



# 5 Ways to Wellbeing Toolkit

# Introduction

The Growth Company (GC) is committed to promoting good health and wellbeing by creating an open and supportive culture.

We want to raise more awareness that our physical health and mental health are connected and can change throughout our lives and that is why we think it's important to continue to talk about how we feel and look out for any signs that we are unwell so the relevant support can be put in place to prevent any issues from escalating.

Research carried out by the [New Economics Foundation](#) found that there are five simple ways to improve how you feel each day:




This toolkit provides some practical ideas and suggestions about how you can introduce the **Five Ways to Wellbeing** into your everyday routine. Trying these steps could help you feel more positive and able to get the most out of life. We've also included some helpful resources including websites and signposting to further support.

# Connect


Good relationships and connecting with people in a meaningful way are important for your mental wellbeing, they can:



**Give you an opportunity to share positive experiences**



**Help you to build a sense of belonging and self-worth**



**Provide emotional support and allow you to support others**

There are lots of things you could try to help build stronger and closer relationships:

## Do

- ✓ Ask how someone is and really listen when they tell you.
- ✓ If possible, take time each day to be with your family, for example, try arranging a fixed time to eat dinner together.
- ✓ Arrange a day out with friends you have not seen for a while.
- ✓ Try switching off the TV to talk or play a game with your children, friends or family.
- ✓ Have lunch or a virtual coffee break with a colleague or your team.
- ✓ Visit a friend or family member who needs support or company.
- ✓ Take some time to get to know your neighbours. Invite them around for a cup of tea.
- ✓ Volunteer at a local school, hospital or community group. Find out how to volunteer on the [Do It Volunteering Website](#).
- ✓ Try [Meetup](#) which has been set up to help people find local groups where they can make friends or try out something new.
- ✓ Make the most of technology to stay in touch with friends and family. Video-chat apps like Skype and FaceTime are useful, especially if you live far apart.
- ✓ Join one of our [8 EDI Networks](#) to meet others, peer to peer support and get involved in our campaigns.

## Don't

- ✗ Do not rely solely on technology or social media alone to build relationships. It's easy to get into the habit of only ever texting, messaging or emailing people.

# Be Active

Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety across all age groups. Being active is not only great for your physical health and fitness, evidence also shows it can also improve your mental wellbeing by:



**Raising your self-esteem**



**Helping you to set goals or challenges and achieve them**



**Pausing chemical changes in your brain which can help to positively change your mood**



Find out more about getting active:

## Do

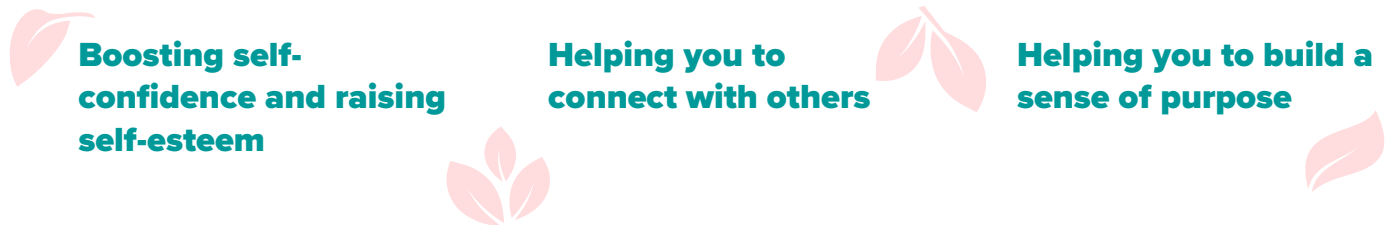
- ✓ Find [free activities to help you get fit](#).
- ✓ If you have a disability or long-term health condition, find out about [getting active with a disability](#).
- ✓ Try the stairs instead of a lift.
- ✓ Organise a wellbeing walk with colleagues at lunchtime.
- ✓ Start running with [couch to 5k podcasts](#).
- ✓ Find out how to start [swimming](#), [cycling](#) or [dancing](#).
- ✓ Find out about [getting started with exercise](#).
- ✓ Try these 3 simple [Chair Yoga Poses](#) for all fitness levels whilst sat at your desk.

## Don't

- ✗ Do not feel that you have to spend hours in a gym. It's best to find activities you enjoy and make them a part of your life.

