

Care Home Managers and Staff Wellbeing Workbook



Introduction

This workbook has been put together on behalf of Bristol Mind to accompany the short mental health and wellbeing sessions delivered to Care Home Managers from the West of England during 2021. The sessions aim to support Care Home Managers in looking after their own wellbeing and that of their staff during the unprecedented challenges and pressures of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The impact of Covid-19 on Care Home staff, residents and their families

Care Home Managers, staff, residents and their families know only too well the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had and continues to have. Here are a few of the many challenges and traumas that continue to be experienced:

- Having to work in very different ways; the pressures of working safely; the loss of usual 'human' contact with colleagues and residents
- At times, lacking the resources to fully care for residents safely and as staff would want to do, uncertain resourcing at all levels
- Fear of becoming ill with all its implications for individual staff, colleagues, their families, resident's families, reduced staffing to deliver the service
- Feeling abandoned and unappreciated by 'the powers that be'
- Supporting residents who cannot see their families, witnessing their pain and at times, deterioration
- · Watching some residents give up on life and fade away
- Losing significant numbers of residents before their time, individuals known and cared for by staff sometimes for many months, bereavement and grieving
- Supporting traumatised and grieving relatives

Using this workbook

This workbook can be used to:

- Remind you about topics covered in the sessions
- Further develop awareness and wellbeing and resilience strategies
- Link to other resources
- Share with other staff

Throughout there are exercises you can do if you want to think more about ways to support your wellbeing.

Everyone is different so take what is helpful to you and leave the rest behind.

What does resilience mean to you?

Exercise:

Take a moment of personal reflection, what does resilience mean to you? What images, words, phrases or proverbs capture your personal view about resilience?

Workplace culture: what might your workplace or organisational motto on resilience be or look like? What has it been during the pandemic crisis?

How does this work in practice? How does it fit with your own or your team's view about resilience? Have the views around you been helpful or unhelpful or a mixture?

Our views about resilience

Our attitudes about resilience are individual and personal. They can be helpful or unhelpful in different situations. Our views are shaped by our backgrounds, past experience, expectations and our culture, including our workplace cultures.

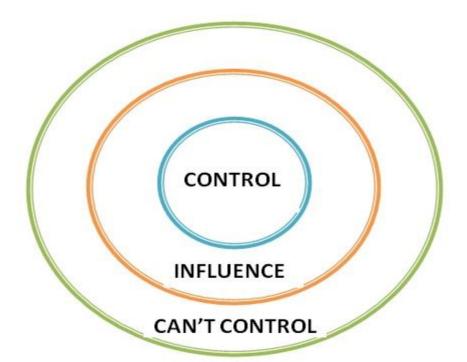
Resilience is expressed in different ways depending on the context. How we'd be resilient in meeting a critical work deadline will, of course, be very different from the individual expression of resilience following a significant bereavement or when we are in the long haul of a global pandemic!

Resilience isn't necessarily (though in some contexts it might be):

Always bouncing effortlessly back from adversity?	Never being vulnerable?
Triumphing over tough times, being tough?	Being extraordinary?
Only about surviving?	Never asking for help?
Suppressing and never showing emotion?	Avoiding feeling uncomfortable or in pain?
Denying there is a problem?	Immediately seeing the positives?
Only needed for the big stressors in life?	Any others?

Source: Developing Resilience: A Cognitive-Behavioural Approach Neenan, M. (2009)

'God give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference' ANON



The Circle of Influence represents the amount of focus we give to things. The more proactive we are with the things we can do something about generally the less stressed we feel. It also helps if we can find ways to 'live with' the things we cannot control.

When we spend more time focusing on 'things' we have no control over our tendency to brood and worry increases and we become more stressed and reactive. There is so much involved in the pandemic that we cannot control making us all more vulnerable to stress and anxiety.

Exercise:

Draw the Circle of Influence. List areas from your work and personal life related to the pandemic that you want to control or think you should.

Ask yourself realistically how much influence or control do have for each? Write your examples in the circle. What was it like doing this exercise?

So, how do you stay resilient when accepting the things that are beyond your control? What do you say to yourself? What do you do?

Source: Circle of Influence. Adapted from The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen R. Covey,. Simon & Schuster (1992).

