



# Wellbeing for over 55's



# How GP practices are working now

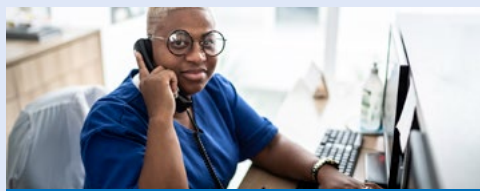
Your GP practice has been open throughout the pandemic with everyone working hard to continue to provide services. The pandemic is not over and we still need to keep you and our staff safe from the risk of infection. That's why we are offering different types of appointments such as phone and video consultations, so you don't have to come into the surgery unless you need to.



## I wanted to see my GP, why am I seeing someone else?

Not everyone needs to see a GP. Practices have a range of healthcare professionals, such as nurses, pharmacists, physios and mental health workers who are the experts in diagnosing and treating health conditions.

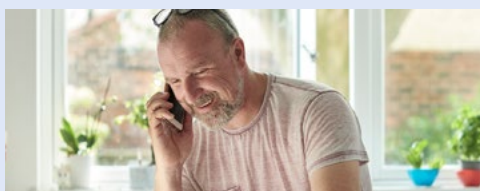
You'll see the right person for your condition as quickly as possible.



## Why do receptionists ask personal questions?

Our trained GP reception staff are a vital part of the practice team. They need to ask questions to make sure you get the right support from the best person in the practice.

All the information you share with the receptionist is treated strictly confidentially.



## Why can't I have a face-to-face appointment?

With infection control measures still in place in your surgery, phone and video consultations have helped us to treat more patients every day than we would be able to see safely face-to-face. We will give you the best type of appointment with the right health professional as quickly as possible.

You will always be seen face-to-face if you need to.



## Where else can I get help?

Visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) for advice on common symptoms and a list of local services or speak to your NHS community pharmacist for personal care and advice on minor illnesses.

If you need help with minor injuries at any time or urgent care when your GP practice or community pharmacy is closed visit [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk) or dial 111 to speak to someone who can help.

Always dial 999 in a life-threatening emergency.

# Eating Well On a Budget



Food For Thought give you some tips on how to eat a healthy, balanced diet, and save money .

- 1 Plan Your Meals**

Planning meals helps reduce waste, and helps you budget so that you only buy what you need. **Use recipe books or websites for inspiration and ideas. You can find lots of recipes on our website.**
- 2 Write a Shopping List**

When you have planned your meals, write a shopping list. Only buy what you need. **Use our handy Shopping List sheet to help.**
- 3 Cook from Scratch**

Avoid buying 'ready meals' - they are more expensive and often less nutritious than home-made. Avoid convenience foods - grating your own cheese / cutting and preparing your own fruit, vegetables, meat and fish is much cheaper and healthier than buying pre-prepared foods or highly processed foods such as cheese strings!
- 4 Consider your Portion Size**

You may choose to prepare one portion at a time, or you may batch cook and freeze extra portions. Batch cooking can sometimes enable you to avoid waste and save on cooking time.
- 5 Re-use Leftovers**

You may have enough to save some for lunch the next day. You can adapt leftovers to make something different and new - for example, leftovers from a roast dinner could be made into a pie.
- 6 Have more Meat-Free Days**

Use beans, pulses and legumes (such as lentils) to replace meat proteins. Soya or quorn can also replace meat in many dishes.
- 7 Shop Online if Possible**

This can help to avoid the temptation to pick up things in store which aren't on your shopping list. Avoid offers which tempt you into buying things you don't need.
- 8 Check the 'per 100g' Price**

Generally it is much cheaper to buy loose items rather than pre-packaged.
- 9 Buy Frozen Fruit & Vegetables**

Buying frozen fruit and vegetables helps avoid waste. You only use what you need, the rest will always keep for another time.
- 10 Freeze!**

Buy reduced items if shopping in store - only if they are on your list. Many things can be frozen until you need them. Freeze leftover bread, meat and other foods to use another time, instead of throwing them out.
- 11 Avoid Take-away Food**

Take-away food can be expensive and may be of lower nutritional value than home-made. If you have a favourite take-away food, try to recreate this yourself at home.

**What are grounding techniques?**

Grounding techniques can help to control symptoms such as anxiety and flashbacks, which we may experience after a traumatic event. They help us focus on the present moment, turning our attention away from uncomfortable thoughts, memories or worries.

**A-Z &  
Categories  
Technique**

Choose some categories and list as many items as you can under each theme. You can start by just listing items - to make it harder, try to make them A-Z.

Pick a category and start thinking!

