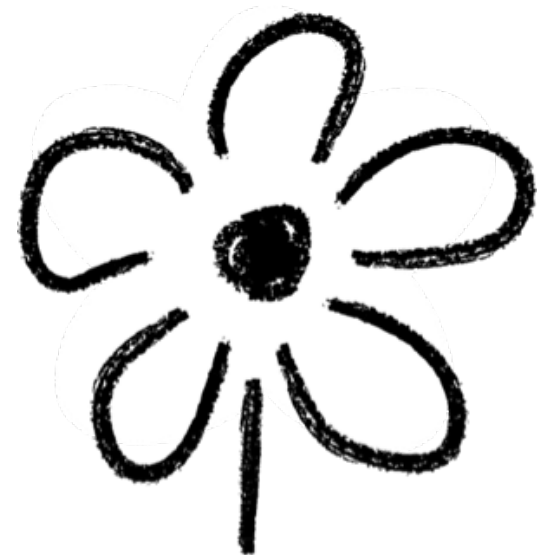


# A Guide to Mindfulness

**bold** Bringing Out  
Leaders in Dementia



# A wee note:

As you know, the **bold** programme focuses on using creative arts methods, for personal development, whenever possible.

Many of us also have personal experience of the benefits of mindfulness for personal development through techniques such as meditation, journaling, walks in nature and deep breathing.

However, we recognise that while mindfulness may work for some people, it won't work for others and so we would encourage you to take the **bold** approach and do what is right for you. These resources are just suggestions and if they don't resonate with you then that is absolutely fine!



# What is mindfulness?

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Mindfulness is when we can be fully present and engaged in the moment without any distraction or judgement.

It is when we can be aware and really notice thoughts, body and our surroundings.

Techniques might include:

- Journaling
- Yoga
- Deep breathing
- Walking outdoors
- Breathe work



# The benefits of mindfulness:

Research shows that mindfulness can positively affect our psychological well-being including:

- Improving our mood
- Increasing positive emotions
- Decreasing our anxiety







# There is no wrong or right way

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“Being mindful and taking some time out for self-care is particularly important with all the different stresses and challenges we face. We know there are lots of different ways to be mindful but we would always encourage people to do what is right for them,” says Dr Lorna Hill.

“If yoga or journaling isn't your thing that is okay. There should never be any pressure to do mindfulness in a particular way. I think the focus should be about taking some time out for yourself and connecting with something that brings you joy, even for just 5 minutes. There is no wrong or right way, just your way.”



# The Art of Journaling

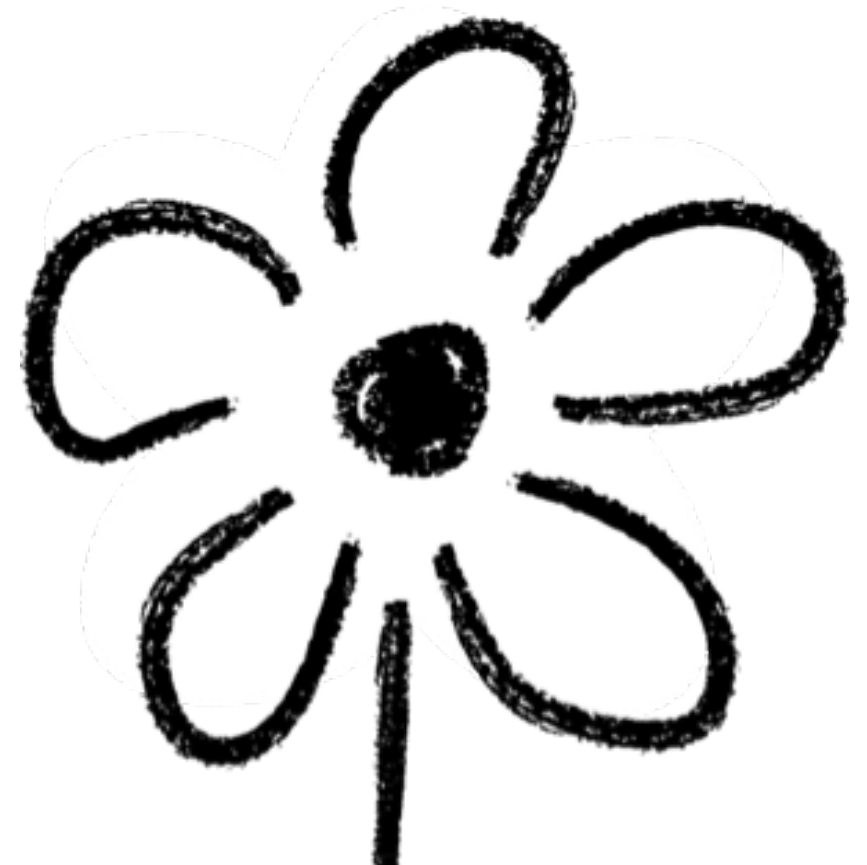
# The Benefits of Journaling

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Journaling is a really useful tool for helping you to work out what is causing you stress. It can help you to get worries out of your head and onto the paper and identify what's causing you problems and what might help you cope.

