

## What does being healthy mean to you?

Our health effects everything in our life. This is about our physical health, mental health, our emotions, our relationships, our social life, and doing the things that we enjoy. When we feel healthy we feel differently to when we feel unwell and we are able to do different things.

### Activity

Being healthy means to me:

- (Example): I can cook my own lunch
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When I feel unwell it changes:

How my body feels	My emotions	The things I want to do
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Thinking about your whole self

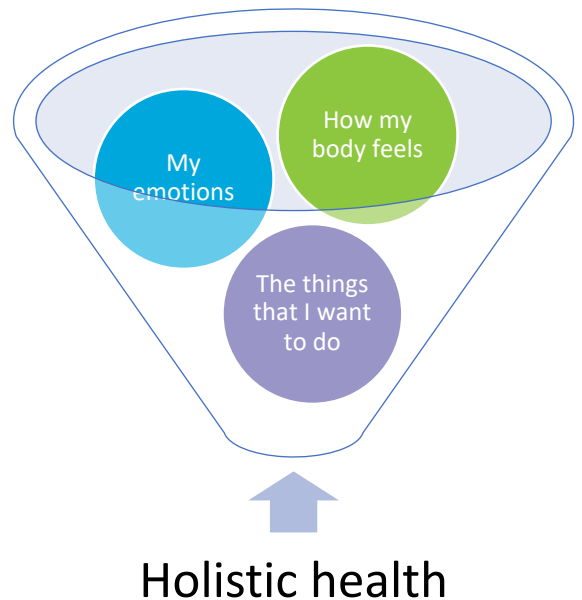
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### What is Holistic Health?

Feeling well is not just about our physical or mental health. To feel really well we have to look after ourselves emotionally and socially too.

This is about the ways we take care of our body, manage our health conditions, the food that we eat, and the place that we live.

Health is about more than how our body or mental health feels, it is also about relationships with friends and family and the things that we do to have fun, and that make us happy.



### What are your health beliefs?

How we think about ourselves when we are well and how we think about ourselves when we are unwell affects how our body and emotions feel when we are ill. This is why people who have the same illness have very different experiences.

The ways in which we think about our health can be both helpful and unhelpful. Sometimes they make us feel worse but they can also make us feel better.

Understanding our own health beliefs helps make us feel more confident to make changes to our lifestyle and to our own self care.

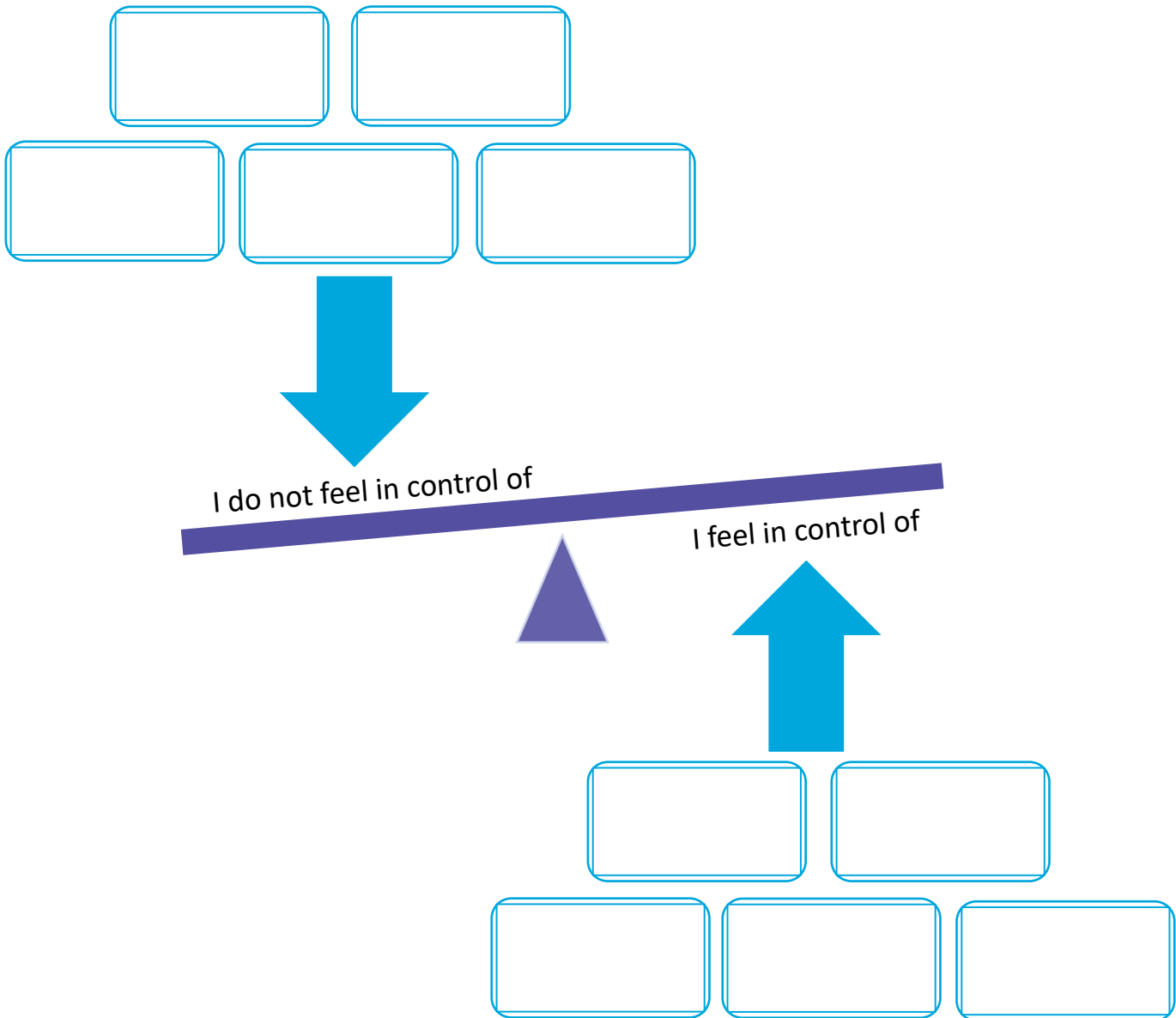
This can help us become more active in making decisions about our health and in finding solutions to our health problems. As our confidence increases, we start to feel more in control. Self empowerment is when we feel in control and can make decisions about our own healthcare.

