

Mind Bath

Wellbeing for over 55's



Food for
Thought

www.bathmind.org.uk

Breathing to reduce stress



This calming breathing technique for stress, anxiety and panic, takes just a few minutes and can be done anywhere.

Make yourself comfortable. If you're sitting, place your arms on the chair arms; if you're standing or sitting, place both feet flat on the ground.

1

Let your breath flow as deep down into your belly as is comfortable, without forcing it.

2

Try breathing in through your nose, out through your mouth.

3

Breathe gently and regularly - some people find it helpful to count from 1 to 5 as you breathe in. You may not reach 5 at first, that's OK, just try to do what you feel comfortable with.

4

After breathing in, without pausing or holding your breath, let your breath flow out gently - counting from 1 to 5 as you exhale.

Practise this for about 3-5 minutes; make it part of your daily self-care routine, if you can.

You can perform this exercise as often as needed. It can be done standing up, sitting down, or lying down. If you find this exercise difficult or believe it is making you anxious or panicky, stop for now. Try it again in a day or so and build up the time slowly and gradually.

You can find lots more resources, tips and activities on our website
www.bathmind.org.uk/advice-and-support/wellbeing-activities/

Our Top 5 Anti-Ageing Exercises

As we grow older, many of us invest a lot of time, thought and money into attempting to avoid the natural process of ageing. If you are searching for an all-natural method that could protect your brain, bones and muscles from some of the effects of ageing, the answer could in fact be as simple as incorporating a balanced exercise programme into your life.

1. Cardiovascular exercise

This form of exercise is essential for heart health. Walking is a great form of this type of exercise. Trying to reach the often mentioned ideal of 10,000 steps a day may not be possible for everyone, but aiming for 30 minutes 5 days a week may be more achievable. Remember that this can be broken up into chunks, for example walking for 10 minutes three times per day. Swimming and cycling are also great examples of cardiovascular exercise.

2. Strength training

This type of exercise may help to prevent muscle wastage. Squats and lunges are examples of these and can be performed in your own home without any specific equipment. Always ensure you have the correct technique, and consult a professional if you are unsure. Two to three times per week and 10-15 reps for each exercise is a good guideline. HIIT or High Intensity Interval training is a great way to combine strength training and cardiovascular exercise.

3. Flexibility

Try to include stretching exercises at least twice a week and hold each stretch for 30-60 seconds. Yoga is a great way of building up and maintaining flexibility - try to find a beginners class near you.

4. Focus on core strength

Our core muscles form part of our inner musculature that helps to support our spine and keep us upright. This helps to ensure we maintain a good posture and can help to prevent back problems. Pilates classes can benefit core and back strength as well as exercises using stability balls.

5. Balance

Falls can become more common as we grow older and become more unstable on our feet. It is therefore very important to work on maintaining our balance. This should ideally form part of any exercise programme. Simple movements like supporting yourself while trying to stand on one leg at a time may help to improve balance.



If you would like to get active, meet new people and learn more about how to support your wellbeing, get in touch to find out more about our workshops and courses.



www.bathmind.org.uk

Bath Mind is an independent charity dedicated to supporting people in B&NES.
Charity Reg No: 1069403

Creative Writing for Wellbeing

Creative writing can help us in many ways, you don't need to be an experienced writer to benefit from putting your pen to paper. As well as being fun, insightful, relaxing (and free!), creative writing doesn't need to be complicated. Here are some ideas to get you started on your writing journey:

First, decide why you are writing, is it for self-expression or creativity? You might want to consider what you want to write. Here are some different forms of creative writing that you might enjoy:

- Journaling
- Poetry
- Short stories
- Lists
- Fiction
- Memoir/Autobiography
- Letters

Journaling:

If you are looking to gain awareness about a particular issue, or you just want a way to express yourself, journaling can be a helpful support.

Prompts can include:

Did something happen today? Is there a special moment you'd like to remember? How did an encounter with someone make you feel?

Top tip: don't worry about spelling or punctuation, just allow the words to come.

Letters:

Letters are a great way to tell someone how you feel or let someone know what you have been doing. It is also worth remembering that letters don't have to be sent.

Why not write a letter to your future self? Or write to ancestor you wished you had known?

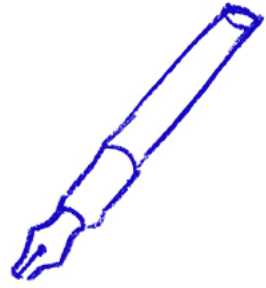
Top tip: you can tap into your imagination to write a response to yourself to gain deeper insights.