<b>Films and TV Shows</b>	<b>Books</b>	<b>Animals</b>	<b>Famous People</b>
<b>Household Objects</b>	<b>Countries of the World</b>	<b>Fruit &amp; Vegetables</b>	<b>Football Teams</b>
<b>Authors &amp; Poets</b>	<b>Cities</b>	<b>Nuts &amp; Grains</b>	<b>Types of Transport</b>

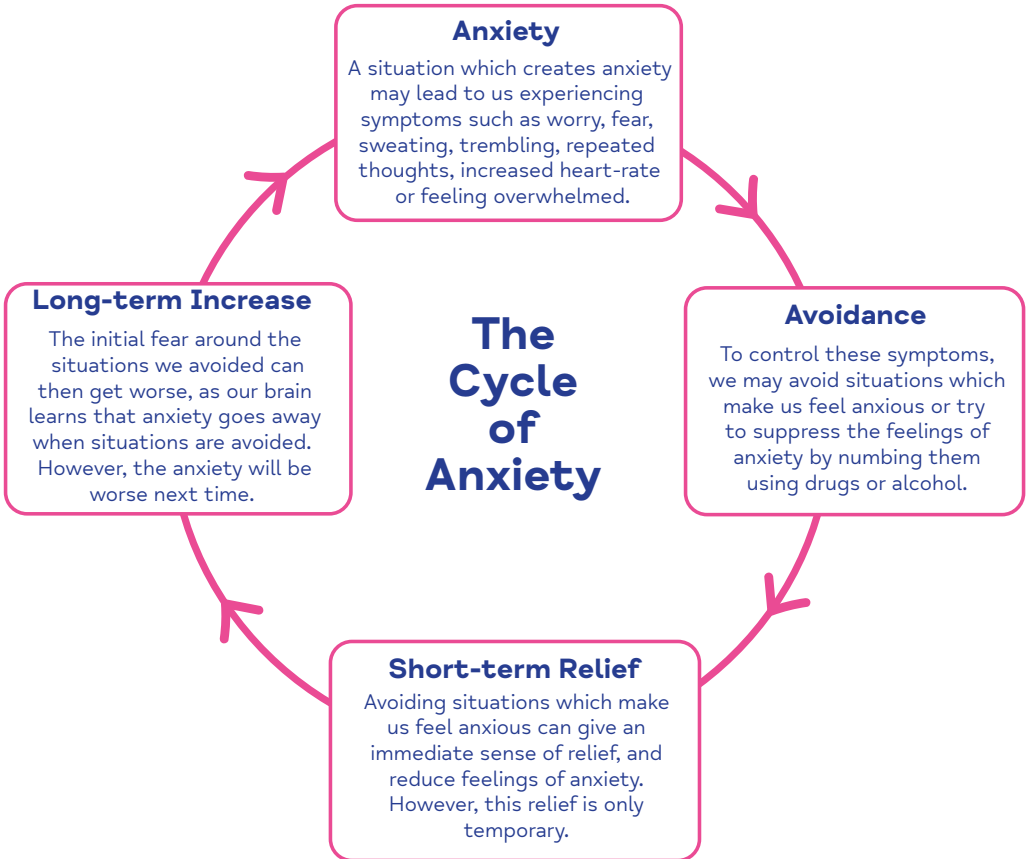
You can use our handy worksheet to write your lists down.



## What is anxiety?

Anxiety is a natural human response to times when we may feel under threat. We may feel worried, tense or afraid about things which we think could happen. Most people feel anxious at times, particularly when coping with stressful events. Everyone's experience of anxiety is different.

Humans have developed a "fight, flight or freeze" response, to protect us from danger. Our bodies release hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline. This can be helpful, enabling us to generate action in our lives, or to keep ourselves safe. However, at times this response can be too much and it can become extremely debilitating.



## How to break the cycle of anxiety

It can be difficult living with anxiety, but there are ways to help yourself. Healthy coping skills can help us to manage anxiety. Instead of avoidance, we can learn to face the uncomfortable feelings which anxiety causes and gain confidence in dealing with situations.

**Help managing uncertainty and feelings of overwhelm**

Uncertainty is a normal and inevitable part of life. However, navigating uncertainty can be difficult and prolonged uncertainty can negatively affect our wellbeing.

When we are feeling stressed, anxious or overwhelmed, it can be helpful to look at what is within our control, and what is outside of our control.

Write in the circles things that can and can't be influenced by you.



For example:  
Our practical actions, such as tidying a living space, preparing for something at work or incorporating more movement into your routine.



For example: our work schedule.



For example: larger global issues.

This activity can be empowering and help us to understand what can be managed at this moment, rather than worry and uncertainty becoming overwhelming.