When you have identified what is causing stress then you can take steps to work out a plan to help you cope with the issues and then hopefully reduce your stress levels.

Remember that journaling is about writing down your feelings and tapping into your thoughts without fear of judgement. This is a private place so don't worry about what others might think





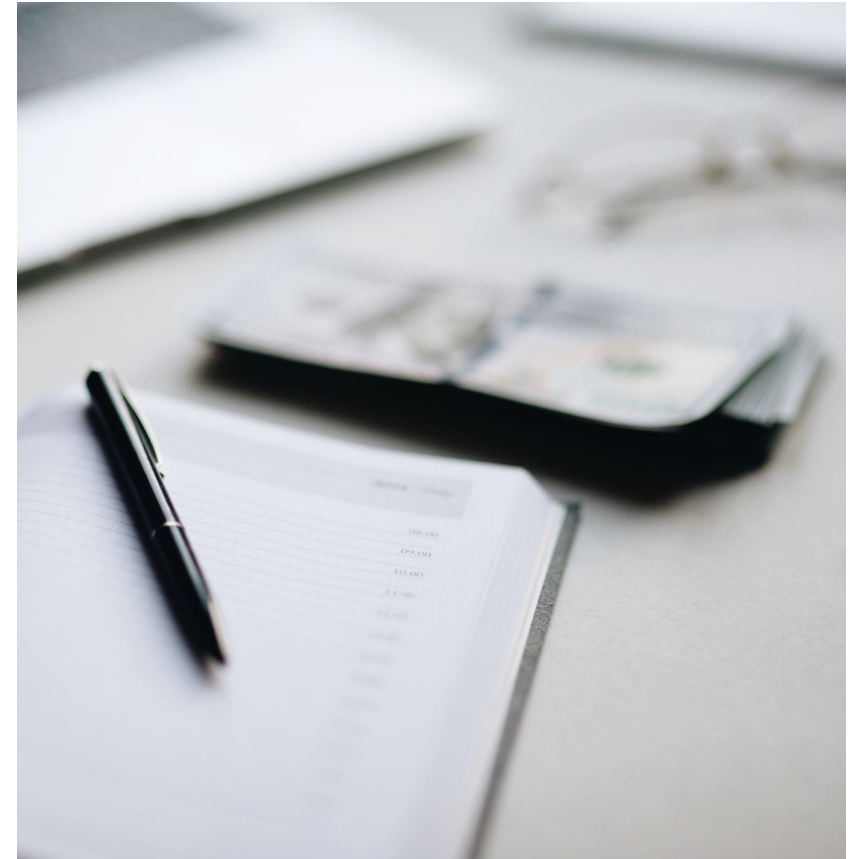
# How to Journal

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Try these tips to help you get started:

- Choose a quiet place to write
- Try to write every day – even if only for a few minutes
- If you are struggling to get started set a timer for 5 minutes to focus your thoughts
- Have a pad and pen which you keep for journaling. If this method doesn't work for you then record your thoughts as you speak
- There is no wrong or right way to write about your feelings.
- Write lists or words or draw if that is easier
- Or start: Today I feel . . . (fill in the rest)
- The more you journal, the easier it should get

Hopefully you will look forward to this time that you have carved out to take care of yourself and express your thoughts and feelings.