'FACE Covid' guidance

Here is some advice from clinical psychologist Russ Harris to support our wellbeing and resilience when we're faced with adversity. He emphasises the value of focusing on what we can control such as our own behaviour and attitudes.

To watch his animation on coping with the anxiety of Covid-19 go to: FACE Covid

F = Focus on what's in your control



Fear and anxiety are inevitable; they are normal, natural responses to challenging situations that feel uncertain and worrying.



You can't control what happens in the future. You can't control Coronavirus itself or the world economy or how your government handle the situation. We have far more control over hour behaviour. So our number one aim is to take back control of our behaviour.



When a big storm blows up, the boats in the harbour drop anchor—because if they don't, they'll get swept out to sea. Dropping anchor doesn't make the storm go away but it can hold a boat steady in the harbour, until the storm passes in its own good time.





You can run through this ACE cycle slowly and peacefully 3 or 4 times. Please turn the page to find out more!

Information adapted from FACE COVID-19 document by Dr Russ Harris, 2020.

Sophie Tree, Molly Layburn and Dr Sally Stapleton, Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

The ACE guidance

Here is more practical detail on the ACE guidance.

The science shows us that we can calm the body and mind by: paying attention to our breathing e.g. longer out breaths, short in-breaths; body awareness e.g. noticing our bodies sitting in the chair or stamping our feet and grounding techniques like focusing on what's around us and what we're doing. Being more mindfully in the moment!

A = Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings

Silently and kindly acknowledge your thoughts, feelings, emotions, memories, sensations, urges.

Take the stance of a curious scientist, observing what is going on in your inner world.

For example, "I am thinking that something bad is going to happen, which is making me feel scared and my tummy full of butterflies"

C = Come back into your body

You could try some or all of the following, or find your own method:

- Slowly push your feet onto the floor
- Slowly straighten up your back and spine; if sitting, sit upright and forward in your chair
- Slowly press your fingertips together
- Slowly stretch your arms or neck, shrugging your shoulders
- Slowly breath in 1-2-3-4 and out 1-2-3-4

E = Engage in what you are doing

Get a sense of where you are and refocus your attention on the activity you are doing.

- Look around the room and notice 5 things you can see
- Notice 3 or 4 things you can hear
- Notice what you can smell or taste or sense in your nose and mouth



Have a go at this ACE cycle slowly 3 or 4 times.

Information adapted from FACE COVID-19 document by Dr Russ Harris, 2020.

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Mindfulness

Evidence that Mindfulness practice improves overall health, attention and concentration and emotion regulation.

Mindfulness practice was first used as an effective health intervention for people in chronic physical pain. Nowadays it is widely used to support emotional and psychological health across all age groups and settings. Being more mindfully in the present moment can help to quieten our busy minds.

Why Mindfulness is so important I KNEW I WOULD WESS UP FONLY THE WILL I FONLY SHOULD I HAD... THE mind is an amazing tool but if we are unable to switch it off, it can overwhelm us.. It is estimated that the average person thinks between 12,000 to 60,000 thoughts every day!

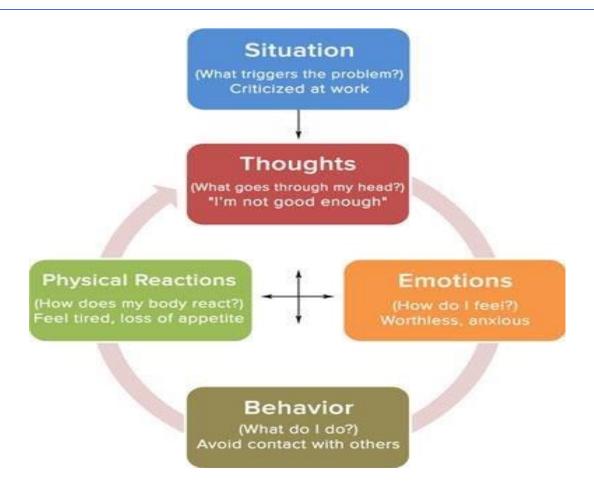
What is Mindfulness?

- It's the mental exercise of <u>consciously and purposefully</u> bringing our attention to what
 is actually happening in the moment. Noticing our physical and thinking experiences
 without any judgement.
- · Stepping back, creating some space, being an observer of self

Exercise:

Try this one moment meditation that can be done anytime and in most situations. It only takes a minute! 1 moment meditation

The thinking, feeling and behaving connection



Our thoughts, behaviours, emotions and physical reactions are interconnected and influence our responses to situations. This view underpins Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). Problems occur when we get stuck in repeated negative thought and behaviour patterns.

Exercise: Take a look at the response to the situation described above, what possible meaning(s) is the person placing on being criticised at work? What alternative thoughts or behaviours might another person have and how would that influence their response?

TIP: Worth being aware that some of our responses may be rooted in past experience. For example, if a person has a very critical family background then the example above might 'push their buttons' a lot. Their reactions may seem quite extreme.

Exercise: Can you think of any recent personal examples of thoughts, feelings and behaviours you've experienced linked to the Covid-19 pandemic? Is there a pattern? How helpful or unhelpful has your pattern of thinking and behaving been?

TIP: It can help to stop and notice thoughts and feelings (put the pause button on for a moment). Read the next few pages on the STOPP technique and Unhelpful Thinking Styles.

The STOPP technique

This technique can be really helpful at moments of feeling overwhelmed or verging on 'out-of-control' e.g. overreacting; feeling especially anxious or angry.

It can help if we press our 'pause button', step back and take a moment to notice our thoughts and feelings. What are we reacting to?

This helps avoid being driven by strong emotions and gets us back into the 'driver's seat' where we can think things through in a calmer way.

STOP and STEP BACK:

Don't act immediately

TAKE A BREATH:

Notice your breath going in and out

OBSERVE WHAT'S HAPPENING:

What am I thinking or feeling? Is this fact or my mind's opinion? Acurate or inaccurate? Helpful or unhelpful? What unhelpful thinking style am I using (e.g. catestrophising; mind reading etc.)?

PULL BACK, PUT IN SOME PERSPECTIVE:

How would someone looking in see this situation? what advice would I give to someone else? Is there another way of looking at this? What's the 'helicopter view' (looking down from a distance) Will this matter in 6 monthes time? Is my view proportinate to what has happened?

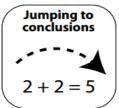
PRACTICE WHAT WORKS:

Do what works. Do what is most proportinate to the situation. Be guided by your values and principles. Consider what the consequences of your actions will be. What is best for me, for others?

The STOPP technique handout can be downloaded from getselfhelp.co.uk

Unhelpful thinking styles:

Common types of thinking styles (psychologicaltools.com): useful in some situations and not in others



There are two key types of jumping to conclusions:

- Mind reading (imagining we know what others are thinking)
- Fortune telling (predicting the future)



Blowing things out of proportion (catastrophising), or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important



Assuming that because we feel a certain way what we think must be true.

I feel embarrassed so I must be an idiot



Using critical words like 'should', 'must', or 'ought' can make us feel guilty, or like we have already failed

If we apply 'shoulds' to other people the result is often frustration



Sometimes called 'black and white thinking'

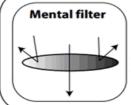
If I'm not perfect I have failed

Either I do it right or not at all

Overgeneralising

"**everything** is **always** rubbish"

"nothing good ever happens" Seeing a pattern based upon a single event, or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw



Only paying attention to certain types of evidence.

Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes



Discounting the good things that have happened or that you have done for some reason or another

That doesn't count



Blaming yourself or taking responsibility for something that wasn't completely your fault. Conversely, blaming other people for something that was your fault.



Assigning labels to oursleves or other people

I'm a loser I'm completely useless They're such an idiot

Exercise: Do you recognise any that you tend to apply? Any that you find yourself applying in response to the pandemic challenges?

TIP: Resilience can be supported by becoming more aware of these thinking styles in action. Notice and name them; question their helpfulness; modify if unhelpful with alternative perspective.

Self-help S.S.R.I.s resilience aids

SSRIs are a group of anti-depressants (the 'selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors'). Dr Chris Johnson has used this as an acronym for resilience tools, which can act as a preventative to becoming low or overwhelmed.

When faced with adversity a <u>resilient</u> response is to recall and make use of previous positive experiences, known as the 'What has Worked Well' or WWW approach.

Exercise: Think of some examples of the following and fill out this table below. STRATEGIES YOU USED i.e. practical things we do e.g. asking for help; problem solving, meditation, diet, exercise etc. STRENGTHS YOU DREW UPON i.e. inner resources e.g. determination, courage, humour, flexibility, communication etc RESOURCES YOU TURNED TO (HUMAN & MATERIAL) i.e. things we turn to for support, guidance, inspiration e.g. friends, colleagues, mentors, self-help books, information sources etc INSIGHTS THAT HELPED YOU i.e. ideas, perspectives, sayings or affirmations we find helpful e.g. 'all things will pass'; 'step-by-step'; 'others have gone before me and made it work'

Source: Dr. Chris Johnson 'Find Your Power – a toolkit for resilience and positive change' (2010) Permanent Publications

The Five Ways to Wellbeing

Evidenced based factors that strengthen resilience (preventative) and combat difficulties when they arise (intervention). These factors can be built into work, service-delivery and our personal lives.

Be connected

invest in social relationships, find ways of having positive social contact with others

2. Be active

exercise, generally look after physical health

3. Take notice

notice and appreciate what you have got. *'Glass is Half Full'* attitude. Mindfulness: noticing with purpose

4. Keep learning

hobbies, interests, challenges, creativity. Doing things you enjoy and are good at

5. Give

contribute, give to others, being part of things

The Five Ways to Wellbeing is a significant public health message based on hard science about how our bodies and minds work. These factors support our wellbeing and resilience so need to be valued and given attention.

Of course, it's not always easy to put them into action or maintain them especially during a pandemic crisis!

So, it's also important to be self-compassionate, be kind to self and extend this to others. You could think to yourself, 'I'm just doing the best I can right now' based on your 'here and now' situation.

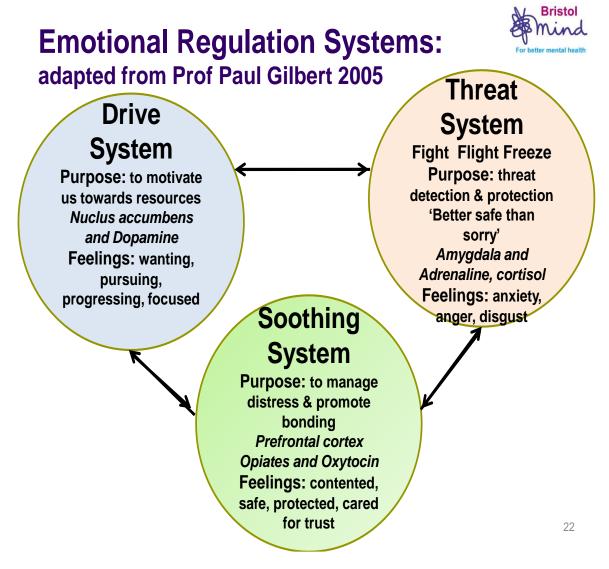
TIP: notice what you are already doing to look after yourself as well as any areas you'd like to develop. Build on your strengths and only set small achievable goals for yourself. Encourage others to do so too.

Source: Centre for Wellbeing, New Economics Foundation Report presented to the UK Government's Foresight programme (2008)

Looking after your wellbeing during COVID-19

Here is guidance from PHE. Notice what you're already doing and build on this.

- Think about your new daily routine. Try to engage in useful activities such as cleaning, cooking. exercise or meaningful activities such as reading or being in touch with friends.
- Connect with others. Maintaining relationships with people you trust is important for your mental wellbeing
- **Help and support others.** Think about how you could help those around you it could make a big difference to them and can make you feel better too.
- Talk about your worries. This is a difficult time for everyone. Sharing with family and friends how you are feeling and the things you are doing to cope can help them too.
- Look after your physical wellbeing. Your physical health has a big impact on how you are feeling emotionally and mentally.
- Seek advice and support if you smoke or use drugs or alcohol.
- Look after your sleep. Good-quality sleep makes a big difference to how you feel mentally and physically, so it's important to get enough. The Every Mind Matters sleep page provides practical advice on how to improve your sleep.
- Try to manage difficult feelings. Focus on the things you can control, such as managing your media and information intake. It is okay to acknowledge some things that are outside of your control right now.
- Get the facts. Find a credible source you can trust such as GOV.UK, or the NHS website, and fact-check information you get from newsfeeds, social media or other people.
- Do things you enjoy. Focus on your favourite hobby, learn something new or simply taking time to relax indoors or outdoors
- Goals. Setting achievable goals gives a sense of control and purpose. Think about things you want or need to do that you can still do at home, such as watching a film, reading a book or learning something online.
- **Keep your mind active.** Can help you feel in control and less low or worried. Read, write, play games, do crosswords, jigsaws, drawing whatever works best for you.
- Take time to relax and focus on the present. This can help with difficult emotions, worries about the future and generally make you feel better.
- If you can, get outside. If you can't, bring nature in. If you can't go outside, try spending time with the windows open to let in fresh air, arranging space to sit and get some natural sunlight, or get out into the garden if you can.



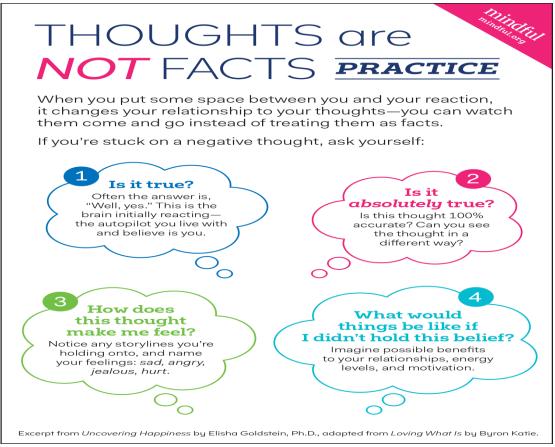
The DRIVE, THREAT and SOOTHING systems are natural interconnecting biological systems. Overtime each system is shaped and refined by how we think and behave. These systems can be modified, adapted, re-layered.

Healthy amounts of stress in the workplace reflect the Drive System in operation i.e. motivates us to act, function effectively and be at our best. BUT we can go into over drive triggering the THREAT System. Then we feel stressed, overwhelmed, and anxious.

When the THREAT system is activated our drive to 'run away' or 'avoid the worst' is stronger and our 'thinking' function is weaker. We can feel like we're losing control!

Activating the Soothing System_helps to keep a healthy balance and reduce the impact of stress.

TIP: ways to activate the soothing system include moving/exercise; relaxing; breathing calmly; being self-compassionate; connecting; being outdoors; positive touch



Beware of your 'inner critic'- Resilience and wellbeing are increased when we cultivate a more self-compassionate and balanced inner voice.

Exercise: Think about a difficult thought you've been having recently, nothing too challenging. Spend a few minutes applying these 4 basic steps. How was that?

Evidenced based techniques to reduce the impact of our 'inner critic' include: standing back and noticing what your 'inner critic says'; asking yourself 'would I speak to a friend like this'? What would you say instead?' Notice and label these thoughts, 'there it goes again that inner critic of mine!'

Self-help resource for living with Covid-19 related worry and anxiety

The pandemic involves many fears and uncertainty making us vulnerable to excessive worrying so we can't sleep at night!

This self-help guide aims to give us some tools to reduce excessive worrying. You might find it useful:

Guide to living with worry and anxiety amidst global uncertainty

Positive Psychology

Evidenced practices that increase resilience and wellbeing

It is a specific branch of psychology launched in 1998. It is the study of 'positive emotions, positive character traits and enabling institutions' Martin Seligman (2006).

Applies scientific methods to the study of what enables individuals, families, organisations and cultures to flourish. Provides evidence about the factors that can contribute to resilience and general psychological wellbeing.

The list below are the top actions that can strengthen resilience and wellbeing based on numerous studies testing them out on real people.

Exercise: Look through this list. Any you're already doing? Any you could build into your life and work?