# Breathing for Relaxation



Next time you feel anxious, try this simple relaxation technique:



**Inhale slowly  
and deeply  
through  
your nose**

Keep your shoulders relaxed. Your abdomen should expand as you breathe. Your chest should rise very little, as the focus is on breathing from your stomach.



**Exhale  
slowly  
through your  
mouth**

As you breathe out, blow air out and purse your lips very slightly, keeping your jaw relaxed. You may hear a soft 'whooshing' sound as you exhale. Try to think of the word 'out' as you exhale.



**Repeat this  
breathing  
exercise**

Do this for several minutes, until you start to feel better.

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/](http://www.bathmind.org.uk/advice-and-support/wellbeing-activities/)**





# 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.

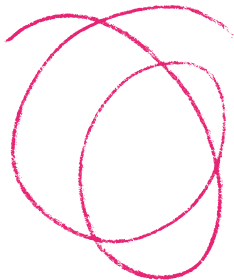
Why not bring in some characters and dialogue to bring your story alive!

**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:

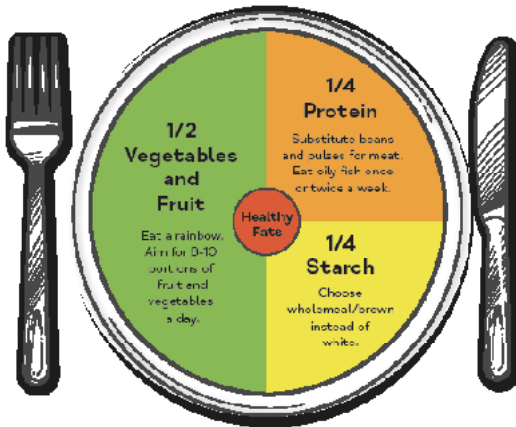
- Safety - avoid getting overwhelmed. We recommend you set a timer, it's amazing how much you can write in just 5 minutes.
- Follow a prompt – a blank page can be a daunting prospect, decide on a couple of words to start with, and let the rest follow.
- Are you an early bird or a night owl? - choose 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](mailto:wellbeing@bathmind.org.uk) or call 07538 113890 to find out more.



# Immune System Support

## A Healthy Plate



Maintaining a healthy diet, to support our immune system, can be a challenge at this time of year. Whilst we all may indulge in less healthy choices, it's important to ensure we maintain balanced nutrition.

Aim to eat 6-8 portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

Stay hydrated, aim to drink 6-8 glasses (approx. 250ml) of water each day.

## The role of zinc in boosting immunity

Zinc is a mineral that has been found to be essential for immune function as well as its role in repairing body tissues and wound healing. The cells of our immune system depend on it to function correctly, it helps to keep our skin healthy and reduces inflammation.

It is found in the highest concentration in oysters and other seafood as well as red meat; but nuts like almonds and cashews; seeds and legumes also contain high amounts of zinc.

Our bodies aren't able to make their own zinc which is why it is so important that we get enough zinc from our food. As zinc isn't stored in the body we need to make sure that we get enough from our diets to fulfil our zinc requirements. This can usually be quite easily achieved by eating a balanced diet and including a variety of fruit and vegetables, some protein rich foods like eggs, meat or legumes, wholegrains, nuts and seeds. Snacking on a small handful of almonds or including some seeds when baking are a good way to increase our intake of this very important nutrient.

If you would like support with food budgeting, nutrition, mental and physical wellbeing, get in touch to find out more about our new courses: [foodforthought@bathmind.org.uk](mailto:foodforthought@bathmind.org.uk)



## Recipe

# Easy Apple Cake



Ingredients (Serves 8)

- 1 cup plain flour
- 1 cup ground almonds
- 3/4 cup sugar (can be replaced with 2tbsp honey or maple syrup if preferred)
- 3/4 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 tsp almond essence (optional)
- 1 tbsp vinegar
- 4 large apples

Method:

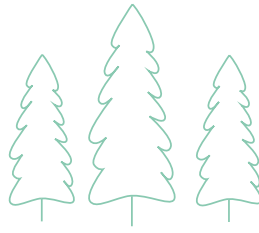
- Mix the wet (liquid) ingredients together
- Mix the dry ingredients together
- Peel, core and slice the apples
- Mix everything together

Bake at 180 degrees for 40 minutes.



You can also decorate the top with some sliced apples. Peel, core and slice an apple, cook over a medium heat for 5-10 minutes with a little butter. Add a sprinkle of cinnamon. Arrange the apple on top of the cake before it goes into the oven.