## What are your health beliefs?

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### Activity

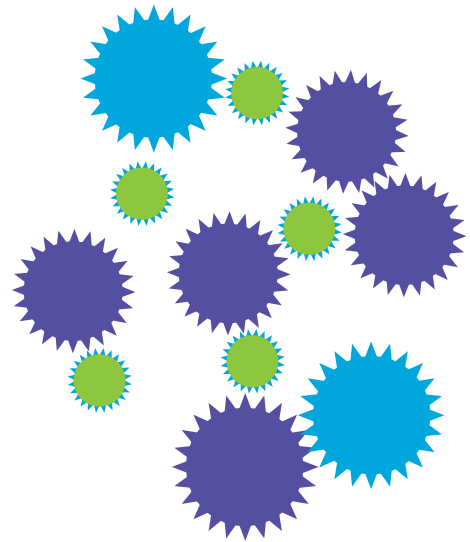
Thinking about your own health and your healthcare, what are some of the things that you feel in control? What are some of things you do not feel in control of?



I do not feel in control of

I feel in control of

We can feel more in control by increasing our knowledge and understanding of our own health problems. We can do this by reading about our condition, talking with other people who share the same condition, and asking our healthcare team questions. We should also feel that we can challenge the things decided about our healthcare and our healthcare plan.



It is important to know not only what we want, but also to know how to reach our goals.

We feel more in control of our own life, including our health and our healthcare when we become more motivated to change some of the things that we do and think that aren't helping our condition.

To feel more in control we need to think about our motivation to change and the things that can help us. We gain confidence when we discover and celebrate our own strengths

We can also feel in control when we can recognise the things that get in our way and that hold us back, including your own resistance to making change. And we should also recognise that there are some things that we can't change.

Thinking about the positive results if you are successful can help you feel more motivated. This helps you to become more active in your self care and taking care of yourself helps you get the highest possible quality of life.

# Changing the things that matter to you

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## Activity

What do I need to change ?

What are the things that can help me?

How much do I want to change?

What are the things that get in my way

How can I manage the things that are in my way

What would success be?

What would success look like?