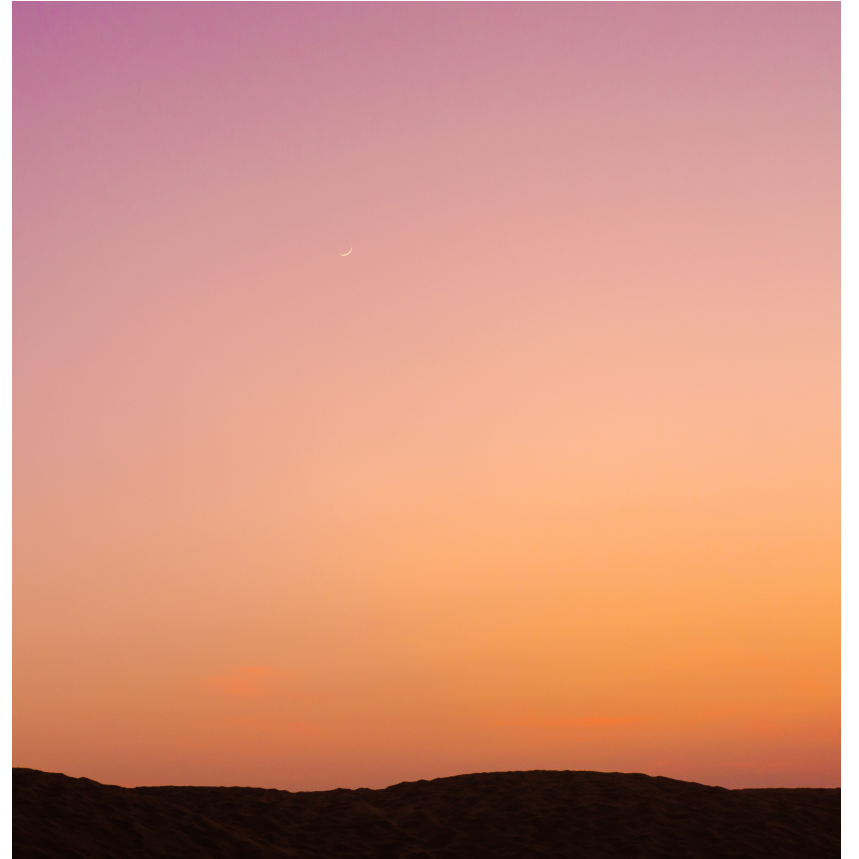


# What Else?

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Keep in mind that journaling is just one aspect of managing stress and anxiety. Other suggestions might be to:

- Relax and give your eyes a rest from screens
- Eat as well as you can and drink plenty of water
- Exercise regularly – again in the way that suits you, even just some gentle stretching or walking
- Try to get plenty of sleep each night if you can
- Remember that it's okay to rest and take a break when you're tired or overwhelmed



# Remember . . .



# Some Calming Breathing Techniques . . .

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Breathing exercises only take a few minutes and can be done anywhere.

You can do them sitting down, standing up or lying down – again just whatever works for you. Just be comfortable.

Breathing can be really effective when you feel you need to ground yourself and find some calm in stressful situations.

However, we invite you to try these exercises only if they feel right for you.



# The Four-Square Breathing Technique

- Breathe in slowly counting to four, feeling the air enter your lungs
- Then hold your breath for four seconds
- Slowly exhale through your mouth for four seconds
- Hold your breath for four seconds
- Repeat several times until you feel more grounded



# The 5,4,3,2,1 Grounding Technique

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This is a particularly good exercise to ground yourself and become aware of your surroundings, particularly if you are feeling overwhelmed.

The aim is to focus on the moment using your five senses and use slow, deep breaths to calm and quieten your mind.



Don't worry about the order of these things, it's okay if you mix them up!

- **Look for 5 things you can see:** Notice the rain against the window-pane. Become aware of the table in front of you and a picture on the wall. Take the time to really look and acknowledge what's around you.
- **Become aware of 4 things you can touch:** Your mug, the cushion on your chair or the floor beneath your feet. Again, take a moment to touch something and be aware of the sensation.
- **Listen for 3 things:** Perhaps you can hear the traffic outside, the sound of a TV or just silence.
- **Notice 2 things you can smell:** Focus on your breathing and be aware of the scent of coffee or laundry detergent. If you can't smell anything then think of your favourite smells.
- **Acknowledge 1 thing you can taste:** It might be coffee or tea or toothpaste. If you can't taste anything then think of your favourite tastes.

A serene beach scene with a red text overlay. The background shows a sandy beach with tall, dry grasses in the foreground and the ocean in the distance under a clear sky. A semi-transparent red rectangle is centered over the image, containing white text. A thin white horizontal line is positioned below the title text.

# DAILY REMINDER

Take five minutes to relax and  
breathe.





# Self-Care

IDEAS FOR WHEN YOU'VE HAD A  
CHALLENGING DAY

BREATHE DEEPLY

EXERCISE

TRY AN AFFIRMATION

GO FOR A  
WALK

WRITE A JOURNAL

READ A BOOK

TRY SOME YOGA

COOK YOUR  
FAVORITE MEAL

WRITE 5 THINGS  
YOU LOVE

WATCH YOUR  
FAVORITE FILM





# Some Further Resources

- Free 10-minute mindfulness meditation hosted by the Daily Calm:

[https://youtu.be/XI\\_B45DpMLU](https://youtu.be/XI_B45DpMLU)

- NHS: 5 Steps to Mental wellbeing:

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/>

- Mindful practices, recorded by Oxford University Mindfulness Centre, are available here:

<https://www.oxfordmindfulness.org/learn-mindfulness/resources/>

Books (as recommended by Edinburgh University's Chaplaincy)

- Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World, by Mark Williams and Danny Penman. The book is based on Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy, and can be used to take yourself through a mindfulness programme at home.
- The Mindful Way Workbook, by Teasdale, Williams and Segal, is a Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy workbook that you can take yourself through at home.
- Full Catastrophe Living by Jon Kabat-Zinn, founder of Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction.
- Mindfulness: Ancient Wisdom Meets Modern Psychology by Willem Kuyken and Christina Feldman.

# Home Learning Disclaimer

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