

Take5

steps to wellbeing

Ideas for you to feel good and be well

Belfast edition





What is Take 5 steps to wellbeing

Take 5 steps to wellbeing can:

- Improve your mood
- Help you cope when life doesn't go to plan
- Strengthen your relationships.

This booklet will give you:

- Ideas of activities for each step
- Examples of services in your area to help you **Take 5**
- Information on stress, poor mental health, suicide and self harm.

Take 5 activities can be done by everyone

They can be fun, quick and free

You are probably already doing some of them

The five ways to wellbeing were developed by the New Economics Foundation
Take 5 logo artwork designed in association with Belfast Strategic Partnership

Connect

Connect with the people around you: family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. Spend time developing these relationships. They will support and enrich you every day. We connect when we feel able to be ourselves, share our thoughts or feelings, or share a new experience together.

If you are supporting others, balance this with connections which support you.

- Connect with other people:
 - phone, message, email or text
 - eat a meal together
 - join a support group (online or in person)
- Connect with nature, pets or animals
- Connect with your spiritual needs.



Get connecting

For men: Men's Sheds: Groups for men to learn new skills (like woodwork) and have a chat www.menssheds.ie 028 9074 9494

For the elderly or vulnerable: Good Morning: Free community-based telephone support service www.goodmorningni.org 028 9075 1070

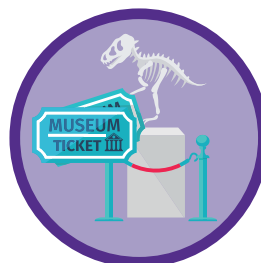
Support groups and organisations: www.familysupportni.gov.uk (aimed at families but many organisations will be helpful to others)

Relationship counselling and support: Relate: (for all relationships): www.relateni.org 028 9032 3454

Keep learning

Try something new. Rediscover an old hobby or sign up for a course. Fix a bike, learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Learning new things is fun and will make you more confident.

- Ask someone to teach you how to do something or about a topic which interests you
- Sign up for a local course or class
- Search the internet for information, tips or online courses
- Visit your local library
- Visit a museum/ exhibition
- Ask someone a question about themselves.



Get learning

Local courses: Many courses are provided free of charge. Search online for local courses or visit your local community centre

www.belfastcity.gov.uk/community

Local library details: www.librariesni.org.uk 0345 450 4580

Search 'How to...' on sites such as www.google.com or www.youtube.com

Be active



Go for a walk, run, swim or cycle. Play a game, dance or do some gardening. Exercising makes you feel good. Choose an activity that you enjoy, one that suits your mobility and fitness.

- You can do exercises in a chair or lying down if needed
- Fit it into your daily routine:
 - Get off the bus a stop early and walk
 - Swap the lift for the stairs
 - Meet a friend for a walk instead of a coffee.



Get active

Leisure Centres: Visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/leisure (028 9032 0202) for details of local leisure centres and more information on:

- Discounts available for people with disabilities, people receiving benefits, students and senior citizens
- Healthwise scheme: 12 weeks free membership for people with certain health problems (referral required)
- Parks, community gardens and outdoor gyms

Exercise guides: Visit www.nhs.uk/fitness for 'sitting exercises', 'fitness advice for wheelchair users', 'physical activity guidelines for children', 'NHS fitness studio' (free home exercise videos) and much more

Green gyms: Visit www.tcv.org.uk for details of the Green Gym sessions: fun, free, outdoor sessions creating green spaces for communities

Take notice



Stop, pause, take a moment to look around you. What can you see, feel, smell, hear or taste? Look for the new, unusual or extraordinary in your everyday life. Think about how that makes you feel. Some people call taking notice 'mindfulness'.



- Take photos of the seasons changing
- Practice slow breathing
- Try a task you need to focus on eg. crochet or mindful colouring in
- Notice your thoughts and feelings
- Savour the taste of your food
- Before bed ask yourself: What did I do well today? What was good today?
- Beautiful Things Challenge: How many beautiful things can you notice today? (a beautiful sky, a kind stranger, a child's laugh). Have a competition with family or friends.



Get noticing

Explore mindfulness: www.freemindfulness.org or download a free app such as 'Headspace'

Pilates or yoga classes: at a leisure centre
www.belfastcity.gov.uk/leisure 028 9032 0202

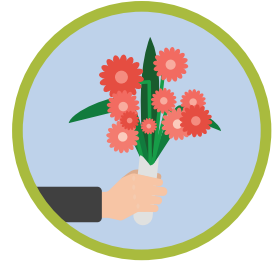
Observe nature: Visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/leisure for Belfast parks and walking routes

Photography courses: Search online for local courses

Give

Do something nice for a friend or stranger. Thank someone, smile, volunteer your time or join a community group. Think of other people. Giving is rewarding and connects you with people around you.