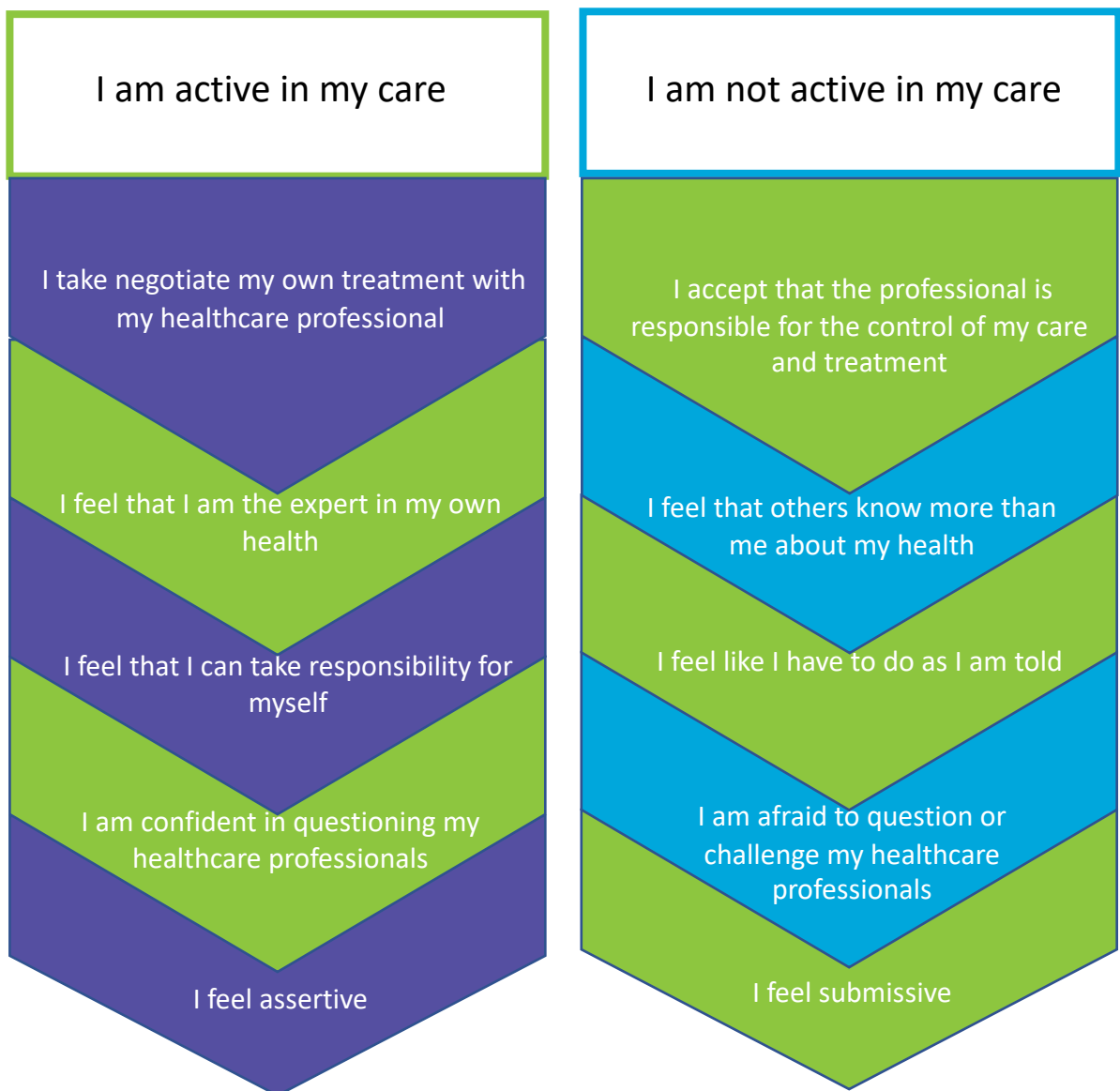


## Being active in your own healthcare

The activity below shows some of the ways in which you can be more active in your health and health care. Being active in your own health and healthcare helps you to feel in control. It makes you empowered in your own care.

Are you more active, or inactive? What would you like to change?

### Activity



## Learning selfcare skills

Look after yourself is about more than looking after your physical health, it is also about looking after your mental health. To feel really well you have to look after yourself emotionally and socially too.

Self care skills, the skills of looking after ourselves, are important skills that often need to be developed. Self care is more than taking care of your health condition it also means that you need to spend time on yourself, doing the things that bring you joy. Spending time on ourselves can often leave us feeling guilty, but looking after yourself is just as important as looking after someone else.

The activity below is to help you think about the things that you can do to look after yourself. How often do you do these things? How do you feel when you do them?