Writing Fiction:

Stories can be fun and creative. They can be dark and serious, captivating, and mysterious. If there's a story you want to write, just give it try. Why not bring in some characters and dialogue to bring your story alive!

Top tip: read stories and other genres by other authors to learn different styles of writing.

Things to consider when you're writing for your wellbeing:



- Safety - avoid getting overwhelmed. We recommend you set a timer, it's amazing how much you can write in just 5 minutes.
- Follow a prompt – a blank page can be a daunting prospect, decide on a couple of words to start with, and let the rest follow.
- Are you an early bird or a night owl? - choose a time of day that feels right, perhaps you'll find it easier to write with the sun rising or when dusk is falling?
- Move your body - give your hands a stretch and a pat on your back after writing.
- Don't rush - set your writing aside and read it later. It's personal choice if you want to keep it, edit or throw away any cathartic writing.



If you're interested in joining a Creative Writing for Wellbeing group at Bath Mind, please contact wellbeing@bathmind.org.uk or call 07538 113890 to find out more.

Ingredients

1250g dark chocolate (70%)
250g unsalted butter
4 large eggs
250g golden caster sugar
2 heaped tablespoons self-raising flour
2 heaped tablespoons cocoa powder



Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas 4.
Tear off a large piece of greaseproof paper, scrunch it up under cold water, then unfold and use it to line a 20cm square baking tin.
Snap the chocolate into a heatproof bowl, dice the butter and add with a pinch of sea salt. Melt over a pan of gently simmering water, stirring regularly, then remove from the heat and leave to cool slightly.
Crack the eggs into a large bowl, then add the sugar and whisk until light, pale and fluffy.
Sieve in the flour, followed by the cocoa. Whisk to combine, then fold through the melted chocolate.
Spoon the mixture into the lined tin and spread it out evenly. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until crisp on the outside but slightly wobbly.

Leave to cool in the tin for 15 minutes before slicing and serving warm – delicious with vanilla ice cream, crushed hazelnuts and caramel popcorn.

Tips for Eating on a Budget

- Plan your meals - this helps reduce waste.
- Make a shopping list and only buy what's on your list.
- Batch cook meals, freezing portions for another day.
- Cook from scratch - raw ingredients are much cheaper than 'ready meals'.
- Buy reduced items and freeze them for use another day.
- Consider your portion size - you may be able to reuse leftovers for another meal.
- Have more 'meat free' days. Use beans, pulses and legumes (such as lentils) to replace meat.
- Check the 'price per 100g' price.

One Pot Fruit and Nut Porridge

A delicious 10 minute energy-boosting alternative to cereal that will keep you full until lunchtime. This meal is high in fibre and healthy unsaturated fats which help lower cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of heart disease.

This recipe makes ONE serving but can be doubled, tripled or even quadrupled to make many meals in bulk. Store it in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 4 days and reheat in a microwave until piping hot.

Suitable for vegetarians. This recipe can be made vegan by switching the milk for any plant-based milk.

INGREDIENTS

50g oats
1/2 tbsp chia seeds
1tsp cinnamon
150ml milk
A handful of blueberries
A handful of almonds

METHOD

1. Add the oats, chia seeds and cinnamon to a pot and mix.
2. Add the milk and mix well. Heat over a medium-high heat for around 7-8 minutes, until most of the liquid has been absorbed.
3. Serve the porridge with the blueberries and almonds.

Tip: If you like your porridge runnier, just add more milk!



How our Food affects our Mood

Balancing Blood Sugar

How can we ensure blood sugar balance is maintained and mood is therefore more stable?

Try to eat regularly (eg: 3 meals and 2 healthy snacks a day)

Include plenty of fibre (wholegrains, fruit and vegetables)

Include protein in every meal

Reduce sugar and caffeine

Choose foods with low glycaemic load...
what does this mean?...

Glycaemic Index

Foods with High GI release sugar (glucose) quickly, resulting in a rapid rise in blood sugar levels; a sugar spike. In contrast, low GI foods release sugar gradually over a number of hours, resulting in less insulin being produced.

Fruit and Vegetables

Ensuring you get at least 5 a day is essential to provide adequate intake of vitamins.

All of these nutrients are important for different reasons - they play a role in our physical AND mental health. B vitamins particularly play an important role in producing brain chemical needed to regulate our mood. Try to 'eat a rainbow' - including more vegetables than fruit.

