

Mental health problems can affect anyone, any time of the year, but mental health awareness week is a great time to show your support for better mental health and looking after your own wellbeing.

Hosted by the Mental Health Foundation, the theme for **Mental Health Awareness Week**, this year is 'Community'.

The purpose of the week is to celebrate the power and importance of community. For more details of the week click [here](#).

The Week is an opportunity for people to talk about all aspects of mental health, with a focus on providing help and support.

Most of us thrive when we have strong connections with others and supportive communities around us.

People who are more socially connected to family, friends, or their community are happier, physically healthier, and live longer, with fewer mental health problems than people who are less well connected.

Communities can provide you with a sense of belonging, safety, support in hard times, and give purpose.

Taking care of your mental health is as important as taking care of your physical health.

Mental health problems affect around one in four people in any given year\*. They range from common problems, such as **depression** and **anxiety**, to rarer problems such as **schizophrenia** and **bipolar disorder**.







Here are a few easy tips on how to look after your mental health.

**Connect with other people** – talk to others about how you're feeling on a regular basis. This could be a friend, a family member or a colleague. Whether its face to face, by text or email or on the phone. Good relationships will help you to build a sense of belonging and self-worth. They will also provide you with emotional support and allow you to support others.

**Keep Learning** – research shows that learning new skills will boost your self-confidence and raise your self-esteem, help you to build a sense of purpose and help you to connect with others. You may want to learn a new language, improve your cooking or your DIY skills.

Creative hobbies can also boost our confidence. If you're trying out a new hobby, track your progress and you'll feel a sense of achievement as your skills improve.

**Give to Others** – Helping someone else feels good, as it gives us a sense of worth. Even small acts of kindness can make a big difference. Research suggests that acts of giving will create positive

feelings and a sense of reward, helping you connect with others. This could be doing a local litter pick, volunteering at the dog's home or food bank or helping an elderly neighbour.

**Eat & Drink Healthily** – a varied diet can help both our physical and mental wellbeing. Eating regular meals can ward off dips in blood sugar that can leave us feeling irritable and tired, and drinking lots of water can improve concentration and help us think more clearly.

**Be Active** – staying active can make a big difference to both our physical and mental wellbeing. It will help raise your self-esteem, help you to set goals and challenges and cause chemical changes in your brain which can help to positively change your mood. This may be a brisk walk to clear your mind, yoga to calm your thoughts, or a high impact exercise class to de-stress. The key is to find activities you enjoy. Plan activities with a friend for a greater commitment and to stay connected with others.

**Be Mindful** – Paying more attention to the present moment can improve your mental wellbeing. This includes your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you. For more details click [here](#).



Research has shown that emergency services workers are twice as likely as the public to identify problems at work as the main cause of their mental health problems, but they are also significantly less likely to seek help. So it's even more important to look after your own mental health when working on the frontline.

## Here are some tips

**Think about your purpose:** Be clear about why you are doing this job.

**Be clear on expectations:** Make sure you know what is expected of you and whether it is realistic.

**Keep your boundaries:** Establish clear boundaries between work and personal life, don't take work home with you.

**Talk to colleagues:** Make time to talk to your colleagues about your experiences and share fears and concerns.

**Value your own family and relationships:** While work is important, your family and relationships need to be valued.

**Exercise:** Regular exercise can boost your self esteem, can help you concentrate, relax and increase your overall wellbeing.

**Get plenty of sleep:** Sleep helps regulate the chemicals in our brain that transmit information. These chemicals are important in managing our moods and emotions and an imbalance in those chemicals can result in us becoming depressed or anxious. Read our sleep guide [here](#).

**Eat well:** A balanced diet that is good for your physical wellbeing is also good for your mental wellbeing. Your brain needs a mix of nutrients to stay healthy and function well. Read our healthy eating guide [here](#).

**Avoid alcohol:** The numbing effects of drinking are only temporary and can often lead to mental health issues. It's advised that if you do drink, that you stay within the governing bodies recommended unit guidelines.

**Keep in touch:** It's good for you to catch up with friends and family face to face or over the phone.

**Take a break:** A change of scenery or pace is good for you.

**Do something you're good at:** Enjoying yourself can help beat stress

**Care for others:** Supporting others uplifts you as well as them.

**Ask for help:** If at times, life gets too much for you, it's important that you speak to someone, this may be a family member or trusted friend, your GP or a professional organisation, see the list at the end of this guide for details.

**Making positive change is more important than ever, but it's difficult to know where to start. Do one thing today, whether it's going for a walk, learning a new skill or doing something creative, taking the first steps to getting support for yourself, or reaching out to someone else, take the opportunity to do one thing during Mental Health Awareness Week.**

Whatever you've been through this year,  
**Mental Health Awareness Week** is a chance to make a positive  
change for your mental health.



## Useful links:

[NHS](#)

[Samaritans](#)

[Mind](#)

[AnxietyUK](#)

[Mental Health Foundation](#)



## Police Mutual Services

Worrying about money can be extremely stressful and may lead to mental health conditions. Police Mutual are here to help. We want to break down the stigma surrounding debt and get people talking about money.

We've teamed up with **PayPlan\*\***, one of the UK's leading free debt advice providers, who offer free and confidential advice to anyone in serious financial difficulties.

They're able to advise you on a range of debt solutions suited to your individual circumstances, helping to protect you and your family with a sustainable way to manage your debt.

Get free and confidential help to combat your debt, call **PayPlan\*\*** on **0800 197 8433**.

Our Care Line Service provided by Health Assured can offer advice and information, helping with a range of concerns including emotional support.

**To read more of our wellbeing guides take a look at our Wellbeing Hub [here](#).**

**Call us 0151 242 7640 Visit [policemutual.co.uk](http://policemutual.co.uk). We're open from 9am - 5pm Mon - Fri**

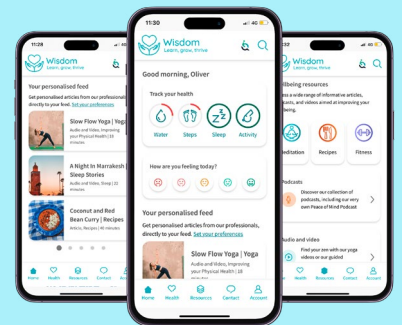
## Wisdom App



**Wisdom**

Learn, grow, thrive

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Download the Health Assured App and register today – your code is **MHA107477**

\*Time to Change. Attitudes to Mental Illness 2014 Research Report

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