<input type="checkbox"/>	I sometimes give myself something nice like a present or treat	<input type="checkbox"/>	I make time to do relaxing activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	I believe it is important to be selfish at times	<input type="checkbox"/>	I like it when others look after me when I am ill
<input type="checkbox"/>	I plan things in my life that I can look forward to	<input type="checkbox"/>	Every day I make sure I have some time to do something I enjoy for myself
<input type="checkbox"/>	I make a point of looking after my appearance and health	<input type="checkbox"/>	I like it when someone gives me a present or compliments me on something I've done
<input type="checkbox"/>	I can praise myself if I think I have done a good job	<input type="checkbox"/>	I do not simply live my life according to what other people want
<input type="checkbox"/>	I make a point of eating a healthy diet and I do not skip meals	<input type="checkbox"/>	I deliberately do exercise and keep myself physically fit
<input type="checkbox"/>	I deliberately make time to build up friendships with people I like	<input type="checkbox"/>	I make time to take interest in hobbies and other activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometimes I have to put my own needs first	<input type="checkbox"/>	I can say 'no' when other people make demands on me

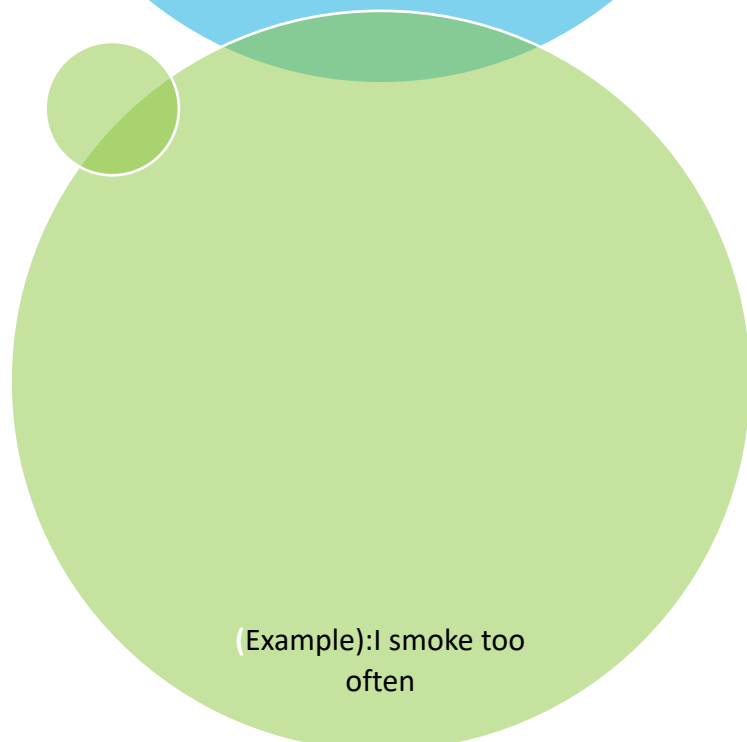
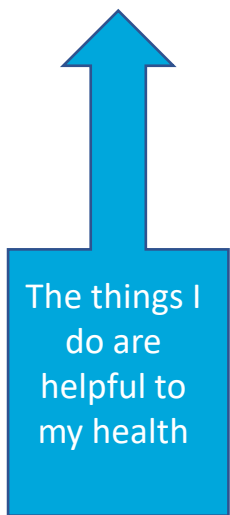


## What do I do that is helpful to my health and selfcare?

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### Activity

The activity below can help you to think about some of things that you do are really helpful to you and to your health. They help you to feel healthier and improve your quality of life. Some of the things that you do are unhelpful to you and can make your health condition feel worse. To feel in control of your own health and healthcare you can decide to do more of the things that make you feel better and less of the things that make you feel worse.



## Understanding setbacks

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### Activity

Being able to see the signs of a setback before it happens can help you to manage it better, may even help you to spot ways of stopping it happening. During a setback you do things that are helpful and unhelpful to you, be proud of the things that you feel you do well, and build them into your plan of what to do to manage your setback next time.

The activity below can help you understand some of things that happen during a setback. This helps you to learn to manage your selfcare and to manage setbacks in ways that are helpful to you and that keep you on track with healthy behaviours.

Was there a cause?

What did I feel like  
before the setback?

What happened during  
the setback?

What did I do that  
helped me?

What did I do that is  
unhelpful to me?

What can I do differently  
next time?



## Developing confidence

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Confidence is about feeling positive about yourself, being self assured, secure, and assertive. Confidence involves being able to handle or feel comfortable in a situation; in other words, feeling in control.

There are many things that can affect your confidence level.

Think of something that is happening in your life that is stressful, for example, a conflict in a relationship, or financial problems. In stressful situations, under-confident people tend to have 'Negative Thoughts' – 'I deserved to be treated like that', 'It's all my fault', 'I am feeling so nervous I'm going to be sick', 'I won't pass the exam'.

