

Where can I get further help?

If you feel your worries are getting out of control, make an appointment to see your GP or take a look at the Trust's website to see what services we offer and contact details. If you cannot get online please contact our Customer Services team on 0800 587 2108 for more details

Website – www.southwestyorkshire.nhs.uk

Follow us on Twitter to get updates on what we're doing: [@allofusinmind](https://twitter.com/allofusmind)

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Booklets available in this series:

- Anger – How do I manage it?
- Baby Blues – How can I best deal with them?
- Bereavement – How can I cope?
- Confidence – How can I get some?
- Healthy Living – What should I do?
- Healthy Sex – How can I be sure?
- Low Moods – How can I feel better?
- My body, my health. Check it out!
- Pain – What can I do to help myself?
- Self Harm – How can I help myself?
- Shyness – How can I manage it?
- Sleep – How can I get some?
- Stress – How do I manage it?
- The end of life – How can I prepare for it?

Your feedback is welcome

We invite you to share any comments, compliments, concerns or complaints you have about the Trust. Please speak to a member of staff or contact our customers services team on 0800 587 2108, who can also provide help in understanding this information, including in other formats.



Many of us have days when we are overwhelmed with worries and sometimes a small amount of healthy concern is good as it spurs us into action. For example, if you are concerned about walking into a puddle and getting your feet wet you walk around it.

However your worrying can turn negative when you become obsessed with the 'what ifs'. These are big doubts and fears that increase anxiety and can stop you from leading a normal life. The good news is that this type of worrying can be stopped; you can train your brain to stay calm and look at life in a more positive light.

This booklet aims to help you deal with your worries and manage them using simple methods and we want you to find this booklet uplifting and helpful. However, it is not intended to be a direct substitute for a consultation with a healthcare professional.



Step one: Think about it

Is the problem you're facing solvable? Ask yourself:

- What am I worried about?
- Can I do anything about it?
- How is worrying about this is going to help me?

If you cannot do anything about it then you need to let this worry go and focus your attention somewhere else.

If your worry can be solved start to make a plan. To do this you can brainstorm different solutions, pick your favoured one and follow it through. Give yourself a timescale and try to stick to it. You will find that once you start working on these actions it will bring your mind some peace. (There is space for you to jot some notes down at the end of this booklet.)

The 'Worry Tree' is a good reference guide for deciding if the worry you are facing can be solved. You can access the Worry Tree by visiting www.getselfhelp.co.uk.

When you have solved this worry you need to then let it go and focus your attention elsewhere.

If you are still worrying about things outside of your control ask yourself "What would I say to my friend if they came to me with this worry?" If the answer is to forget about it, trust your own advice. Let it go.

By writing things down you might start looking at your thoughts and feelings in more detail than you have done before. It is normal to feel anxious about this and you may find it useful to speak with a healthcare professional about it before you carry on

Step two: What else can I do?

Plan

Set aside some time each day to focus solely on your worries. Choose a place specifically for this task (avoid relaxing places such as your lounge or bedroom) and you might want to set yourself a specific amount of time to think about your anxieties – try not to take more than 20 minutes.

Keep a notebook with you throughout the day and write down your worries in a few words. Try to focus your attention on something constructive once you have done this. You can then refer to these notes in the time you have set aside to address your worries.

You may think that you cannot postpone your worries, but many people find that by successfully setting them aside, they have a greater sense of control.

Breathe

Concentrate on slowly breathing air into your body and with each exhale feel the worries leaving you. Close your eyes and imagine you're in a safe and positive place such as a favourite holiday destination. This will relax you, put your feelings into context and help you see things from a different angle.

Keep busy

Your body can only concentrate on one thing at a time. By doing something else you are giving your mind a distraction. Do some exercise through the day; this will refocus your mind, release good hormones and give your body a workout at the same time. This will put your body and mind in a better place.

“ I'm not doing anything, it'll just go wrong ”

“ What if they don't like me? ”

If you have some spare time that might be taken up with worrying why not do a crossword, a puzzle or some doodling? Wherever you are, try to be mindful and appreciate what is around you; the feel of the sun on your skin or the sound of the wind as it hits the trees. If you are sitting on your own in public and the worries start creeping back why not try people watching? Try and guess what they do, where they're going or what they had for breakfast.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a great way to manage worries as it teaches the idea of letting worries be, rather than engaging with them. Being mindful and noticing what is going on around you will take your mind to a more peaceful state. If you can't help but start to worry, remind yourself that you have finished with all your worrying for now and you'll deal with it later, in the time you have set aside. If you have a smart phone 'Get some head space' is a great app which you could also find helpful.

Sleep well

A good night's sleep helps to keep our body and mind fit and healthy. Try to relax before you go to bed by having a warm bath, a hot drink or reading a chapter of a book. Turn off your mobile phone and television to minimise distraction and create a relaxing environment.

If you find that you are having problems sleeping, take a look at our "Sleep – How do I get some?" booklet on the Trust website.

“ How on earth am I meant to deal with that? ”

Be creative

Creative activities such as writing, making music, dancing or painting can help you to express how you feel inside. The Trust's Creative Minds initiative offers a variety of activities for people to get involved in.

To find out more about the projects in your area, visit the Trust's website at www.creativemindsuk.com

Listening to music can also have a calming effect. Music with a soft beat can help to distract and relax you when you are experiencing worry.

Support groups

You may find it helpful to join a local support group, not only will this help you socialise but will also introduce you to other people who are going through a similar situation. Your local library, GP practice or our Trust website will have more information about groups in your area. If it seems daunting going on your own ask a friend to go with you.

Step three: Let's start a conversation

If you feel your worries are getting out of control then talk to someone who can help like a GP. They will talk to you and help you to decide how best to help you move forward.

“ I worry too much ”

“ What if I've forgotten something? ”

Notes
