

Mental Health and Wellbeing

1 in 4 people in the UK will experience problems with their mental health each year. Mental health can have a huge impact on our lives.

Here at Heroic Care we believe we have a responsibility to ensure everyone within our organisation has the right to live a healthy lifestyle and that mental wellbeing is maintained.

We recognise that there are many aspects to our lives that can affect our wellbeing:

Wealth – lack of income, living below the bread line, hence living in poor conditions.

Health – long term conditions causing pain both physically and mentally. Sudden onset of illness/hospital admission. Living in denial and self-medicating leading to dependency.

Relationships – bereavement & loss, relationship difficulties, domestic violence, living with a narcissistic type people, dependency, being a carer to an ill partner, identity issues, relationships with parents and siblings.

Career – work issues or work-related stress leading to absence from work, demotion, struggling to get promotion or recognition. Issues with work colleagues, subject to bullying and harassment.

Spirituality – finding the right path that brings Peace. Do you lack Peace in life. Are you questioning and unable to find a way forward? Do you make wise decisions?

Sense of purpose – Questioning - what am I here for? What is my purpose? Am I going round in circles? Am I repeating the same abusive relationships?

When one or more of these are affected, it affects our health & wellbeing.

Before we know it, we can end up deep down in that bucket - struggling to get out.

So, it's important we have a good balance in our lives.

There are tools that can help us get back on track:

Being assertive.

Being confident.

Knowing what we want in life.

Having Self respect .

Having and using our integrity.

Being able to express oneself and being our authentic Self.

Having dreams to aspire to.

Knowing when to move on:

Being able to recognise when things are going wrong and being able to move on from a person or situation.

Being able to recognise when those around us are being disrespectful and how to deal with it.

Having the wisdom and to know what is right for ourselves.

What can we do to improve our health & wellbeing?

Talk to someone you can confide in – there are many support groups out there listed at the end of this article.

Exercise – it doesn't have to cost money eg:

Go for a 20-minute daily walk in nature and take in the oxygen rich air.

Swimming – it has many benefits including inducing relaxation and is a peaceful form of exercise, improves flexibility, and the buoyancy alleviates back and joint pain.

Eat a healthy diet and less processed foods, drink plenty for water to keep hydrated.

Carryout a good sleep hygiene routine – so your body begins to relax down for the evening. Have a routine and include a foot spa, with essentials of your choice. Read a book before sleep and avoid VDU's with the bright screens as they will prevent you from producing serotonin and in turn melatonin. Without melatonin you won't be able to sleep.

Practice relaxation technique – there are lots on YouTube.

Here is a short relaxation: Sitting comfortably, relax your arms down by your sides, feet gently resting on the floor.

Become aware of your breathing: gently breathing in and out. Each time you breath out, relaxing your body into the chair. Allow your shoulders to relax as you breath out.

On your next breath out – relax your back into the chair. Feel yourself becoming more and more relaxed each time you breath out.

Now bring your attention to your jaw, let it relax as you breath out, let your tongue go floppy, relax your cheeks and let your eyes close, smooth away any lines across your forehead as you feel yourself entering a deep relaxation.

Practice mindfulness by stopping every hour and being in the present moment. Ask yourself: What can I hear? What can I see? What can I smell? What do I feel? What can I taste? Become aware of how you are sitting, and how you are feeling. Accept yourself whilst relaxing your shoulders down.

Try beginners meditation – this does not have to be sitting still – we can meditate in nature, drumming, dancing, art.

A short meditation that can be practiced daily:

Begin with the relaxation technique to bring you into the right mindset.

Allow yourself to sit in the Present moment. Imagine yourself walking down a leafy lane feeling very relaxed and at peace with yourself.

You see a gate opening into a field of colourful flowers with a stream running by.

Walking towards the stream you find a clearing to lay down upon. Soft of fern and warm from the sun.

As you lay there looking around at the bright glow around the flowers, the rich green grass, feel the rays from the sun as you begin to breath in the energy from them.

Turn your attention to the clear blue sky. As you breath in draw in the healing energy into your mind and body. Allow it to radiate around your mind and body. Healing and repairing. Let it settle where ever you need it. In the knowledge that blue is the colour for healing all aspects of our lives – including how we communicate with others – bringing assertiveness and confidence. Teaching us how to make good decisions and learning how to say no.

