

Tips for looking after yourself so you can look after other people – You are also important

Our mind needs our body to be in good shape

Dealing with stress and anxiety takes energy. If we are having to take on a lot of new information and learn new procedures that also takes energy.

Eating, drinking and taking rest can seem difficult when we are stressed, anxious or threatened. It can be difficult to find time when we have a thousand things to do. It can just not feel important compared to the work we're doing. Or it can just be very difficult to remember when our mind is so busy with other things.

However, sometimes our stress, anxiety or panic is worse or out of proportion when we are not looking after our physical health.

So making sure we are drinking, resting and eating is absolutely essential to make sure our bodies can help our minds.

Make sure you drink:

When we are dehydrated we can struggle to think, prioritise or reason.

Think of ways that make it easy to drink – make a flask before work, set an alarm on your phone, make a pact with your colleagues and agree to remind each other.

Make sure you rest:

The brain sometimes needs space to make sense of what's going on around you.

We need a rest from the effects of worry and stress.

Focus on what you're are doing now – having a drink, having a snack, a routine work task.

A rest might even be something active like a run or walk.

Feeling anxious or panicky?

Breathe – take gentle, slow breaths. In through your nose and out through your mouth. Think – breathing in calms my body, breathing out calms my mind.

Try the rectangle breathing exercise yourself.

Try squeezing and releasing your hands. Smile. Stretch.

ASK FOR HELP – talk about your worries & anxiety with others

Make sure you eat:

Eating regularly is really important to make sure we have energy to think.

When we are tired, cooking good nutritious meals can seem overwhelming.

Frequent snacking could be just as good – prep some nuts or fruit /vegetables that are easy, quick and healthy to eat.

ASK FOR HELP – is there someone in your household or in your community that can do this for you? Can you do some for your colleagues and take turns?

And Sleep:

Create a dark environment.

Avoid using your phone at least an hour before bed.

Avoid the news or worrying conversations before sleep. Put worrying thoughts down - either in a note book or in an imaginary glass box to be dealt with later.

Even a small amount of quality sleep or rest will be good enough.

ASK FOR HELP – some people find meditation/sleep apps helpful and FREE to download

It's OK not to be OK... ASK FOR HELP

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

<https://www.samaritans.org/>