

-MAPS month of wellbeing-

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Breath and emotions are connected in a feedback loop. Use the breath to calm emotions by taking deep breaths.

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Notice your breath. Is your breath shallow or is your breath deep? Practice checking in with your breath in this way often throughout the day.

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Challenge Your Thoughts. Our thoughts affect how we feel and behave. By Simply noticing unhelpful thoughts or patterns of behaviour we can begin to see things differently and improve how we feel.

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Breathe in for 4 seconds, Breathe out for 6 seconds. Practice for 5 - 10 minutes.

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Connect with little creatures. Go on a dog walk, cuddle a cat, caress a hamster, watch birds flying in the sky, observe the creepy crawlies in your garden.

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How we sleep effects how we feel. Notice the times you wake feeling tired or groggy. Notice the times you wake feeling alert and ready for the day. What time did you go to bed/wake up? Regular sleep patterns make us feel better.

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If a worry is weighing you down.... Ask yourself what advice you would give to a good friend in a similar position.

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Write your worries down and then throw the piece of paper away.

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In a notebook write down 3 little nice things each day. Before you go to sleep read your 3 nice things. Sweet dreams!

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Do something nice for someone else. Notice how it makes you feel.

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Smile at someone. Notice when someone smiles at you.

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Have a long warm bubbly bath.

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Listen / dance to your favourite song or album.

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Message a friend you haven't spoken to in a while.

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Do some baking. If you are new to baking, have a go still. Bake what you fancy eating; cookies, cupcakes, bread....

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Have a pillow fight!

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Tell some jokes and have a giggle.

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Get some fresh air.

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Go on a long walk or a bike ride.

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Give yourself a foot or hand massage (or both) before bed. Take your time to slowly massage each part of your hand or foot.

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Spend a few minutes in a calm space noticing your breathing.

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Play a game with family or friends.

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Watch your favourite feel good film.

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Take a blank piece of paper. Paint a picture, do some doodling, draw a pattern, write a poem, fold it up and make your own origami model.

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Do you have a favourite tree? Have you ever sat with that tree and allowed its trunk to support you? Listened to it's leaves or gazed up to the sky and watched the clouds floating by beyond its branches?

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Find a cosy spot to read a book or magazine.

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Research has shown that cold water immersion is good for our mental health. Start your day splashing cold water on your face or finish off your morning shower with a minute's blast of cold water.

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Go on a walk and take photos of things you find interesting.

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Meditate for 10 minutes each day. Close your eyes. Count each in and out breath until you reach 10 and then start again.

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Get into bed with a hot water bottle and a good book.

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Make an assault course in the garden/park using everyday objects. Buckets/ balls/ hats/ chairs to crawl under. Use your imagination. Make it silly.

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Find out more at www.vcsutton.org.uk/maps/mentoring