

Get in touch:

By speaking to one of your Healthcare Professionals:

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...Remember, the
doctor isn't the only
person that can help
you to feel better 😊

Your Guide to Social Prescriber Support



What is Social Prescribing?

We know that taking care of your health involves more than just medicine. With social prescribing you can get specialist support for the issues that go beyond the medical issues.

Our social prescriber will contact you and spend time with you exploring what activities and / or local support could improve your health and wellbeing. You can consider the benefits of participating in them, and we will assist and support you to plan your next steps.

What are the benefits of Social Prescribing?

- Improve your mental and physical health
- Meet new people
- Learn a new skill or participate in a new activity
- Increase self-confidence and self esteem
- Better quality of life
- Get involved in your community

Meet Bill:

Bill has been feeling depressed since his wife died, he was her full time carer.

He is prescribed an anti-depressant but would really like to get out of the house and regain some purpose in his life. The social prescriber has the time and the skills to listen and to help Bill find a range of activities and services available in the local community.

For Bill this might be:

- A health walk for exercise, fresh air + company
- Joining a local Men in Sheds group or another group of interest
- Being put in touch with bereavement services for emotional support



GOALS: What would you like to change?

We often want to make changes in our life, but we sometimes don't know where to start. Goal setting can help you to identify where you want to go and the steps needed to get there.

Think SMART:

- S**pecific – what exactly do you want to achieve?
- M**easurable – how will you know when you meet your goal?
- A**chievable – do you feel you're ready to do this?
- R**ealistic – is this sensible, practical and achievable?
- T**imely – when or how often do you want to do this?

My goal is a long term goal, I really want to make 5 new friends by the end of this year. I have chosen to break this down into smaller steps such as: identifying my hobbies and interests, finding a group to attend then, talking to one new person every month. I know I am busy with work which will get in the way, so I have given myself more time so the goals are more realistic to achieve.



What is stopping you?

You might be thinking 'this is all very well but if it was that easy, I would have done it a long time ago'. Thinking about what has got in the way and stopped you shaping the life you desire can help to prepare yourself for when they crop up again.

For example, I don't think I can do it, my anxiety will get in the way, I have to stay at home to look after my mum.

There are things that can help like: meeting someone who has felt like you and found a way to do the impossible, understanding and managing your anxiety, getting some support to look after my mum – someone I trust while I do things

Take your time to mull over these questions and examples, this isn't about judgement, but about helping you to work things out for yourself.

What keeps you well?

Expecting to be happy all the time is unrealistic; ups and downs are inevitable, so it's worth knowing what keeps you well so you can use these as healthy coping strategies to put in place when you are feeling down.

When you have time, have a think about the sorts of things that you do that make you feel well, make you smile, lift your heart, or give you hope.

For example: being outside, gardening, walking, time with pets, taking a bath, knitting, watching TV, a big hug, reading, family and friends etc.

What makes you feel worse?

Feeling negative, or low does not mean you that you have lost all the progress you have made. There are some things that we know are bad for us – they can make us feel stressed and anxious, or they can add to our pain, make us more breathless and may make us feel like giving up.

If you get a chance, have a think about what makes you feel worse.

For example: social media, certain people, certain places, having no structure or routine, too much alone time, not enough alone time, doing too much, not getting enough sleep, eating or drinking too much or too little.

Balance:

Making life better is all about doing more of the things that make you feel good and less of the things that make you feel bad. One way of doing this, is thinking about how you spend your time and getting a better balance in your life. Take some time to map out your week and notice things/people/events that make you feel good or bad and consider how you could create more balance.

The 5 Ways to Wellbeing:



These are simple and proven actions that can help you to find balance, build resilience and boost mental health and wellbeing.

CONNECT...



Feeling close to and values by other people is a fundamental human need and one that contributes to functioning well in the world.

It's clear that social relationships are critical for promoting wellbeing and for acting as a buffer against mental ill health for people of all ages

With this in mind, think about how you could connect with someone, could you:

- Talk to someone instead of sending an email?
- Spend time with family, friends, colleagues, and people in your local community?
- Put 5 minutes aside to find out how someone really is

Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

BE ACTIVE...



Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety across all age groups/ Exercise is essential for slowing age-related cognitive decline and for promoting wellbeing. But it doesn't need to be intense for you to feel good, slow paced activities such as walking can have the benefit of encouraging social interactions as well as providing some level of exercise. Could you try:

- Taking the stairs instead of the lift
- Going for a walk at lunchtime
- Walk to work, perhaps with a colleague so you can 'connect' too
- Get off the bus one stop earlier than usual
- Organise a colleague, family or friends sporting activity
- Do some stretches or yoga in the morning
- Cycling, dancing or playing a sport

Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

GIVE...



Individuals who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy. increase in wellbeing. Could you:

- Do something nice for a friend or a stranger?
- Thank someone?
- Smile?
- Volunteer your time?
- Join a community group?

Seeing yourself and your happiness linked to the wider community can be very rewarding and creates connections with the people around you

TAKE NOTICE...



Reminding yourself to 'take notice' can strengthen and broaden awareness. Being aware of what is taking place in the present directly enhances your wellbeing and savouring the moment can help to reaffirm your life priorities. Heightened awareness also enhances your self-understanding and allows you to make positive choices based on your own values and motivations. Have a go at:

- Having a 'clear the clutter' day
- Taking a different route on your journey to or from work
- Being curious or noticing the world around you
- Seeing how you feel in the moment
- Practicing mindfulness

Reflecting on your experiences will help you to appreciate what matters to you.

KEEP LEARNING...



Continued learning through life enhances self-esteem and encourages social interaction and a more active life. Setting goals, related to adult learning have been strongly associated with higher levels of wellbeing.

Could you have a go at:

- Doing a crossword or Sudoku
- Finding out something new about your colleagues
- Signing up for a class or following a YouTube tutorial
- Reading the news or a book, or learning a new word
- Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving
- Research something you've always wondered about

Learning new things will be fun and increase your confidence too.