What are your thoughts like when you think of something stressful? **Are your thoughts negative? or positive?**

Negative thoughts can cause anxiety, and when this happens you may feel unwell and get physical symptoms such as sweating, fast heart rate, raised blood pressure, fast breathing and sickness. Or you may get frustrated, irritable, or lose concentration.

This negative **ATTITUDE** has an effect on your **BEHAVIOUR**.

You may feel out of control and unable to complete the task, and **CONSEQUENTLY** you may fail to achieve your goals.

If you want to increase your confidence, you need to start thinking differently. Instead of blaming yourself for the difficult things that happen, instead look for the things that you did well. Everyone can change the way they think and every achievement we experience increases our confidence level.

Positive thinking is much more likely to lead to positive consequences. Even though we can't control the outcome, we can choose how to behave. Positive thinking increases self confidence and self esteem.

Using the ABC model, **ATTITUDE – BEHAVIOUR – CONSEQUENCE** can help you think about your own approaches to difficult situations and develop new ways of thinking that are more helpful.

## The 'ABC' of Confidence

### Case study

Maria had suffered bad toothache as a child and this had put her off going to the dentists for regular check ups. Maria now has toothache and her attitude will affect the way she behaves. The way Maria thinks and behaves could affect the consequence of her actions. Consider the two examples offered.

#### NEGATIVE

##### BEHAVIOUR

I don't want to go the dentist and feel really nervous. It will hurt and may not even take away the pain.

##### ATTITUDE

#### NEGATIVE

Maria gets to the door of the dentist and feels so nervous that she turns around and goes home instead.

##### BEHAVIOUR

I don't like dentists but it is really important to get this checked. I just need to remember. 'I can do this, I know I can'

##### ATTITUDE

#### POSITIVE

Maria gets to the dentist's door and takes a deep breath. She mentions to the receptionist that she is feeling nervous. This helps her feel more relaxed.

Maria's pain gets worse. She tells herself 'I knew I couldn't do it', 'I'm no good', 'I can't do anything right'. This lowers Maria's self esteem and confidence even further. It gets so bad she has to go to A & E where they take out her tooth.

##### CONSEQUENCE

#### NEGATIVE

Maria saw the dentist and had her tooth treated. She is really pleased with herself and decides to book another appointment for a check up in 6 months time. She feels in control.

##### CONSEQUENCE

#### POSITIVE



## Looking after your emotional health

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Not all stress is bad, sometimes stress can be a good thing. Stress is normally a healthy reaction and is only a problem when it interferes with your everyday life. Stress does not mean the same to everyone and we all react in different ways when we are stressed. Some people get angry and some people take themselves away from situations and become really quiet. What may seem very stressful to one person may be very exciting and highly motivating for another.

Some stress is useful as the hormones that go around our body when we are stressed can give us energy that can help to keep us motivated to do the things we need to as well as the things that we enjoy. And sometimes stress can be harmful to us and cause physical symptoms as well as making us feel bad. This stress reaction helps us to stay and confront difficult situations or to run away from situations we think may be dangerous or threatening. This is called the 'fight or flight' response.

When we feel threatened in some way we feel stressed. When this happens the cells in our body start to produce substances called hormones. We cannot prevent this happening as it is our body's way of coping. The two main hormones produced by the cells are called adrenaline and nor-adrenaline which affect our body in a physical way.

If the stress goes on for a long time, another hormone called cortisol is released and the constant presence of these hormones can often leave us feeling ill. When we feel ill our mood changes and this can affect the way we behave and feel. If we do not recognise an increase in our stress levels, we cannot do anything about it. Too much stress and worry leaves us feeling anxious, and can also cause health conditions such as heart disease, stroke, headache, migraine, asthma, skin rash, psoriasis, eczema, stomach ulcers, diabetes, irritable bowel syndrome and colitis.

Everyone experiences stress in their lives, sometimes life becomes more stressful, this stress will only be short term and things will calm down and return to normal within a few days. Sometimes the feelings of stress may last for much longer and then the impact of stress may become more severe and difficult to cope with. Stress can have an affect on your existing health conditions as well as causing new symptoms of stress. The key is to know how stress affects us, so that we can see the signs and quickly do something about it.












## How does stress feel to me?

### Activity




This activity below is to help you to recognise the signs and symptoms of stress and will give you tips on how you can cope better with stressful situations. As you start to feel more in control, you will find that the symptoms and the health problems which may be caused by stress will reduce.

Think about how you feel when you are stressed, this is about how you feel physically, emotionally and how you behave. This will help you to be able to recognise when you are feeling stressed.