Some fruit can be high in sugar which can affect blood sugar, so choose low GI options where possible.

How can you increase your intake of fruit and vegetables?

My Recipes



One Pot

Spanish Chicken and Rice

A super easy, hassle-free meal, perfect for a mid-week dinner. Not only is this meal high in protein, it also contains Vitamin C, which is necessary for the development, growth and repair of body tissues.

This recipe makes ONE serving, but can be doubled, tripled or even quadrupled to make many meals in bulk. Store it in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 3 days, and reheat in a microwave until piping hot.

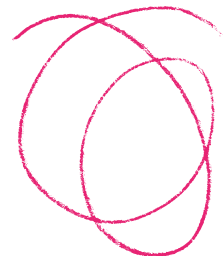
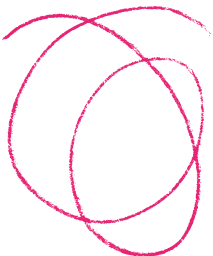
This recipe can be made vegan by switching the chicken for plant-based chicken pieces and the chicken stock for vegetable stock.

INGREDIENTS

1 chicken breast
2 tbsp olive oil
1/2 tsp smoked paprika
1/4 tsp garlic powder
1/4 tsp salt
1/4 tsp ground cumin
1/4 tsp chilli flakes (optional)
30g rice (uncooked)
150ml low sodium chicken stock
20ml lemon juice
Coriander to serve
Lemon slices to serve

METHOD

1. Place the chicken breast in a pot and drizzle with olive oil, paprika, garlic powder, salt, ground cumin and chilli flakes. Toss to coat well.
2. Heat the pot over high heat. Cook the chicken for 2-3 minutes on each side until browned. Transfer to a plate.
3. To the pot, add the rice, chicken stock and lemon juice. Stir to combine.
4. Return the chicken to the pot on top of the rice. Cover and cook for 20-25 minutes until all the liquid is absorbed by the rice and the chicken is cooked through.
5. Serve with lemon slices and coriander.





Need support with your mental health, but don't know where to turn?

You are not alone:

These services are free of charge. Open to all aged 16+ living in B&NES.

Access Community Mental Health

If you need support with your mental health, the team will walk alongside you every step of the way.

Freephone: 0808 175 1369

Email: access@bathmind.org.uk

Open: 9am-5.30pm Monday to Sunday

Breathing Space Evening Support

Experiencing poor mental health, struggling with emotional distress, suicidal ideation or feeling overwhelmed?

Freephone: 0808 175 1369

Email: breathingspace@bathmind.org.uk

Lines open: 5.30pm-11pm Monday to Sunday

The STOPP Technique

Right now, what do you need to help you find a sense of calm?

STOP

Pause for a moment.
Do not react immediately.

TAKE A BREATH

Breathe slowly in through the nose, then breathe out through the mouth.

OBSERVE

- What thoughts are going through your mind?
- What are you reacting to?
- What sensations do you notice in your body?

PULL BACK

GET SOME PERSPECTIVE

- What's the bigger picture?
- Think: What advice would I give to a friend or would they give to me?
- Is this thought, fact or an opinion?
- How important is this?
- How important will it be in 6 months' time?

PRACTICE WHAT WORKS

PROCEED

- What is the best thing to do right now?
- What is the most helpful thing for me, for others, for the situation?
- Where can I focus my attention right now?
- Do what will be effective and appropriate.

Visit www.bathmind.org.uk for more information and resources.

NORDIC WALKING

A great addition to your exercise regime

One form of outdoor exercise that continues to grow in popularity is Nordic Walking. One of the reasons for this is the fact that it provides a full body workout that is easy on joints and suitable for all ages and fitness levels.

What is Nordic Walking?

It originally started as a summer training regime for cross-country skiers. It is like ordinary walking but using specially designed walking poles which harness the power of the upper body to propel you forward. In this way walking is turned into a whole-body exercise.

Who can do Nordic Walking?

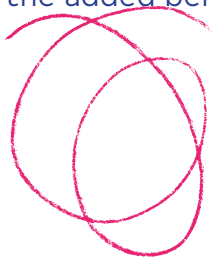
It is suitable for people of all ages and fitness levels. Those with health concerns may be able to participate in gentle walks whilst those who are looking to challenge their bodies can do workout walks.

What do I need to get started?