# Nature for Wellbeing



**Nature has many benefits for our mental and physical wellbeing.**

**Lifts  
Mood**

**Reduces  
Stress**

**Aids  
Relaxation**

**Improves  
Health**

**Improves  
Sociability**

**Improves  
Self-esteem**

## Walking

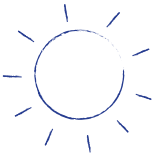


Woods and forests are wonderful places to connect with nature. Take note of your surroundings. Walk mindfully, focussing on the here and now. Look at how the light enters through the trees; touch the bark and feel its texture; observe the wildlife; look at the different colours and textures around you. Listen to the wind rustling through the trees, birds singing. Become aware of your breath as you breathe the forest air; smell woodland flowers.

## Gardens & Parks



Take time to enjoy your garden, if you have one. Sow seeds and watch plants grow. Arrange to meet a friend for a walk and a picnic in a nearby park or garden. Enjoy everything from beautiful floral displays, to daisies and dandelions in the grass. Keep an eye open for animals - there are often squirrels; spot different types of birds; watch butterflies. Try taking your shoes off to connect with the earth; feel the ground under your feet, wiggle your toes in the soft grass.



## Sunshine & Fresh Air

Sunshine and fresh air are good for mind and body. Feel the warmth of the sun and notice how this makes you feel. Keep your home aired by opening the windows. Focus on your breath, and feel yourself relaxing.



## Bring Outdoors In

Those unable to leave home, can still find ways to enjoy nature. Grow a plant in a garden or a window box. Open the windows, let light and fresh air in. Treat yourself to some flowers. Put pictures and photographs of nature on the walls.

**Visit our website for more ways to enjoy nature, and other helpful resources to help support your mental health and wellbeing:**

[www.bathmind.org.uk/resources/wellbeing-activities/](http://www.bathmind.org.uk/resources/wellbeing-activities/)

# How are you sleeping?

The importance of sleep for our mental health.



**On average, we spend around a third of our lives sleeping. When we sleep, our brains process and store new information and our bodies repair cells. These processes all support our mental and physical health. A lack of sleep can affect our overall wellbeing.**

## There is lots we can try to help improve our sleep:

### Look after yourself

How we look after ourselves during the day can also affect how we sleep. Try to avoid big meals before bedtime. Avoid caffeine for several hours before bed. Getting outside and taking in fresh air during the day can be beneficial to our sleep.

### Keep a sleep routine

Going to bed and waking around the same time each day or going to bed when you feel ready to sleep, and waking up at the same time every day can help establish a sleep routine. If you've had a bad night of sleep, avoiding activities because you feel tired may make sleeping that night more difficult.

### Preparing your sleeping area

Experiment with different things such as temperature, light, noise and bedding. Many sleep better in a slightly cooler environment. If your environment is light, you may find wearing a sleep mask helps. Most find they sleep better in quiet environments, but if you don't, try listening to music or a podcast. If your environment is noisy, you may find wearing ear plugs helps. You may sleep better with lighter or heavier weight covers; warmer or cooler bedding.

### Preparing for sleep

Preparation can be very powerful in helping us sleep. Try to avoid screens for an hour or two before bed as the blue light emitted by screens can affect how we sleep. Avoid activities which may stimulate your brain. Breathing exercises, meditation, listening to a relaxing podcast or drinking herbal tea may help some relax and get ready for bed. If your mind is racing with thoughts which are preventing you from relaxing, try writing those thoughts down, reassure yourself that you can address these issues tomorrow, replace them with visualising something that makes you feel calm and relaxed. You may like to try this guided sleep meditation which can help prepare you for sleep: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio/bedtime-meditation/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio/bedtime-meditation/)

### Try to avoid clock watching

If you are finding it hard to fall asleep, try to avoid checking the time. If you can't fall asleep, try getting up and doing a 'mundane' task for a few minutes, then go back to bed. Worrying about the fact that you are not able to sleep can make it harder to sleep. If you're struggling to sleep, do something to relax yourself rather than focussing on negative thoughts. Focussing on your breath can help bring you back to the present moment and calm your mind.

### On waking in the morning.

Try to look at natural daylight before looking at screens - this can help your circadian rhythms and your body's natural 'sleep-wake cycle.'

**When to seek help: If you are finding it difficult to sleep long term, talk to your GP.**

## Information and support

You can find more information and support here: [www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/how-to-get-to-sleep/](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/how-to-get-to-sleep/)

**If you are experiencing difficulties with your sleep or would like support with your wellbeing, you can contact Bath Mind here:  
[www.bathmind.org.uk/resources/get-help-now/](http://www.bathmind.org.uk/resources/get-help-now/)**

# Mental Health & Wellbeing Support



## **Breathing Space - Evening Support**

Telephone: 0808 175 1369

Email: [breathingspace@bathmind.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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/](http://www.bathmind.org.uk/our-services/)