



winter wellbeing

Our top tips and ideas to help you
look after your wellbeing this winter



Small changes can make a big difference to how you feel this winter...

Winter can be a challenging time of year with colder and darker days. Winter festivities can affect our stress levels and we need to be even more aware of how to look after our wellbeing.

Mind in Brighton & Hove is here to help you bring balance and less stress with our top tips and ideas to support your wellbeing this winter.

The Five Ways To Wellbeing are an evidence based set of actions that you can incorporate into everyday life this winter to enhance your wellbeing.

* connect

Connecting with yourself, others and what is around you is beneficial for your wellbeing. Take a moment and ask yourself - what is possible for me right now? How would I like to connect with myself and others?

Take some time to connect with your own thoughts and feelings - and with what helps you feel balanced and well.

You could make a card and send it, write a note, send a text or make a call and let someone know you are thinking of them. If you feel able to, and want to increase your social network you could look for local groups and activities to join. Think of ways you can connect that suit you - perhaps plan a video call and share good wishes, share a favourite recipe, a joke and laughter.

You could also connect with nature by wrapping up warm and stepping outside to take in all that's around you. If you can't get out, you could watch a nature programme or get a plant to look after.



* take notice

Take notice of your feelings, thoughts and needs throughout the day - is there something you could do right now to look after your wellbeing?

Noticing your surroundings, slowing down and capturing a moment can be good for your wellbeing, especially when it becomes a bit busy around you. Take a moment or two to stop and really look; take in the changing season and pretty lights at this time of year. When taking notice of what's around you - how does it make you feel, mentally, emotionally and physically? Notice your breathing and take some long slow breaths, breathing in through your nose and slowly out through your mouth, let go of your stress and appreciate what you can see, feel and hear.

* be active

Moving your body can change your emotional response and energise you to get on with your day to day life.

It doesn't have to be outside or involve a lot of effort and time. You could make simple changes like taking the stairs instead of the lift - or get off the bus one stop earlier.

Check in with your body and your energy levels - take a moment to think about whether you need to be kind to yourself, or be a bit more energetic.

We all have varying energy levels and physical abilities and our mental health can also affect how much physical activity we feel able to do, and that's ok. Some days it may seem more difficult to be active, but trying to have some activity during the day, having a shower or doing a bit of cleaning, or anything that is realistic and achievable, really will help.

Have some fun, put some music on and do a few star jumps while the kettle boils. Make up a festive dance move, or sing your heart out to the latest festive songs.



* give

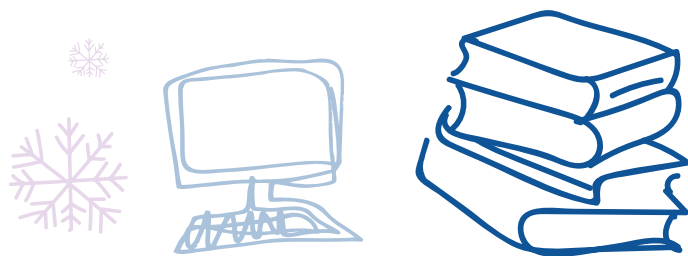
Reaching out to others can make you feel like part of the wider community around you. Acts of kindness can boost your own self-worth, and are also rewarding for others. You could donate to your local foodbank, or offer your time to volunteer with a local project. Take a moment to reflect on what you give - a cup of tea, a smile or your time - and recognise that you have contributed to your own and others' wellbeing. Be aware of giving to yourself and acknowledge and value how you take care of yourself.



* keep learning

Learning new things can be very rewarding and give us a sense of achievement. You could find a local choir to join, read a new book or learn a craft. Learning does not have to be a big challenge finding something you are interested in is the first step towards learning something new.

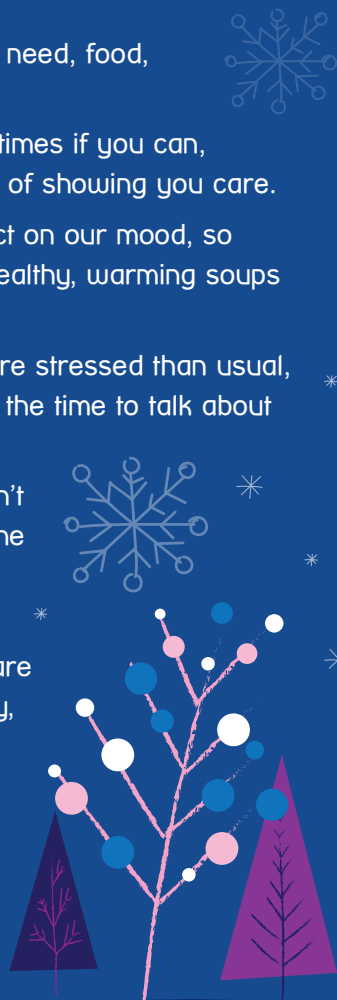
Learn more about yourself, start a family tree, read a self-help book - or take up a hobby you have always wanted to do.



* top tips for winter wellbeing

Think about the little things you can do for yourself each day:

- * **Do the festive season your way** - and take it one day at a time.
- * **Energy** - save your energy for the things you really need to do, and try not to get caught up in unnecessary things - don't feel pressured.
- * **Take time for you** - spend time outside or snuggle up and watch a good movie.
- * **Plan ahead** - make sure you organise what you need, food, medication and data on your phone etc.
- * **Shopping** - try and shop online or go at quieter times if you can, homemade gifts and cards are a thoughtful way of showing you care.
- * **Food and mood** - our food can have a big impact on our mood, so think about some meals that are delicious and healthy, warming soups are especially good at this time of year.
- * **Anxiety and stress** - it's normal to feel a bit more stressed than usual, but if things do get too much, make sure to take the time to talk about how you're feeling.
- * **Physical health can impact how we feel**, so don't forget to make time to move - try marching on the spot for a few minutes or walking up and down the stairs for as long as you feel comfortable.
- * **Don't compare yourself** - TV and social media are full of happy festive images; these are not reality, so don't compare yourself with them - and remember you are not the only one who is finding things difficult.
- * **Ask yourself** - how can I be kind to myself right now?



* Useful telephone numbers and resources

* Mental Health Support

- Sussex Mental Healthline: 24/7 telephone support for anyone experiencing difficulties with their mental health - call **0800 0309 500**.
- If you feel unwell or are worried about someone, contact your GP or call NHS **111**.
- You can contact the Samaritans on **116 123**.
- If someone has attempted suicide or seriously harmed themselves, seek emergency support - call **999** or go to your nearest A&E.
- West Sussex: www.pathfinderwestsussex.org.uk
- Brighton and Hove: www.communityroots.org.uk
- East Sussex: <https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/social-care/health-advice/mental-health>

* Bereavement Support

- Cruse: **0808 808 1677**

* Young people under 35

- Papyrus: **0800 068 4141**

* Older People

- The Silver Line: **0800 470 8090**

* Gambling Support

- GamCare: **0808 8020 133**

* LGBT

- Switchboard: **0300 330 0630**

* Debt advice

- Money Advice Plus (Brighton): **08081 963699**
- Money Advice Plus (East Sussex): **01323 635 999**
- Citizens Advice (West Sussex): **0808 278 7969**

 @mindbrighton

Wishing you a healthy & happy
2022 from everyone at Mind
in Brighton and Hove.

 **mind**
for better mental health
in Brighton and Hove