

# Self help matters.

Helping you to find your solutions

Looking  
After Yourself

# Looking After Yourself

Everyone experiences stress at some point in his or her life.

Moderate amounts of pressure can be good for you and can improve your performance, your productivity and your sense of well-being. Too much stress can lead to anxiety, tension or difficulty in thinking clearly. It is important to recognise the differences between these stresses, to understand what causes stress and to know what action you can take to prevent it.

To develop your own understanding of stress management, personal well-being and resilience, find ways to look after yourself.

## Top Tips

**Diet.** Wash away stress hormones, released during the 'stress response', by drinking water, avoid taking in additional toxic substances and eat a healthy diet.

**Exercise.** Exercise clears the body of stress chemicals and releases endorphins (positive mood enhancing chemicals) into the brain.

**Pilates.** This mind-body workout will develop your strength, flexibility and endurance while challenging your core strength. The combination of controlled breathing and co-ordinated movements will improve your posture and muscle tone.

**Yoga.** Traditional style yoga classes aim to maximising each individual's physical capabilities and incorporate stress release, co-ordination and balance techniques.

**Tai Chi.** This Chinese Martial Arts utilises the body in a moving meditation with the mind focussed on inner and outer aspects of the movements.

**Triggers.** Identify your stress triggers and how you can dodge or manage them.

**Positivity.** Expect some good things to happen... enjoy and embrace them.

**Open out.** Tell someone you trust how you feel. Express yourself creatively, maybe through writing, dance, art or music.

**Reality.** Is your perception of an event biased or exaggerated?

**Changes.** Look out for any changes to your normality – diet, exercise, sleep, drinking, smoking, recreational drugs etc – this can be a sign of stress.

**Accumulation.** Stress often occurs when we start to accumulate unresolved pressures. Deal with stresses when they occur so they don't build up.

**Solution.** Adopt a solution-focused approach to your way of being to consider all the positive options and changes you can make to resolve stress.

**Just say NO.** Learn to say 'no' assertively.

## On-Campus Suggestions

### If you have 10 minutes to spare:

- Close your door, switch off your mobile and imagine yourself in your favourite place. Day-dream.
- Start a crossword or a fiction book
- Write a list of positive things in your life
- List the things you'd like to change and how you'd do this
- Walk around the outside of your building

### If you have 30 minutes to spare;

- Get into the fresh air
- Walk through Cruickshank Gardens
- Sit quietly in King's Chapel for 15 minutes
- Look at the stain-glass in St Machar's Cathedral
- Walk around King's playing fields

### If you have 60 minutes to spare;

- Take an exercise class at the Aberdeen Sports Village
- Swim in the pool at the Aquatics Centre
- Walk in Seaton Park
- Have lunch/coffee with a friend who makes you feel good

## Resources

### ABERDEEN SPORTS VILLAGE

Further information on a range of 'body' classes and other facilities which are available at ASV



[www.aberdeensportsvillage.com](http://www.aberdeensportsvillage.com)

### MOODZONE

Boost your mood, cope with stress, anxiety or depression or simply improve your overall emotional wellbeing.



**Opening Hours:** Online

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/low-mood-stress-anxiety.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/low-mood-stress-anxiety.aspx)

### LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL

Want to know how to feel happier, more confident & worry less right now? Would you like to learn new ways of dealing with what life throws at you?



**Opening Hours:** Online

<https://littf.com/>

### THE MIX

Provides free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile.



**Opening Hours:** Online

[www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

### MINDFULNESS FOR STUDENTS

Helping you to stay calm, focused & better manage the pressures of student life.



**Opening Hours:** Online

<http://mindfulnessforstudents.co.uk/>

### UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN SERVICES & SUPPORT

A range of support resources for everyone at University



[www.abdn.ac.uk/infocenter/support](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infocenter/support)

### BIG WHITE WALL

Online community of people who are anxious, feeling low or not coping who support and help by sharing what's troubling them. This is a free, online, moderated service and confidential.



**Opening Hours:** Online

[www.bigwhitewall.com](http://www.bigwhitewall.com)

### If you are experiencing a crisis - please contact any of the following

- **Emergency Services** - telephone 999 (Free) 24 hours
- **Samaritans** - telephone 116 123 (Free) 24 hours
- **Breathing Space** - telephone 0800 83 8587 (Free) Mon-Thu 6pm-2am, Fri-Sun 6pm-6am
- **Nightline** - telephone 01224 272829 (local rate) term-time only, between 20.00-08.00
- **NHS 24** - telephone 111 (Free) 24 hours

For other support resources, please see - [www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling)