

Mental Wellbeing Support Handbook

Breaking Barriers Around Food • Stress • Body Image

Welcome

Your mind and body are deeply connected. The way you think and feel influences the way you eat, move, and live.

This handbook will give you **practical strategies to support your mental wellbeing**, break free from unhelpful cycles, and build a more positive relationship with food, your body, and yourself.

1. Breaking Emotional Barriers Around Food

Common Challenges

- Emotional eating (using food for comfort or distraction)
- Guilt after eating certain foods
- “All-or-nothing” dieting mentality

Strategies

- **Pause & Reflect:** Before eating, ask *“Am I physically hungry or emotionally seeking comfort?”*
- **Food & Mood Journal:** Track patterns between emotions and eating habits.
- **Permission to Enjoy:** Allow all foods without guilt—restriction fuels bingeing.
- **Alternative Coping Tools:** Walking, journaling, meditation, or calling a friend.

 **Reframe:** *Food is not the enemy. It's nourishment, pleasure, and connection.*

2. Managing Stress for Better Health

Stress impacts digestion, cravings, and energy levels. Managing it is key to health.

Daily Stress Management Practices

- **Breathing Technique (4-7-8):** Inhale 4, hold 7, exhale 8. Repeat x3.
- **Mindful Breaks:** 5 minutes daily—step outside, stretch, or sip tea without distractions.
- **Boundaries:** Protect your energy—learn to say no when needed.
- **Movement as Medicine:** Gentle walks, yoga, or dance to release tension.

 **Tip:** Make stress relief part of your routine, not an afterthought.

3. Body Image & Self-Compassion

Shifting Perspective

- Recognise that body image is shaped by culture, social media, and past experiences—not just reality.

- Self-worth ≠ body size.

Strategies for Positive Body Image

- **Gratitude Practice:** List 3 things your body *does* for you daily (e.g., carries you, hugs loved ones, helps you dance).
- **Mirror Work:** Speak kind affirmations while looking at yourself.
- **Social Media Detox:** Unfollow accounts that trigger comparison; follow body-positive, empowering voices.
- **Dress for Confidence:** Wear clothes that feel good *now*, not “when I lose weight.”
- **Reframe:** *Your body is your lifelong home—treat it with care, respect, and love.*



4. Mind-Body Connection Practices

- **Mindful Eating:** Eat slowly, chew thoroughly, notice flavours and textures.
- **Grounding Exercise:** Place feet on the floor, notice your surroundings, take deep breaths when overwhelmed.
- **Visualization:** Picture your healthiest, calmest self and step into her mindset daily.
- **Journaling Prompts:**
 - “What do I need today to feel supported?”
 - “What am I proud of in my health journey this week?”



5. Daily Wellbeing Rituals

- ✓ Morning gratitude (1–3 things you’re thankful for)
- ✓ Hydration + nourishing breakfast
- ✓ Midday check-in (how am I feeling, what do I need?)
- ✓ Evening wind-down (stretch, journal, or meditate)
- ✓ Compassion reminder: speak to yourself kindly



Final Note

Your mental wellbeing is just as important as your nutrition and habits. By caring for your **mind, emotions, and self-image**, you’ll create the foundation for lasting health.



- You are more than your body.
- You deserve peace with food.
- You are worthy, always.