

# Mental Wellbeing

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Happy New Year! For some people the winter months can be a challenging time both mentally and emotionally. The mental health organisation MIND research found that 1 in 4 adults in the UK suffer from mental health issues in their lifetime ranging from anxiety, panic attacks, and depression to more serious diagnosis. SAD (seasonal affective disorder) the winter blues, affects nearly 1 % of the population in the UK. Therefore it's important to have a balanced mind, body, soul approach to support you through the winter months and beyond.

## *Get enough sleep and rest*

Adults need approx 7-9 hours per night. Develop good sleep hygiene, turn off and unplug electrical items, develop a nightly routine, don't eat or drink too late at night, create a dark, optimal temperature room, and use a journal or app to write out any thoughts or feelings of the day.

## *Mood and food*

Whilst the winter months are here, it's essential to maintain good diet and nutrition. Increasing B vitamins (found in fish, nuts, beans, lean meats) zinc (seafood, dark greens) for immune boosting and magnesium (bananas, almonds, milk) the master stress mineral. Spicy warming foods like soups and stews plus warm drinks support the kidney energy that regulates core vitality in our body. A good Nutritionist can advise and support you accordingly

## *Love your body*

Massage can relax and aid circulation as well as invigorate the body and mind. Use aromatherapy oils such as neroli and rose geranium which have uplifting properties. Acupuncture can strengthen the meridians

(energy lines) within the body and support organ function especially kidneys, lungs and circulatory systems. Reflexology massages specific points on the feet and hands, which harmonise and tone the entire mind and body.

Getting physical means that even 10 minutes walking outdoors in sunlight even on cloudy days- can boost the neurotransmitters in our brain by producing serotonin the feel good hormone. Any activities which combine exercise with sociability and fun are recommended. Dance classes, team sports, walking and running clubs. Supported our mind helps combat SAD (seasonal affective disorder) which is exasperated in winter months especially in the Northern hemisphere. Meditation techniques such as Mindfulness encourages the mind to be into the present moment, notice body sensations and use the breath correctly to create peace and calm. Yoga, tai chi, Pilates classes combine body awareness, flexibility, develop your core strength and aid inner reflection with the benefit of structure and guided tuition.

New Year is a great time to learn new hobbies, interests or retrain. Contact colleges, local classes, or online courses to help remain open minded and curious. Develop resilience techniques to cope with life's ups and downs-try EFT (emotional freedom technique or tapping), NLP (Neuro linguistic programming) or PSYCH-K (psychological kinesiology) which all help to create new positive inner beliefs about yourself.

Get motivated to make positive change, create your own future and set realistic goals with Life coaching and mentoring. Overcome fears, negative habits, and phobias and develop self esteem and confidence with help and support of trained Counsellors and Solution focused therapists.

Whatever you choose, here's to a happier, healthier and more balanced 2014.

