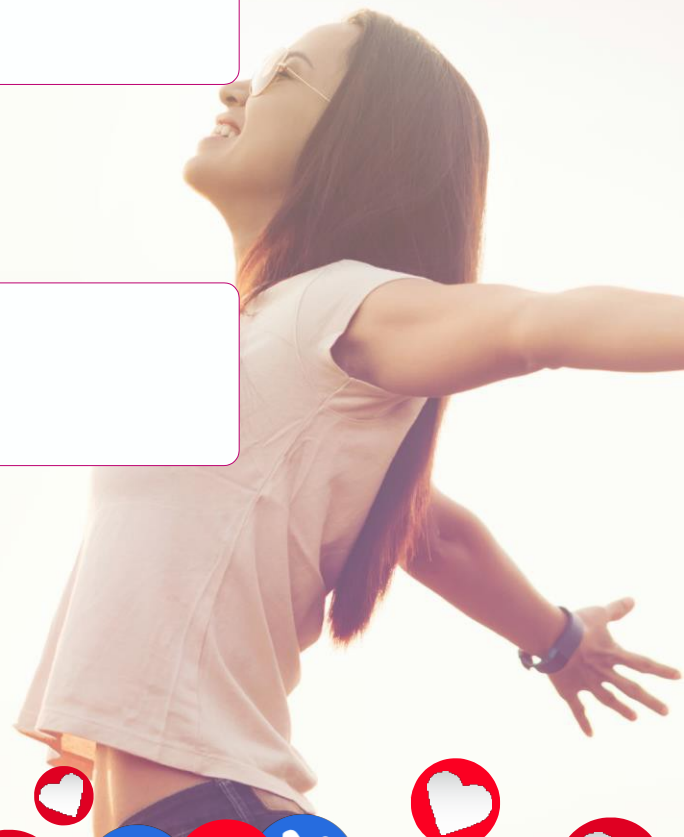
# Three Good Things

*That happened today*

1

2

3



# Leisure

It is important to make time for those activities that help lift our mood and relax us, whilst keeping our mind active and challenged.

- Set aside time in your routine for this.
- Read books, magazines and articles.
- Listen to podcasts, watch films and do puzzles.

You can visit the library to borrow books and use the computers.

You can borrow eBooks, audiobooks or magazines from home for free, if you're a library member.

The Open University and Future Learn have lots of free online courses available

Why not use Google Earth to look up places that you have been or places that you've always wanted to go!

Reconnect with previous leisure activities.

Many museums are now online, these are only a few:

The Louvre

National Gallery Of Art

British Museum

Nasa

Vatican Museums



It is important that we feel comfortable and able to engage in our activities within our home environment. You may have to organise your space more effectively in order to carry out an activity, for example, clear an area to engage in some creative work.

There are also some activities that you can engage in to help yourself feel more relaxed at home if you are feeling anxious or cut off from the outside world.

We have outlined a couple of ideas below.

Bringing nature into your everyday life can benefit your mental wellbeing. It can improve your mood, and make you feel more relaxed.

It is possible to get the positive effects of nature while staying indoors at home. You could try the following:

- Spend time with the windows open to let in fresh air.
- Arrange a comfortable space to sit, for example by a window where you can look out over a view of trees or the sky, or watch birds.
- You may be able to buy seeds, flowers or plants online for delivery, to grow and keep indoors.

Decluttering your home can help reduce stress levels and improve sleep and concentration levels.

You might also find some lost treasures!

### **The Pomodoro Technique**

1. Decide on the decluttering task to be done.
2. Set a timer (traditionally to 25 minutes).
3. Work on the task .
4. End work when the timer rings.

## *Environment*



# Productivity

This term refers to anything you do in your paid or voluntary work, education, as well as anything that contributes to your family (carer).

Some people may find that they are required to work from home more often. We have included some information for those working from home and those still attending the workplace.

## Health and Wellbeing Tips for Home Working

1. Break up long spells of Display Screen Equipment work with rest breaks (at least five minutes every hour)
2. Telephone your colleagues instead of emailing them or use video calls for social interaction
3. Leave your desk or working area at lunchtime
4. Drink water regularly.
5. If you are worried, anxious, stressed or experiencing low mood etc. and it is interfering with your ability to work you should talk with your line manager in the first instance as would be the case in ordinary circumstances.

## Are you still in the workplace?

Had you previously completed a wellness and recovery plan for work?

Or the worker role inventory with your mental health occupational therapist?

You can recap on your early warning signs, and triggers allowing you to create an action plan, which may lead to short term reasonable adjustments to allow you to have your needs met.



## Self Care

[CrownHouse-01475558000](#)

[BelvilleCommunityGardens-www.belvillecommunitygarden.org.uk/orfindonFacebook](#)

[Compassionate Inverclyde - find on Facebook](#)

[www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body](#) (access to a 10 minute home workout as well as general information on smoking, reducing alcohol intake, and healthy eating)

[www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/sitting-exercises/](#) (chair exercises)

[www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/10-minute-home-cardio-workout/](#)

[Visit YouTube and search for Joe Wicks who has a range of workouts from HITT to PE for children](#)

[www.cents.nhs.uk/resource-library/relaxation-techniques](#)

[www.mentalhealth.org/podcasts-and-videos/podcasts-for-your-wellbeing](#)

[www.nhs.scot/healthy-living/mental-wellbeing/stress/breathing-and-relaxation-exercises-for-stress](#)

## Leisure

[www.Inverclyde.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/inverclyde-libraries/library-online](#)


## Other useful contacts

[Samaritans 116 123](#) (call free from any phone, 24 hours a day) or email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) (they aim to respond within 24 hours)

[Breathing Space - 0800 83 85 87](#) (Mon - Thurs 6pm - 2am, Fri 6pm - Mon 6am)







Below is a selection of some helplines and websites that offer support to those living with some of the most common long term conditions.

**NHS Inform:** provides information on a range of illnesses and conditions and helps people make informed choices about their health and wellbeing:

[www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot)

**Diabetes Scotland:** Call 0141 212 8710\*, Monday-Friday, 9am-6pm or email: [helpline.scotland@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:helpline.scotland@diabetes.org.uk) Confidential helpline (charges apply) that can provide information about the condition and take time to talk through and explore emotional, social, psychological or practical difficulties.

**Asthma UK:** Speak to an asthma expert nurse on their helpline: 0300 222 5800. Also visit their website: [www.asthma.org.uk](http://www.asthma.org.uk) which is providing updated information on COVID-19 as they receive it.

**Epilepsy Scotland:** provide a free confidential helpline that provides information and emotional support to anyone affected by epilepsy. Call 0808 800 2200, Mon-Fri 9:30am -4:30pm. Website hosts a range of information and resources: [www.epilepsyscotland.org.uk](http://www.epilepsyscotland.org.uk)

**British Heart Foundation:** website which hosts a section on emotional support and wellbeing: [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)

**British Lung Foundation:** helpline available: 03000 030 555, Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm calls cost as local call. Website: [www.blf.org.uk](http://www.blf.org.uk) also provides a range of information.

**Anxiety and Stress Disorders:** NHS Living Life provides a free telephone based service for people over the age of 16 feeling low, anxious or stressed. Call: 0800 328 9655 lines opened Mon-Fri 1pm-9pm. Visit the Heads Up website which host information on a range of disorders insomnia, what helps and how to support someone living with insomnia. <http://headsup.scot/>