- Give a smile, a compliment, encouragement
- Give a hand eg. encourage others to **Take 5**
– arrange activities for children/ elderly, help someone get contact details/ information from the internet, do activities with them
- Give your time, a silent wish or prayer
- Give thanks ie. be grateful for the good in your life
- Give yourself the gift of connecting, learning, being active, or noticing: Fill in a square on the back of your **Take 5** Loyalty card to self.



Get giving

Volunteer opportunities: Details of wide-range of volunteering opportunities at www.volunteernow.co.uk 028 9023 2020

Foodbanks: Donate food or your time www.trusselltrust.org

Donate Blood: Northern Ireland Blood transfusion Service
www.nibts.org 028 9053 4666 / 0500 534666

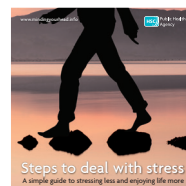
When times are tough



Life will have stressful times. **Take 5** can help you to cope better with stress. Sometimes, despite **Take 5** you can still experience symptoms from stress or mental health difficulties.

Stress

Stress can affect your thoughts, feelings and behaviour. If you know there is a stressful time ahead, it helps to plan more **Take 5** activities during that time. For more information on stress and tips to manage it visit www.mindingyourhead.info and find 'Steps to Deal with Stress' under the resources section.



Poor mental health

1 in 5 people will have a mental health issue during their life – everybody will know someone affected. If you are worried you or someone you know might be suffering from poor mental health talk to your GP. Your GP can assess if further treatment may help including community-based support, talking therapies, medication or psychiatric services. You can get more information at www.mindingyourhead.info



Suicide and self harm

Sometimes people can be so distressed they have thoughts about suicide. Given time and the right help and support they can feel better. It is not always possible to tell if someone is thinking of suicide. However some people may show some of the following signs:

Worried about someone



What to watch out for:

- Lack of interest in people, work or activities
- Very low mood
- Talking about going away or saying goodbye
- Talking or writing about suicide
- Self-harm or previous suicide attempt
- Sudden change from distress to saying they are 'at peace' or 'okay' (this may indicate that they have decided to end their life by suicide)
- Making 'final' arrangements, eg. giving away possessions

(Not everyone with these signs is thinking of suicide)

If you are concerned about someone you can follow these three steps:

- 1 Show you care** 'I'm worried about you and I want to help'
- 2 Ask the question** 'Are you having thoughts of suicide?'
(Asking does not give someone the idea. Thoughts of suicide usually develop over a long time. Asking shows you can see their distress. It gives them a chance to talk about something probably frightening them.)
- 3 Call for help** 'Let's talk to someone who can help'

If you or someone you know are having thoughts about suicide or self harm:

Call LIFELINE free **24/7** on 0808 808 8000 or visit: www.lifelinehelpline.info

Call Samaritans free **24/7** on 116 123

Contact your GP Out of hours, North and West Belfast 028 9074 4447

South and East Belfast 028 9079 6220



What Take 5 activities will you do?

Choose activities you will enjoy and that can fit into your every-day life.

One activity can count towards more than one step eg. Going for a walk with a friend could count towards connecting, **being active** and **taking notice** (notice the sky, or the birds singing).

Setting **SMART** goals can help you start doing new **Take 5** activities.

SMART goals are:

- **Specific:** eg. 'Walk' rather than 'get fit'
- **Measurable:** eg. for 30 minutes, 3 times a week
- **Achievable:** Start small and set goals within your reach
- **Relevant:** Choose changes that make sense for you
- **Timely:** Set a start date eg. after lunch every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, starting this week.

Take 5 reminder card



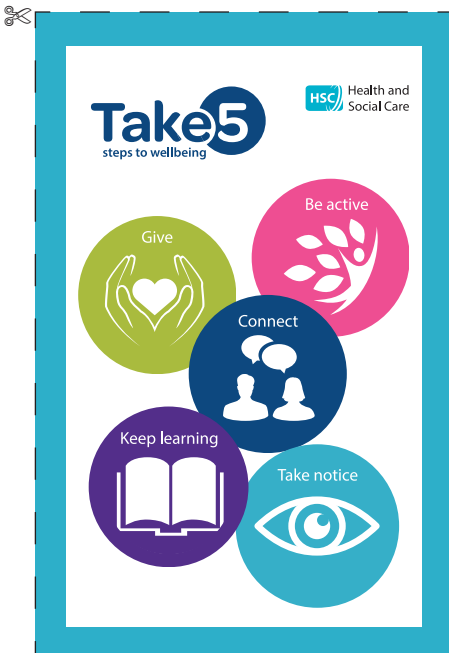
Keep one in your wallet and give one to a friend.

When you see the card ask yourself:

- 'Do I want to do more:

Connecting, Learning, Being Active, Noticing
or **Giving?**

- What would I like to do?'



For further information on
mental health and wellbeing visit
www.mindingyourhead.info



Public Health Agency
12–22 Linenhall Street
Belfast BT2 8HS
www.publichealth.hscni.net

**What Take 5 steps
have I taken?**
Tick or colour boxes



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