



in collaboration with

MENTAL  
HEALTH  
at WORK



A guide to actions to take  
for **YOURSELF**,  
for **SOMEONE ELSE**,  
for **ALL OF US**

# TAKE ACTION

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for mental health

While mental health awareness is vital, real change requires action.  
This guide outlines actions we can all take to support mental health for everyone.

# Take action for mental health

**Many of us are aware and understand that we all have mental health, but we may not know what actions we can take, and with resilience often mis-sold as the ability to keep pushing ourselves without negative consequences, it can leave us feeling overwhelmed and isolated.**

However, true resilience increases when we can offer ourselves and others permission to explore our feelings, share our experiences, and find new ways to cope with the many challenges that come with being human.

Acknowledging what we are carrying and accepting the limitations that this might bring is important for our ongoing resilience.

This, along with regular actions, can help us to improve our wellbeing, better support others, and even have a positive impact on our wider communities and in the workplace.

**This guide provides some clear actions we can incorporate into our daily lives, share and embed into our culture as we find a better, more compassionate way forward towards a healthier and more resilient future.**

Daily actions to manage, benefit and support mental health for ourselves, others and everyone.



# For **YOURSELF**

Taking action to support your mental health can help lift your mood in the moment as well as having long-term benefits. We can put this into action with the following steps:

## DAILY CHECK-INS

Use a meaningful scale to consider where you are at. Some things to consider include:

- ▶ **How am I feeling physically?**
- ▶ **How much energy do I have to meet the demands of today?**
- ▶ **How much am I currently taking on?**
- ▶ **What is the mental load?**
- ▶ **What can I do to allow for more space?**
- ▶ **Do I feel resourced or supported to cope with my demands?**



## KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

It's easy to lose sight of the many things in our lives that can give us comfort and strength. By considering what resources we have available, we are able to keep them accessible and can then benefit most when we need them. Our resources can be people, places or even things.

**PEOPLE:** Who is in my corner? Who makes me feel safe and seen? Who could offer help?

**PLACES:** Where do I feel most at peace? Where do I feel connected or a sense of belonging?

**THINGS:** What brings me joy? What provides comfort? What energises or grounds me?



## DAILY PRACTICES

- **Prioritise sleep**
- **Eat for energy**
- **Stay hydrated**
- **Spend time outdoors**
- **5 minutes of sunlight within 30-60 minutes of waking helps regulate our circadian rhythm and cortisol curve, improving resilience to stress throughout the day.**
- **Practice self-care**
- **Meet yourself with kindness**
- **Try something new\***
- **Take regular breaks\***
- **Be conscious of your breathing and incorporate breathwork into your routine**



## TRY SOMETHING NEW

New foods, new activities and experiences, new routines can all reenergise and reinvigorate.



## TAKE REGULAR BREAKS

### 20-20-20

The 20-20-20 rule is a simple yet effective guideline designed to help individuals, particularly those with high screen time. This rule suggests that for every 20 minutes working, you should take a break and focus on an object approximately 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.



# For **SOMEONE ELSE**

Supporting people around us with their mental health isn't always easy. But there are ways to make a difference.

# Key actions we can take

## ACTIVE LISTENING

The core elements of active listening are acceptance, being genuine and empathy. When we listen without judgment, or goal or intent, we can offer validation which helps create hope, empowerment and acceptance.



## AVOID THE BLAME GAME

If you accidentally cause offense, take the time to apologise meaningfully, reflect on what happened and take those learnings forward.

## SUPPORT NOT SOLUTIONS

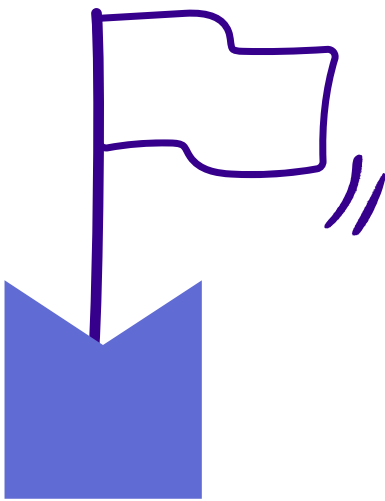
Offer practical support or information and avoid offering solutions, taking over and 'fixing'. Allow the other person to guide you on how they wish to be supported, and if they are not sure, get curious with them about what might help.



# For **ALL OF US**

While we are increasing our awareness of mental health, we still need to challenge the stigma, increase our understanding, and strive for equity in the workplace, community, and the services available to break cycles of poor mental health for everyone.

# Actions that can benefit everyone



## BE AN ALLY

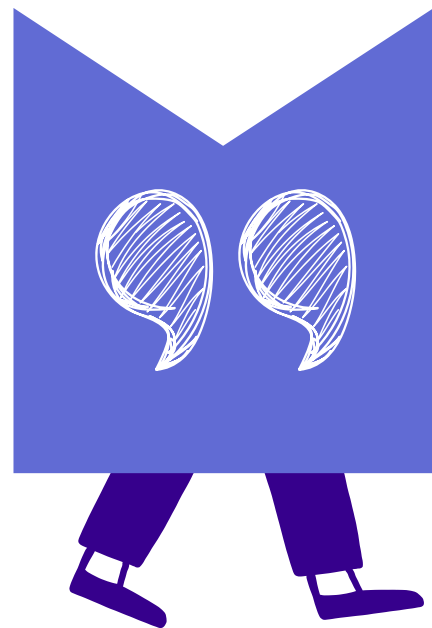
Allyship is actions, behaviour and practices that support, amplify, and advocate with others, most especially with individuals who don't belong to the same social identities as ourselves.

Allyship takes work, so educate yourself on the experiences of others through books, websites and videos from reputable sources and speak to individuals about their unique experience of the world rather than assume an understanding.

## CHALLENGING STIGMA

Consider how your words, actions and behaviours may contribute to the stigma that still exists around mental health and issues that affect our mental health.

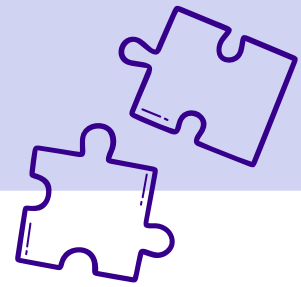
Challenge and call out stigma, beliefs and behaviours that are harmful or prevent others from feeling seen and belonging.



## BECOME CONSCIOUS OF INDIVIDUALITY AND UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

It can be difficult to see how others may experience the world unless we acknowledge what blind spots we may have. By considering the characteristics that make us unique and any advantages they may offer in certain situations, we can then consider if we are failing to be inclusive of the needs of others.

The characteristics to consider include cognitive skills, personality traits and the things that shape our identity, such as race, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, culture and socio-economic background.



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**This resource was produced by the Mental Health Foundation in collaboration with Mental Health at Work.**

Mental Health at Work (MHaW) is dedicated to transforming workplace culture by prioritising mental health and wellbeing through educational programmes and seminars to our clients across a multitude of sectors, both in the UK and internationally.

Our registered trademarked and CPD accredited inhouse programmes such as MHaW Understand, MHaW Manage® and MHaW Allies® combine with partnership initiatives such as the e-learning course 'Mental Health & Wellbeing in the Modern Workplace' developed alongside the Mental Health Foundation plus a range of MHFA England® programmes including MHFAider®, Champion and Refresher training all delivered by certified MHFA England instructors make us the go to partner for your organisation.'

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