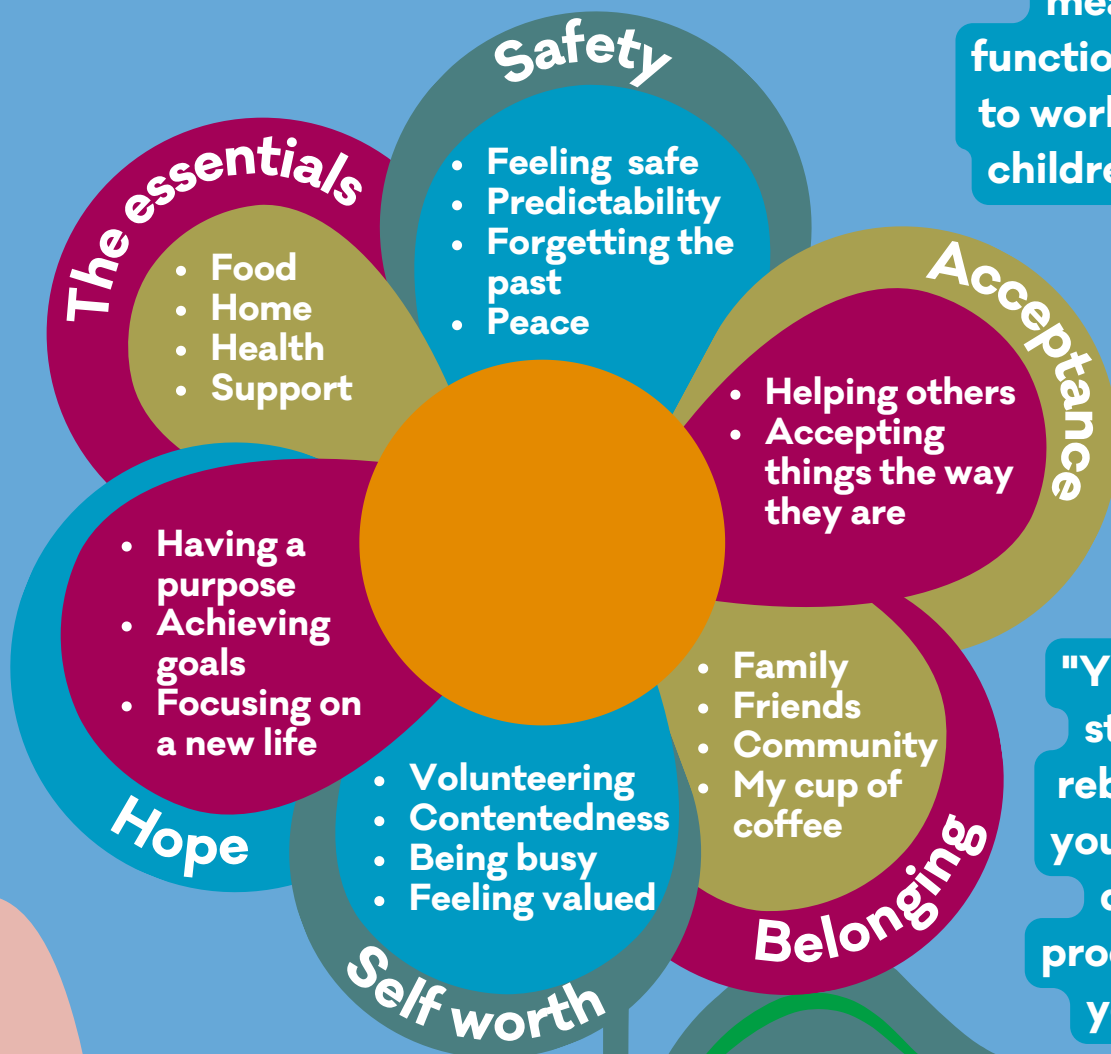


What does 'wellbeing' mean for people seeking sanctuary?



"Anything that will make you feel happy, make you forget about maybe your past experience and help you focus on a new life".

" For me, wellbeing has absolutely different meaning now. If I can function, if I can wake up, go to work, if I can cook for my children without thinking."



"You have to be really strong and ready to rebuild your life. But if you lost your wellbeing during the asylum process you might lose your future as well"

Meaningful compassion starts with understanding

What has a positive impact on wellbeing for people seeking sanctuary?



1. Volunteering

"I kept myself busy all the time. I volunteered ... giving from my time, actually from my stressful time, to help others. But the return back for me was I built a little bit of resilience for myself, and all my day I was busy"

2. Third places (not accommodation or organisation, but a place where a person can relax)

"Going to gym makes me forget my story, I don't like thinking about it."

3. Education and learning new skills

"Learning helps your wellbeing because it gives you the positive view of the future"

4. Feel valued

"This organisation is sanctuary for us as ambassadors . They always appreciate the work we did ... this kind of things really mean to us."

5. Support from charities and peer support

"This centre helped a lot of people, raised them to achieve their goals, get confidence, support everywhere, accommodation, food, everything. And they are kind-hearted. They really do help."



What has a negative impact on wellbeing for people seeking sanctuary?



1. Uncertainty and limbo

"The big problem is because they don't process our cases. The people just waiting and waiting for long time. No change. We lost hope. All of us."

2. Stigma

"There are people, who don't know you, or don't know why you are here. They think that you just go steal their money, their jobs, their houses"

3. Loneliness

'When I came here, I was lonely, I couldn't see people. Even when I see people I don't even know how scared, little bit afraid like, lot of shame through my head. But the problem that how I would stop the feeling of loneliness'.

4. 'We are nothing'

"They don't give us a right, any right. Our right, just to eat, get that £40 to eat and sleep. Other things we don't have any right, we feel like we're not humans".

"We really don't want it to be a constant narrative of pity and misery"

5. Forced poverty

"If you don't have enough money, how you can do wellbeing activity? The bus ticket is very expensive for me. And be able to reach education places..., so many places you could volunteer and keep yourself active and productive, and take your mind away'.

6. 'Lost' childhood

'Our kids don't grow up like other children. It means they don't have a home. OK, don't feel for us. We already ruined our life. But how about our kids? They don't know nothing. They don't deserve this'.

7. Language barrier

'You feel you are lost. You feel you know nothing. ...You feel you are in the jungle and you don't know where the way out of it is when you can't speak everything you are told, you just nod your head. Yes, yes, yes, yes. You smile pretending you're smiling.



What can help support wellbeing for people seeking sanctuary?



1. Improving time and quality of processing asylum claims

"If they process our cases properly, everything is going to change. As you get your answer, you can work and you can start your life"

2. Right to work

"The most important thing if I can work"

"You might be a teacher, a business person or an educationist. You shouldn't be left like that because this kills a lot"

3. Equal opportunities

"The government has to look into all these areas where there is discrimination against asylum seekers, and people are deprived of so many rights and opportunities. They should look into those areas. And if those things are sorted, definitely the level of wellbeing would be highly increased"

4. Making third places accessible to people receiving asylum support

The Government could be providing things that save some of those who are on asylum support... if someone want to get some mental health support, someone might tell them to go to the gym ... But you can't do that on asylum support. So the government could be kind of putting those things in place... providing things that you know that could help wellbeing in that sense.'

5. Building connections with local communities and volunteering

'Very important for the new arrivals to involve and not to isolate themselves... to be like involved in local communities and networks. So we shouldn't isolate ourselves as well. We have to integrate. We have to ask ... and it's not shame not to know for the first time, but it's shame to ... like not to know for a long time. So, it's better to involve yourself in in local communities and networks.

6. Providing long-term funding to charities

'You just know no funding is guaranteed'