#### My body

-  My heart beats faster
-  I feel hot and flushed
-  I can feel my heart beating faster
-  My mouth is dry
-  I sweat more
-  I get pins and needles
-  My stomach gets upset
-  I get butterflies
-  My body aches
-  I feel tired
-  I get headache

#### My emotions

-  I feel more weepy
-  I am grumpier
-  I am more moody
-  I feel sadder than is normal
-  I feel frustrated
-  I feel like I am on my own
-  I feel nervous
-  I am snappy with people
-  I feel like I cant think properly
-  I feel angry
-  I feel lonely

#### My behaviour

-  I eat more
-  I eat less
-  I eat more unhealthy foods
-  I can't be bothered doing things
-  I don't want to go out
-  I smoke more
-  I drink more
-  I sleep less
-  I become quieter and withdrawn
-  I can't concentrate
-  I have negative thoughts



# How stressed and anxious am I?

## Activity

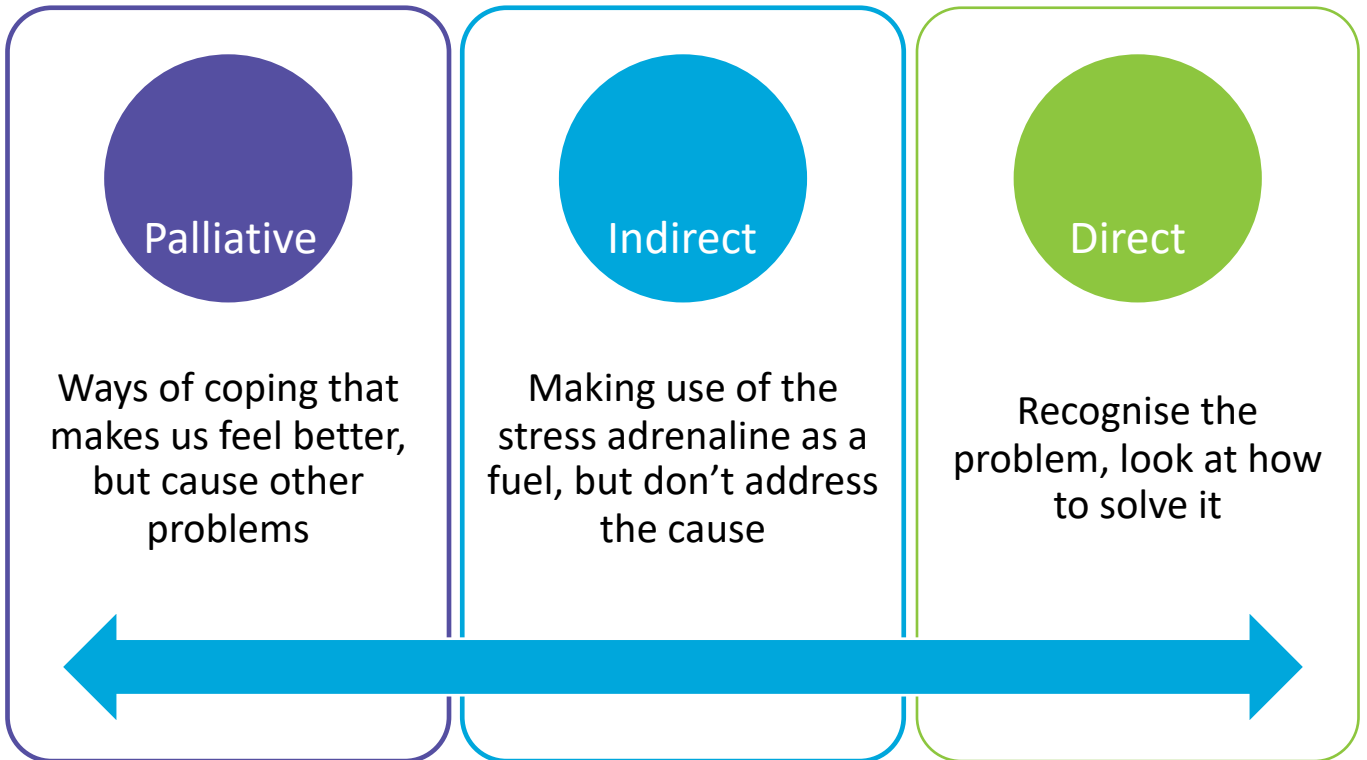
The activity below can help you to think about how stressed and anxious you are. This can help you to understand your own stress levels and if the stress you feel is helpful or unhelpful to your health.