A pair of Nordic walking poles are the main requirement. These poles are specially designed to take the weight off the knees and lower body making you feel lighter. They can usually be purchased through a Nordic Walking instructor. Good comfortable walking shoes and appropriate clothing are also recommended. Although Nordic Walking can be done virtually anywhere outdoors - it is a good idea to learn the correct technique from a certified instructor. Have a look online to find your nearest walking group or session.

What are the health benefits?

Nordic Walking is a form of moderate activity which, when combined with a healthy lifestyle, diet and exercise programme can lower your risk of chronic illnesses. It has the added benefit of being easy on the joints.



Tips for maintaining good posture during exercise

It can sometimes feel like hard work to maintain good posture when going about daily tasks but particularly when exercising. It is, however really important to ensure a good posture when working out as it can help to reduce the risk of muscle and joint strains, falls and injuries.

When we exercise we often put our bodies into lots of different positions and overload them using weights or increasing intensity or speed of movements which can lead to injury if not performed correctly. Good posture throughout is therefore a crucial part of this.

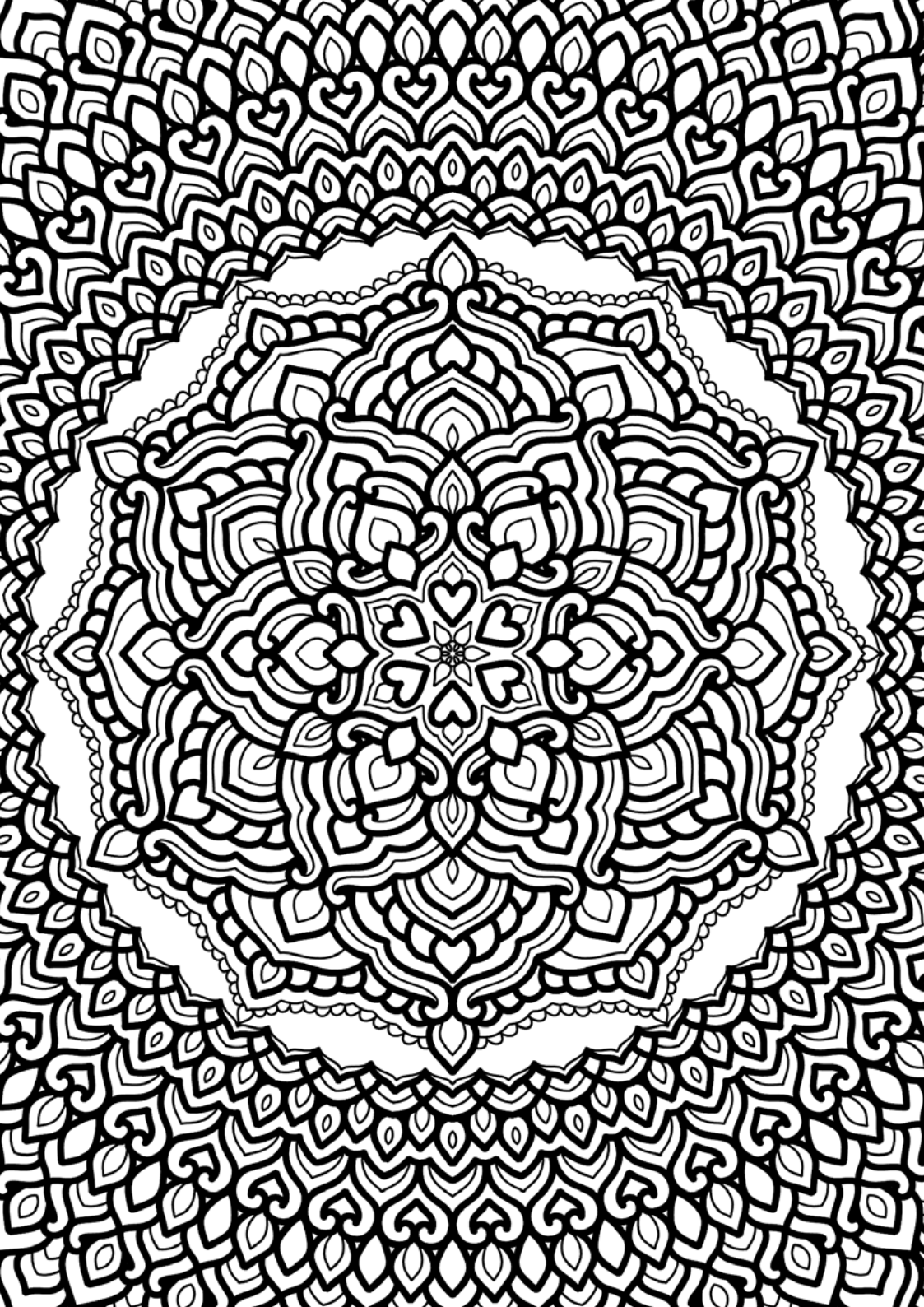
According to Michigan State University Extension, these are the most important recommendations to take into account in terms of correct posture and form whilst exercising:

