

How to cope with change

Change is an inevitable part of life. There are lots of different changes we might experience during our lifetimes. For example, you may change jobs, move house, change living situation, or have children.

Change can be both positive and negative. But regardless of what the change is, it's really important to look after your wellbeing.

Self-care tips to manage change



There are a number of things you can do to support your wellbeing during times of change. Here are some of our top tips.

Talk about the way you feel

Talking about the way you feel with someone you know and trust can often help.

Your friends, family or colleagues may be able to offer you practical help or advice and give you another perspective. Even if they can't help, often just talking something through and feeling that there is someone to listen and understand you can make you feel much better.

Focus on the consistent things

Try to maintain your everyday routines as much as possible. This can be helpful for you and for your family.

Make gratitude a habit

First thing in the morning or last thing at night, write down a list of things you are grateful for. We can instinctively be more sensitive to negative events and emotions. Practising gratitude can help restore balance during times of change, and has been shown to have a positive effect on wellbeing.

Relaxation

In times of change, you might find it hard to focus on the present, with your mind worrying about the future. Learning a relaxation technique, such as breathing exercises, yoga or meditation, can help you relax and slow down your mind.

One minute for you: tense and relax

Tensing and releasing muscles can help you feel more in control of your mood.

Inhale and tense one muscle group for five seconds – like your feet or shoulder muscles. Exhale and release the tension that's there, imagining stress leaving your body. Relax for 10 seconds, and move on to the next muscle group, until you've worked through your whole body. When releasing the tension, focus on the changes you feel when the muscle is relaxed.

Finally, tense your entire body and then relax. Take a deep breath and focus on the feeling of ease.

Get enough sleep

This can help you have the energy to cope with difficult feelings and experiences. Lack of sleep affects your mood, concentration and energy levels.

Clear your mind

Address any negative thoughts that cause you stress and worry before you get into bed. Introduce scheduled worry time. Research shows that containing your worry within designated times can help free up the mind for other activities, like sleep.

Transferring worries to paper

Writing down worries or concerns is a powerful way of clearing your mind. Have a notepad by your bed and set aside five minutes at the end of the day to jot down your thoughts.

Find what works for you

During times of change it can be hard to find time for you, but it's important to take some time out to help you recharge and feel like yourself. Go for a walk, call a friend, read a book – find out what works for you.

Move

Exercise can help to relieve stress. Regular exercise doesn't have to be very strenuous or sporty to be effective. To start with, you could try gentle exercise like going for a short walk, yoga or swimming.

Think of easy ways to include more exercise in your busy routine, such as parking the car further away, getting off the bus a few stops earlier, or taking the stairs. Being active boosts feel-good endorphins and can distract you from daily worries.

Eat healthily

Eating healthily can have a positive impact on your physical and mental health. Eating a well-balanced diet with plenty of water and vegetables can help look after your wellbeing. Stopping or reducing your alcohol intake and avoiding tobacco and recreational drugs can also help improve your general wellbeing.

Seek support

You may find that, despite your best efforts, you are unable to maintain your mental wellbeing on your own. It is always okay to ask for help.

Contact the Mind Infoline

Our team provides information on a range of topics including:

- types of mental health problems
- where to get help
- medication and alternative treatments
- advocacy.

We will look for details of help and support in your own area.

Our lines are open 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except for bank holidays).

0300 123 3393

info@mind.org.uk

Text: 86463

Don't forget that this period of change will not last forever, and things will hopefully start to get a little easier.