I feel tense or wound up	All of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think worrying thoughts	All of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel scared and have butterflies	All of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel restless and have to be on the go	All of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

I get the feeling something bad is about to happen	All of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can relax and sit at ease	All of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
I get sudden feelings of panic	All of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Ways of managing stress

There are three different ways that we cope with stress, some of them make us feel better but don't solve the problem, some can make us feel better but can cause us other problems, and some ways try to tackle the problem head on.



### Activity

Thinking about the ways you we deal with stress can help us to manage our stress in different ways in the future.

Think of three things that you do you deal with stress, what kind of coping mechanism is it? Does it help or harm you? Does it help you to solve the problem?

## Tips on handling stress

Doctors have traditionally prescribed medicines to treat stress but research has shown that there are many more effective ways of taking care of yourself when you are stressed. The more you understand about stress, the better you can take care of it. Here are a few tips:

### Try to live a healthy lifestyle



Try to live a healthy lifestyle and eat a balanced healthy diet. Try to avoid ways of coping which may make you feel worse such as emotional eating, drugs, smoking or alcohol. These may lead to further health problems such as obesity, heart disease, addiction, cancer and liver disease. Instead try to use healthier ways of coping such as relaxation and exercise.

### Try to say how you feel



Many people who are stressed bottle up their feelings and this may make you feel worse. To try to stop this happening find someone you can trust to talk to. Try telling them how you feel. If you think you need professional help, talk with your GP, or arrange to see a counsellor. Ring a helpline to gain support.

### Try to think positively



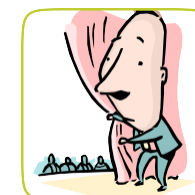
When we are low we tend to see things in a negative or bad way and this may make it difficult to get motivated. Try to avoid making excuses for why you can't do things. Think of ways you can take care of the problems you have, e.g. by setting small and achievable solutions and goals. Once you have achieved some of your small goals you will soon start to feel better.

### Learn ways to relax



Learn relaxation techniques and try other things to relax, such as listening to music and having a hot bath. Try to increase your level of exercise because this helps reduce physical symptoms of stress. Studies show that exercise is just as good as taking anti-depressant tablets.

### Build up your confidence



Try to build up your confidence skills and stand up for yourself more, so that you feel better about yourself. Set some time for yourself and try doing things you have always wanted to. Don't be put off by what others say.

### Manage your stress



Try to think about what is making you feel stressed and the things that are making the situation worse. Make an action plan of things you can do to reduce your stress. Try to get a balance between work and play.



## Healthy Eating

### The eatwell plate

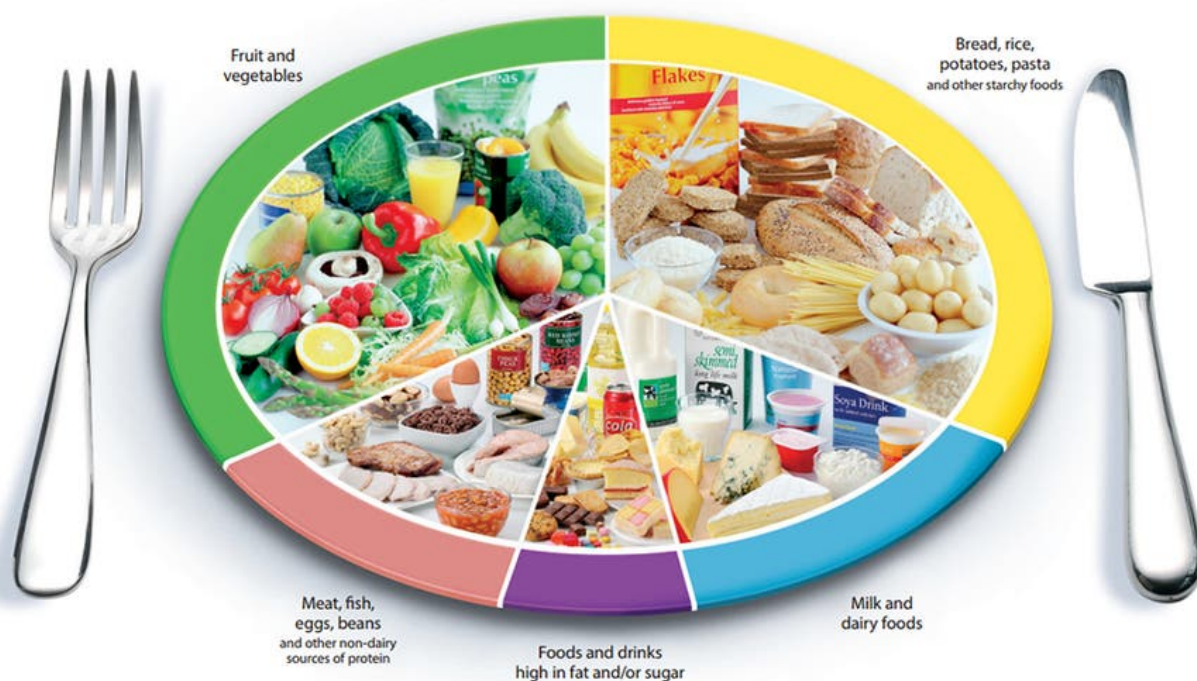
It can be difficult to eat a healthy diet. Food labelling can be confusing and when we are busy it is easy to forget to eat a healthy balanced diet. When we are in a hurry we often end up grabbing something quick. Unfortunately 'something quick' often means 'fast foods' or 'convenience foods' which are usually high fat, high sugar and highly processed.