Now turn your attention to the sun feeling the warm rays against your skin.

As you breath in, breath in the vibrant energy from the sun, allow it to radiate around your mind and body, energising and revitalising as it flows around your mind body and Soul. Allow this healing energy to rest in your solar plexus in your centre of emotion and fire. Allow this sun energy to keep the flame of life burning within you.

Now turn your attention to vibrant green energy vibrating from the grass – breath it in to your mind and body. Allow this green energy to radiate around your mind and body in the knowledge that nature brings balance to mother earth. Allow this energy to settle into your chest bringing balance and calm.

Now turn your attention to the flowers. Pick a flower in your mind and as you breath in – breath in its colour and radiance into your heart. This is you Love energy. Keep breathing into your heart until it is full and overflowing. Place your hand on your heart. Feel this Love as it flows from you into your chest, up into your mind, down into your legs and feet, down into your hands and fingers and the palms of your hands. Feel this beautiful Love energy radiate from your very Being.

Become aware of the silence. Become aware of how healed, revitalised and balanced you have become. Hold onto this feeling and allow it to rest in every cell of your body. Store this sensation in your mind. Saying to your self – I am at Peace with myself. I am Love. Stay in this present moment for the next few minutes before opening your eyes and giving yourself a stretch.

Reflect on the day:

Keep a journal – write a few words of how you have felt during the day – what has triggered the greatest emotion in you?

Create a vision board – add pictures and words of your aims and what you would like to achieve.

Take an assertiveness course – courses can be found online and at local colleges.

Pets are very comforting and healing – even if you are unable to own one, seek family and friends pets.

Start a hobby or interest that's achievable.

Recognise patterns of behaviour within yourself and those around you: Ask yourself:

How is it affecting me? What are my thought patterns? How negatively do I think and speak?

Do I act from a place of Love? Do I Love myself?

Do I come from a place of gratitude? How grateful for the simple things in life am I?

That inner voice inside our head - that inner critic – is it more negative than positive?

Am I criticising myself all the time? Do I ever praise myself for good deeds and achievements?

We have 60,000 to 80,000 thoughts a day. How much of this we express affects the way we interact with others, and how they react to us. Whilst we think negatively, we will create negative outcomes. When we think positively, we attract positivity around us, success, achievements and abundance.

Our thoughts are like seeds

Our minds like soil – the medium for things to grow in.

We will either grow a flourishing plant or great idea that becomes reality

Or a withering dying plant or negative thought that attracts doom gloom and despair.

Which do you desire?

Each time that inner critic becomes to talk negatively to you – change it to a positive affirmation:

I can do this

I am enough

I can achieve anything I desire

I Love and approve of myself

I Love me

I am imperfectly perfect

Betari's box is a theory that describes how people can get locked into a vicious circle of communication based on their attitudes and behaviour to each other. For example – how my behaviour can affect another person and how that person can affect back or to another person. If we are speaking negatively or gossiping – the feelings are negative and unproductive. However, if we are feeling happy and uplifted – this can also influence those around us and how they treat us back.

Equally it's important to mention that within this when we look at how we communicate with others using **Mehrabian's theory**: 55% of our communication is nonverbal, 38% vocalisation and only 7% of the words we speak. Which suggests we tend to respond more to body language and intonation rather than the actual words, particularly if the message is that of an emotionally charged or sensitive.

Maintaining a positive mindset is not easy, but when we become self-aware, we are much more able to reset our thinking and become more positive about our ourselves, that we are good enough and can achieve all that we aspire to.

Most importantly – believe in yourself!

We can all heal and transform our lives with the right support and mindset.

Local to Leicestershire support services:

Vitaminds – Anyone over the age of 16 can self-refer online

Mental Health Matters - Tel: 07816 269726

The Tomorrow Project – Suicide prevention and bereavement for children and adult

DistrACT – The App can be downloaded for people who self-harm or feel suicidal

Shout – A free text messaging service for anyone struggling to cope Text 85258

Saneline -For those experiencing or supporting someone with a mental health problem 0300 304 7000 4pm-10pm daily

SoBs - Survivors Of Bereavement By Suicide Tel: 0300 111 5065 open 9am – 7pm daily

The Silverline - For over 55's struggling - open 24/7 0800 4 70 80 90

The Samaritans - 24/7 Tel: 116 123