# Keep Learning

Research shows that learning new skills can also improve your mental wellbeing by:



Even if you feel like you do not have enough time, or you may not need to learn new things, there are lots of different ways to bring learning into your life. Some of the things you could try include:

## Do

- ✓ Try learning to cook something new. Find out about [healthy eating and cooking tips](#).
- ✓ Try taking on a new responsibility at work, such as mentoring a less experienced colleague.
- ✓ Work on a DIY project, such as fixing a broken bike, garden gate or something bigger. There are lots of free video tutorials online.
- ✓ Consider signing up for a course at a local college.
- ✓ Learn a new language for free through the free app [Duolingo](#). With quick, bite-sized lessons, you'll earn points and unlock new levels while gaining real-world communication skills.
- ✓ Try new hobbies that challenge you, such as writing a blog, taking up a new sport or learning to paint.
- ✓ Explore the wide range of different courses and material available to access on our learning system PAL App. For instance, we offer a programme of health and wellbeing training including [Employee Wellbeing and Remaining Resilient](#), [Mental Health Aware](#) and [Suicide awareness](#) to increase understanding and awareness.

## Don't

- ✗ Do not feel you have to learn new qualifications or sit exams if this does not interest you. It's best to find activities you enjoy and make them a part of your life.

# Take Notice

Paying more attention to the present moment can improve your mental wellbeing. This includes your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you.

Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". Mindfulness can help you enjoy life more and understand yourself better. It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

Read more about [mindfulness](#), including steps you can take to be more mindful in your everyday life.

## Do

- ✓ Try this [One Minute Meditation](#) when you have limited time.
- ✓ Take time to notice your surroundings, paying particular attention to anything you notice which is new, the sights, the feel, the sound, the smell or the taste of your food and drink.
- ✓ Try this [5 Senses Worksheet](#) which can be a useful guide to being more present and more attuned to your senses.
- ✓ Focus on your breathing technique to help to stay calm and relaxed; try this [breathing exercise](#).
- ✓ Take time to check-in with yourself. This [Stress Signs and Symptoms factsheet](#) can enable you to better understand your own stress responses and take corrective action.


## Don't

- ✗ Forget that your mind will naturally wander off during mindfulness or meditation exercises but it will get easier the more you practice.




# Give Back


Research suggests that acts of giving and kindness can help improve your mental wellbeing by:




**Giving you a feeling of purpose and self-worth**



**Creating positive feelings and a sense of reward**



**Helping you connect with other people**



It could be small acts of kindness towards other people or larger ones like volunteering in your local community. Some examples of the things you could try include:

## Do

- ✓ Saying thank you to someone for something they have done for you.
- ✓ Asking friends, family or colleagues how they are and really listening to their answer.
- ✓ Spending time with friends or relatives who need support or company.
- ✓ Offering to help someone you know with DIY or a work project.
- ✓ Volunteering in your community, such as helping at a school, hospital or care home. We have more information on [Volunteering at GC](#). You can also find out how to volunteer on the [Do It Volunteering Website](#).

# Resources for Wellbeing



## GC Support and Resources

**Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)** - delivered by Health Assured, offers a range of free, confidential support that is available to you and your family 24/7. Resources can be accessed through the Health Assured [website](#) using the username '**Growth**' and password '**Company**'.

For an overview of our EAP [click here](#). You can contact the helpline by telephone on **0800 030 5182** or visit the online portal. There is a wide range of support available including [webinars](#), [mini health checks](#), [4 week health programmes](#), [factsheets](#), and [online counselling](#) (the Cognitive Behavioural Therapy programme is a valuable resource if you're experiencing emotional problems such as anxiety, low mood or stress) and covering the following key areas:

- **Emotional Health** – How to cope with challenging life changes, advice on how to manage stress and anxiety, support for carers and mindfulness tips and techniques.
- **Physical Health** – Helping you to improve your physical wellbeing through healthy eating, staying active and sleeping better.
- **Life Support** – Practical advice on how to deal with relationship issues and bereavement; as well as legal and financial guidance.

**Financial wellbeing and resources** - [Financial Wellbeing and Energy Saving tips and further signposting and tools](#) for those worried about their finances.

**Menopause Policy** - [Menopause policy and supporting guidance](#) or join our Menopause Support Group on Teams for peer-to-peer support.

**Mental Health Policy** - [Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy](#) which signposts to further resources and support.

**Neurodiversity** - [Neurodiversity Support Hub - additional support and resources](#) where you can find out more about our Neurodiversity Support Group and Neurodiversity Champions



**Our Working Way** - [Our Working Way](#) which includes additional support including [Mental Health First Aiders](#)

**Wellness Action Plan tool and guidance** is a tool for everyone to use; you don't need to have a mental illness in order to feel the benefits. It just means that you already have practical steps in place to develop your own personal coping strategies and ensure you are supported when you aren't feeling great.

### **External Support and Resources**

**Carers Trust** – [Carers Trust](#) works to transform the lives of unpaid carers. Find carer support and replacement care services near you through their network of partners.

**Cruse** – [Bereavement Support](#).

[Hub of Hope](#) is the UK's leading mental health website with local signposting to mental health practitioners.