- 1. **Know your strengths:** Complete the <u>VIA (Values in Action) Signature Strengths</u> <u>questionnaire</u> to identify your signature strengths. *Awareness of our signature strengths can enhance our resilience and well-being, increase our self-esteem and positively influences our relationships.*
- 2. **Three good things:** for 1 week, each night think of 3 things that went well, write them down and reflect upon them or do this once a week for 6 weeks. *Shown to boost mood, supports flexible and positive perspective*
- 3. **Show your gratitude:** Be actively thankful for the things you have to be grateful for. Tell someone you are grateful for something then did for you. *Helps to cultivate an optimistic positive perspective and connectivity.*
- 4. **Random acts of kindness:** Do something for another person, big or small. Produces physiological and psychological positive changes, increases sense of connection.
- 5. **Active-constructive responding:** Make a point of celebrating other people's successes. *Relationships shown to especially benefit from celebrating each other's successes.*
- 6. **Savouring the moment:** For example, really enjoy that cup of tea, take your time and savour. *Brings in some Mindfulness practice*
- 7. **Positive reminiscence:** Re-imagine a positive memory. Shown to lift mood, anxiety, and more beneficial if replayed strongly through images. Re-living negative experiences undermines resilience and wellbeing

Self-care tree for all staff

Managing prolonged stress at work and at home during the COVID-19 pandemic





Your personal Wellness Action Plan

You've taken the time to reflect on your own wellbeing so here is an opportunity to write down your own Wellness Action Plan for the workplace. Find some time to discuss with your manager or a colleague.

1. What helps you to maintain your wellbeing? What can you adopt to support your wellbeing in the workplace? Think about your mental and physical wellbeing, they go hand-in-hand.	
2. List any early warning signs that you are getting overly stressed or struggling in any other way:	
3. Any specific workplace triggers that can impact on your wellbeing or stress levels? How might your performance be affected?	
4. What support do you need from the workplace, who and how? Any actions and positive steps you and your workplace can take if you're experiencing stress or poor mental health	
5. Anything else you feel would be useful in supporting your mental health	

Resources

Wellness Actions Plans

Free guides to support yourself and your staff

Self-help

NHS self-help resources and therapies

NHS mental health apps library

Every Mind Matters information and resources from the NHS to look after your mental health and wellbeing

Wellness Society free tools if you subscribe, for example 'how to deal with your inner critic' and ' ways to be kinder to self'

www.getselfhelp.co.uk self-help information and CBT worksheets

COVID specific

Public Health England advice on how to look after your mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

FACE Covid Russ Harris animation

FACE Covid for young people (based on the Russ Harris FACE Covid advice)

Coronavirus support from mental health charity Mind

<u>City Mental Health Alliance - Supporting colleagues</u> Resources to help organisations support their colleagues, including how to manage remote teams in challenging times.

<u>Every Mind Matters - Coronavirus and wellbeing</u> Includes ten tips to help if you are worried about coronavirus, and advice on maintaining your wellbeing while staying at home.

Mental Health At Work - Coronavirus and isolation: supporting yourself and your colleagues Mental Health At Work has grouped together resources to support one another's mental health through the outbreak and through working remotely.

Mental Health Foundation - Looking after your mental health during the coronavirus outbreak Some tips to help you, your friends and your family to look after your mental health, including how to avoid rumour and speculation which can fuel anxiety.

Five ways to wellbeing

NHS information about how the <u>Five Ways to Wellbeing can improve overall health and</u> wellbeing.

Simple breakdown from Mind of the <u>Five Ways to Wellbeing</u> with ideas of things you could do to include these in your life.

Wellbeing and resilience free online courses

<u>Covid-19: Psychological First Aid</u> A free course put together by Public Health England and the British Red Cross.

<u>collegeofwellbeing.com</u> Dr Chris Johnson offers a range of short online resilience courses (some are free) and occasionally delivers courses in Bristol

Free online course dealing with anxiety during Covid from the Wellness Society with West Sussex Mind

Mindfulness

<u>www.mindful.org/</u> Online meditations, events, news, research on all things mindful
<u>www.basic-meditation-tame-inner-critic</u>
A meditation to calm the inner critic

YouTube animation on how Mindfulness can empower us

free mindfulness course and podcast University of Oxford Mindfulness Centre

Mindfulness and meditation apps

Insight Timer (free) promoting wellbeing, talks, mindfulness, community network.

Head Space Mindfulness app (free for a few weeks then costs)