

## Mental Health & Wellbeing Pack



Welcome to Age UK Sutton and Sutton Uplift's mental health and wellbeing pack.

This pack has been created to help us to find ways to talk about the importance of our mental health and wellbeing. In this pack you will find information about mental health

and wellbeing, along with some practical steps we can all take to ensure we are looking after our own mental health and wellbeing.

With the recent news of a second national lockdown, we want to ensure that older people in Sutton know where they can access support should they need it and know we are here to support you with your mental health and wellbeing through the restrictions in the winter months.

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## Introduction

**Age UK Sutton** is a small independent local charity which provides key services to people ages 50 and over.

We offer information and advice, where we give free confidential advice on health, housing, care, income, local services and more.

We provide a service for older people who are coming home from hospital, where we support people in their homes and ensure they have what they need when they are first discharged from hospital.

Our Help at Home service is a paid for service that enables older people to live independently at home. Our trained Support workers can do your shopping, prepare light meals and do surface cleaning to help you.

For more information about Age UK Sutton and the services that we offer, please call us on 0208 078 0002 and one of the team will be happy to help. You can also email us at [info@ageuksutton.org.uk](mailto:info@ageuksutton.org.uk)

**Sutton Uplift** is an integrated Primary Care Mental Health service accessible to anyone living in the borough of Sutton or registered with a Sutton GP, who are 18 years and over. We support anyone who has a mental health or wellbeing needs, whether this is due to emotional difficulties or life stressors.

Our values are based on empowerment and building resilience within the community, we tailor support to the individuals. Wellbeing is core to our service with Wellbeing Navigators working in collaboration with all elements within Sutton Uplift.

**We can support your mental health and wellbeing needs through a number of ways including:**

- One to one Recovery Wellbeing support sessions

- Self management courses **i.e:** Coping with Stress, Relaxation & Self-Care, Improving Self-Confidence & Assertiveness, Living Well with Long Term Conditions, Improving Sleep, Overcoming Anger & Irritability.
- Psychological therapies, IAPT (Improving access to Psychological therapies) and counselling.

Developing and maintaining good mental health and physical wellbeing helps us to deal with the opportunities and challenges that come our way. We aim to support people with wellbeing in many ways so no problem is considered to be too small.

If you think we can be of help and are interested in finding out more about our service please complete the referral / questionnaire form included in this pack . Once you have completed the form, please send this to:

**Sutton Uplift-Wellbeing Team, 6 Stanley Park Road, Wallington, SM6 0EX or call 0203 513 4044** for further assistance.

## Talking about Mental Health



We know how important it is to look after our physical health as we get older. What we often don't talk about however, is how our mental health can affect us. In our pack, you will find a really useful leaflet called **Your Mind Matters**. This leaflet will explain what

mental health is and talks about common signs that may indicate that your mental health is suffering.

We want older people to know that they can talk openly about how they are feeling and that Age UK Sutton and Sutton Uplift are working in partnership to offer wellbeing and practical support along with the wider network of other local support services.

### **Coronavirus Pandemic 2020**

We realise the impact of Coronavirus has not been only on those who have contracted the virus themselves but on all of us who have struggled with pressures, worries and isolation caused in part by the lockdown's and ongoing restrictions. We are aware that the upcoming national lockdown may be having an effect on how you are feeling. We are here to talk to and would really encourage you to contact us using the details below if you have been affected or would like any support.

### **Keeping connected**

On Thursday 5th November we held a virtual coffee chat, where we spoke about how we were feeling about the current restrictions and about our own experiences. These coffee chats are a safe, confidential place to talk about mental health and little things that help us. Most importantly, we talk and listen along with sharing a laugh or two! We will be holding some more of these coffee chats and you are more than welcome to join us for a quick coffee, or however long you want to stay and chat.

We do have some tablets available that we can lend out to enable you to join us if you do not have internet or a device with a camera on it. If you would like to join us, or would like some more information, please call us on 0208 078 0002 or email us at [activities@ageuksutton.org.uk](mailto:activities@ageuksutton.org.uk)

## The importance of looking after your Mental and Physical Well Being



Wellbeing is the experience of health, happiness, and prosperity. It includes feeling well both mentally and physically.

Feeling mentally well includes being satisfied with your life, having a sense of purpose and socially connected. Unfortunately, due to current Covid -19 restrictions, many of us aren't able to socially connect with our friends and families in the way we are used to. This can have an impact on our mental health and ultimately affect our well being.

We run a **Virtual Friday Club** which meets via video call **every Friday at 11:00am** where we have a chat about our week and get to see some friendly faces. We have a lovely friendly group and welcome new members to join us when they can for a chat. You

can join us by emailing [activities@ageuksutton.org.uk](mailto:activities@ageuksutton.org.uk) or calling us using the contact details below. We are working hard to connect older people who do not have access to the internet and would love to hear from you if you would like to connect with others but don't have internet or know how to use your device to connect to a video call.