**Health Assured factsheets** - [Stress, Pressure and Resilience factsheet](#) and [Mental Coping Techniques Factsheet](#)

**Health Assured short webinar** - [How to practice mindfulness](#)

**MIND** - [How to Manage your Mood with Food, 8 Tips](#) (Video) /[Written Resource](#)

**MIND** - [How to Manage Stress at Work](#)

**MIND** - [How to Be Mentally Healthy at Work](#)

**MIND** - [Support for LGBTQIA+ mental health - Mind](#)

**Relate** – [Resources for support around Relationships and Relationship Breakdowns](#)

**Rethink** – A leading charity provider of mental health services in England for people living with mental illness and those who care for them. Offers expert advice, information, and around 90 services – everything from housing to community-based services. They run over 130 local groups which provide vital peer support in the community - [help in your area](#).

**Rethink** – [Ethnic Minority Community Mental Health Factsheet](#).

**Run4YourMind** – [Running and Wellbeing Blog](#).

**Samaritans** - Free 24-hour confidential emotional support: 116 123 | [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) | [Visit their website](#). This number is free to call from both landlines and mobiles, including pay-as-you-go mobiles. Silverline Help UK for older people is the only free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and support to older people, open 24 hours a day, every day of the year 0800-470-8090.

**University of Manchester** – [Mindful Eating](#)

**Walking with the Wounded** - [Walking with the Wounded](#) deliver employment, mental health, care coordination and volunteering programmes in collaboration with the NHS to get those who served, and their families, whether mentally, socially or physically wounded, back on their feet and making a positive contribution once more.

### **Men's Mental Health**

**Andy's Man Club** - a men's suicide prevention charity, offering free-to-attend peer-to-peer support groups across the United Kingdom and online. We want to end the stigma surrounding men's mental health and help men through the power of conversation. [#ITSOKAYTOTALK Andy's Man Club \(andysmanclub.co.uk\)](#)

**Directions For Men** - We're a group for men who are struggling. Whether it's physical or mental health, debt, relationships or just not feeling themselves. We meet we talk about it and we help each other through. [Contact Details | Directions for Men](#)

### **Young People's Mental Health**

**MIND** - [Wellbeing Tips for Young People](#)

**Papyrus Hopeline UK** - Helpline for children and young people under the age of 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide and for anyone who is concerned that a young person could be thinking about suicide. Monday to Friday 10am-10pm. Weekends and Bank Holidays 2-10pm.

**0800 068 4141 | Text 07786 209697**

**YoungMinds** – [Wellbeing Resources for Young People](#)

### **Support for the Disabled Community**

**Mencap** – [Who We Are | Mencap](#) – offers services and support for those with a learning disability or caring for someone with a learning disability.

**Scope** – [Scope](#) is a disability equality charity in England and Wales which provides practical information and emotional support when it's needed most.

### **Health and Wellbeing Podcasts**

**Feel Better, Live More – Dr. Chatterjee.** Covering an array of healthy-living topics, Dr Rangan Chatterjee's podcast serves fascinating medical insight all wrapped up with a warm, palatable and entertaining bow.

**Happy Place – Fearne Cotton.** Fearne takes a deep dive approach to explore the sometimes difficult journeys her guests have been on.

**Unlocking Us – Brené Brown.** Number one New York Times bestselling author Brené Brown has launched a podcast to explore some of the deepest questions that concern us. In her own words: "I've spent over 20 years studying the emotions and experiences that bring meaning and purpose to our lives, and if there's one thing I've learned it's this: we are hardwired for connection, and connecting requires courage, vulnerability, and conversation.

### **Health and Wellbeing Apps**

**Action for Happiness** – you'll receive simple, daily action ideas designed to help you support your own mental health and wellbeing and spread more happiness to others around you too.

**Calm** – offers a wide range of regularly updated classes, activities, sleep sounds, masterclasses, and affordable price.

**DistrACT** – provides support around self-harm urges.

**Drinkaware** – to make sure you stay on top of your wellness when it comes to drinking. Includes calorie calculator, self-assessment tool to review drinking patterns, goal settings, etc.

**Exhale** – Exhale is developed specifically with Black, indigenous and women of colour in mind to offer mental health and emotional support via guided meditations and visualisations, breathing exercises, positive affirmations and coaching.

**Flora** – Green Focus – helps you spend time off your phone, clear to do lists and build positive habits.

**Headspace** – offers guided meditations on several topics such as managing stress, facing challenging times, dealing with anger, etc.

**Moodnotes** – helps you track your feelings, explore your triggers and identify hidden emotions.

**5 Minute Journal** – helps you have a more positive outlook on life through guided gratitude journaling.