To help people work out what to eat and how much the Food Standards Agency has developed 'The eatwell plate.'

The eatwell plate is made up of the five food groups and tells us how much of each to eat in a day.

## The eatwell plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.



## Healthy Eating

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### Starchy foods – Carbohydrates

Includes bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and cereals

Starchy foods should make up one third of the food we eat each day. Ideally we should include food from this group in every meal. Starchy foods are a good source of energy and also contain fibre, calcium, iron and B vitamins.

It is better to choose wholegrain or wholemeal varieties of these foods wherever possible as they are more nutritious than white or refined starchy foods. Wholegrain foods take longer to digest and help us feel fuller for longer.

### Fruit and vegetables

Fruit and vegetables make up a third of our food intake every day. It is recommended that we do this by having a variety of at least five portions of different fruit and vegetables a day. Remember potatoes count as a starchy food and not as portions of fruit and veg. There are so many good reasons to eat five portions of fruit and veg a day and here's a few:

- They're packed with vitamins and minerals
- They can help you maintain a healthy weight
- They help reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke and some cancers.

### Milk and dairy foods

It is recommended that we eat some milk and dairy products each day. Milk and other dairy products are really good sources of protein, vitamin A and vitamin B12. These foods are also an important source of calcium which we need to keep our bones strong.

### Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy proteins

**Meat** is a good source of protein, vitamins, particularly B vitamins and minerals such as iron, and zinc. Vitamin B12 only naturally occurs in meat, milk and eggs.

**Fish** is an excellent source of protein and it contains essential vitamins and minerals. White fish such as cod, haddock, plaice and whiting are very low in fat. Oily fish such as sardines, mackerel, trout and salmon are rich in omega 3 fatty acids and a good source of vitamins A and D. For a healthier choice, poach, bake or grill fish, rather than frying it because fried fish is much higher in fat, especially if it's cooked in batter.

**Eggs** are a good source of protein, and contain vitamins and minerals such as vitamin D, vitamin A, vitamin B2 and iodine. There is no recommended limit on how many eggs people should eat.

## Healthy Eating

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**Beans** -Pulses are a great source of protein for vegetarians, but they are also a very healthy choice for meat-eaters. Pulses include beans, lentils and peas. They are a low-fat source of protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals and they count as a portion of fruit and veg. Pulses are a good source of iron. Eating peppers or dark green vegetables, or drinking a juice rich in vitamin C like orange with your meal will help you to absorb the iron.

**Foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar:** Less than 10% of what we eat each day should come from these foods. We need to be cautious about the amount of soft drinks we have as many are high in calories as they contain a lot of sugar. We also need to try to eat the things here less often or in a smaller amount:

- pastry, cakes and biscuits
- hard cheese, butter and lard
- meat pies, sausages and meat with visible white fat
- coconut oil, coconut cream and palm oil.

**The Food Standards Agency (2005) promotes eight tips for eating well:**

- base your meals on starchy foods
- eat lots of fruit and vegetables
- eat more fish – (2 portions a week for girls, pregnant or breast feeding women or women who wish to become pregnant in the future – 4 portions a week for boys, men and older women)
- cut down on saturated fat and sugar
- try to eat less salt (6g a day for adults, less than 4g for children under 14)
- get active and try to be a healthy weight
- drink plenty of water
- don't skip breakfast.

# How could you improve your diet?

## Activity

The activity below can help you to think about the food you are eating and what you may want to change to improve your diet.

