

10 Keys to Happier Living

Created by MHFA England in partnership with Action for Happiness. Find out more about the 10 Keys to Happier Living at actionforhappiness.org.

Visit mhfaengland.org to learn about Mental Health First Aid and how you can support a friend, family member, colleague or student with their mental health.

1. Giving

Holding out a helping hand makes other people happy and will make you feel happier too.

Give it a go:

- Share your skills or offer support
- Ask friends, family or colleagues how they are and listen without judgement

2. Relating

The people around you offer a valuable pool of support so it's important to put time into strengthening those connections.

Give it a go:

- Meet up with someone you haven't seen in a while
- Turn off distractions to chat with friends or family about your day

3. Exercising

Regular activity will provide an endorphin boost and increase confidence.

Give it a go:

- Find an activity that suits you and your schedule
- Swap the car on short journeys and cycle or walk to work

4. Awareness

Taking time to switch off autopilot and 'be in the moment' is a great tool to combat stress.

Give it a go:

- Pay attention to your senses — what can you see, hear or feel around you?
- Choose a regular point in the day to reflect

5. Trying out

Learning new things is stimulating and can help to lift your mood.

Give it a go:

- Take on a new role at work or school
- Try out a new hobby, club or activity that interests you

6. Direction

Working towards positive, realistic goals can provide motivation and structure.

Give it a go:

- Choose a goal that is meaningful to you, not what someone else expects of you
- Remember to celebrate progress along the way

7. Resilience

Although we can't always choose what happens to us, we can often choose our own response to what happens.

Give it a go:

- Find an outlet such as talking to friends or writing it down
- Take action to improve your resilience skills

8. Emotions

Positive emotions can build up a buffer against stress and even lead to lasting changes in the brain to help maintain wellbeing.

Give it a go:

- Take time to notice what you're grateful for and focus on the good aspects of any situation
- Set aside time to have fun

9. Acceptance

No one is perfect. Longing to be someone different gets in the way of making the most of our own happiness.

Give it a go:

- Be kind to yourself when things go wrong
- Shift the focus away from what you don't have and can't do, to what you have and can do

10. Meaning

People who have meaning in their lives experience less stress, anxiety and depression.

Give it a go:

- Prioritise the activities, people and beliefs that bring you the strongest sense of purpose
- Volunteer for a cause, be part of a team, notice how your actions make a difference for others