- Your neck should remain in line with your spine
- Align your chin, neck and ears over shoulders
- Keep your back straight
- Shoulders should be back, relaxed and down
- Don't lock your knees, relax them
- Pelvis should be slightly tucked under while pulling your belly button back towards your spine

It can be useful to run through this checklist in your mind each time you start to perform an exercise – using mirrors may also be helpful in this situation to help you take note of which areas you may need to work on.

Good posture can reduce the occurrence of injuries – sometimes injuries or pain can be a direct result of poor posture. It also allows muscles to be used as they are intended thereby increasing energy levels and reducing fatigue. By standing more upright with the spine in a neutral position, the lungs will not be compressed lung capacity may be increased which can improve your breathing. Proper body alignment can improve blood flow which can have a positive effect on circulation and digestion.

Certain exercises can help to strengthen the muscles that are particularly important for maintaining a good posture. Increasing core strength and muscles in the back may be especially helpful. Consult a fitness professional regarding specific exercise and how to perform these correctly in order to ensure good form and improve posture.



Come and join us!

Bath Mind's groups are a great way to connect with others and enjoy different activities. You can see the full range of groups we offer on our website www.bathmind.org.uk, or call us to join and find out more.

Greenlinks

Greenlinks is a community support group offering people with mental and physical health issues the opportunity to engage in gardening activities linked to 5 Ways to Wellbeing (Connect, Learn, Be Active, Give and Take Notice). Greenlinks provides an opportunity for people to stay in touch with nature, meeting on our allotments at Monksdale Road and Ammerdown Estate.

Monksdale Road Allotments Tuesday 11.30am-2.30pm
 Thursday 10am-1pm

Open Opportunities

A non-judgemental space to connect with others and improve wellbeing, centred around the 5 Ways to Wellbeing (Connect, Learn, Be Active, Give and Take Notice). The sessions often involve a guest speaker or a lead activity such as art, mindful drawing, quizzes, drama sessions and the occasional day out! Bath Mind facilitators are on hand to offer 1:1 support and to help with access to other services.

Every Monday from 1pm to 2.30pm at The Bubble, central Bath

Hopespace

An evening group meeting in central Bath in a comfortable and warm setting, for conversation, games, quizzes and fun. The group is supported by Bath Mind staff and volunteers, to offer mental health and wellbeing support and guidance, and signposting to other services where necessary.

Tuesday 6pm-8pm, The Bubble, St John's, central Bath.

Contact: Telephone: 01225 316367 or 07538 113 890
 Email: wellbeing@bathmind.org.uk

You can also self-refer on our website: www.bathmind.org.uk/wellbeingreferral/

Wellbeing Walks

Short, gentle walks led by volunteers from Bath Mind and Bathscape. A relaxed and friendly social space to meet new people, get some fresh air and enjoy nature.

Thursdays 11am, Monksdale Road Allotment Car Park (BA2 2JD)
Contact: info@bathscape.co.uk Text: 0781 664 1745 (Lucy)

Mental Health & Wellbeing Support



Breathing Space - Evening Support

Telephone: 0808 175 1369

Email: breathingspace@bathmind.org.uk

This is a free service. Every day 5.30pm-11pm.



Access Community Mental Health

Telephone: 0808 175 1369

access@bathmind.org.uk

Self refer by phone or email.

This is a free service. Monday to Sunday 9am to 5.30pm



Befriending

Telephone: 0300 247 0050

befriending@bathmind.org.uk

Self refer by phone or email.

This is a free service.



Wellbeing Support Groups

Groups and activities

Self refer by phone or email.

wellbeing@bathmind.org.uk / 07538 113890

Suggested donation of £4 per session.



Safe Space Youth Group (age 16-25)

Telephone/Text: 07538 113890

email: wellbeing@bathmind.org.uk

Self refer by phone, text or email.

This is a free service.



For more information and opening hours
visit our website:

www.bathmind.org.uk/our-services/