***Our physical and mental health can both affect each other.***

Most of us are more aware of our physical health, than how our mental health can affect us. Both our physical and mental health can have an impact on each other.

For example, if you have a long term physical condition, your mental health can be affected due to you not being able to do things you used to do and having to rely on others to help you more.

Another example would be feeling a bit low, and then not having the desire to get up and go out for the day, Meaning we aren't getting enough exercise, which can then make us feel a bit low.

We all have days where we don't feel like doing much and that's ok! It is important to make sure these days don't become an every day.

By having a well balanced diet and active lifestyle, you can ensure you are looking after both your mental and physical health. An active lifestyle does not mean you have to exercise every day, a 10 minute walk can really help to release endorphins, which will then lift your mood.





## 5 Ways of wellbeing



**These are simple and proven actions that we can do everyday to help us find balance, build resilience and boost mental health and wellbeing.**

### **Connect:**

Connect and stay in contact with the people around you: your family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. Spend time developing these relationships.

For example, You could call someone you haven't spoken to in a while or write a letter to them.



### **Be active:**

Take a walk, go cycling or play a game of football/ walking football, nordic walking. Find an activity that you enjoy and make it a part of your life. (Age UK / Sutton Uplift can guide and help you to find these opportunities).

### **Little things you can do to stay active:**

Go for a walk- even if it's a really short walk, you could try and do this every day and see how it makes you feel after you have been out.

Try the exercises in this pack. They are chair based exercises so you can take these at your own pace and build up and try to do more sets to challenge yourself!

You could put some music on and have a dance around this

### **Give:**

Even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Larger acts, such as volunteering at your local community centre, can improve your mental wellbeing and help you build new social networks.

### **How could you give?**

There are many ways you can give, you could call a friend and have a chat, giving them a friendly voice at the end of the phone!

You could make a donation to your local charity. Local charities are in need more than ever to be able to support the community throughout the pandemic. If you are able to, a small donation would help them in their efforts to support others.

Volunteer in your local community. As we are facing a second national lockdown, many charities will be welcoming volunteers. Here at Age UK Sutton we are asking for wellbeing callers, to have a weekly conversation with an isolated older person. If you

would like some more information about volunteering with us, please email us at [volunteering@ageuksutton.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@ageuksutton.org.uk)

If you would like to look for other volunteering opportunities, please contact the volunteer centre. Please call them on **020 8661 5900** Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm

### **Take Notice:**

Be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you. Some people call this awareness “mindfulness”. It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

### **Ways you can take notice:**

in this pack we have included an exercise known as **5 4 3 2 1**- this is a great way to increase your awareness of the world around you.

You could record your thoughts about your day and reflect on them at the end of the day. Writing our thoughts and feelings down is a great way to process them and help us manage them.

### **Keep learning or try something new:**

Learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence. So why not sign up for that cooking course, start learning to play a musical instrument, get into Yoga- a great activity to learn on your own or with others, online or with a DVD to play at home. Dance classes, these can be accessed on line and some are still currently being run in communities with social distancing guidelines in place.

Try Tai Chi, a slow and gentle exercise which enables muscle strengthening and endurance also is accessible on DVD and some classes may still run in the community with safe social distancing guidelines in place.

University of the Third Age (U3A) gives you the chance to learn new skills without the pressure of any qualifications. There are many more learning activities available than

ever before so please do not hesitate to contact Age UK and Sutton Uplift to find out more. You can take a look at Age UK Sutton's current activities we are able to offer by visiting <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/sutton/activities-and-events/activities-during-c19/> or call us using the contact details below.

**[Please note that activities running are always subject to the most recently updated guidance on social distancing and restrictions advised by the government and public health - it's a good idea to check ahead of time with the organiser before attending an activity]**

### **Things you can do at home**

We have put together a section on little activities you can do at home to help improve your mental and physical well being.

In this pack you will find the following extras:

1. A 'Grow Your Own' plant pack- these will be in the clear bags
2. A distraction **54321 senses** exercise to ease any stress/ anxieties you can do at home with a hot drink and some chocolate on us! you can find this in the green bag! You can also do this exercise when out and about and no one has to know what you are doing as it is all done in your head just by using your 5 senses.
3. Some simple exercises that you can do at home with easy to follow pictures

*(if you have been advised to seek medical advice before exercising please do so  
- and stop if you feel unwell during an activity)*

4. A relaxation exercise for you to try at home - *why not call a friend and tell them to try it out too!*

## Grow your own plant



Being able to grow your own plants can really improve your wellbeing as it can help you to learn a new skill, connect and talk with others by sharing the progress of your plants and by being able to give the produce from your plant to others!

You will find a clear bag in this pack with the following contents:

- Compost pellet
- Seeds
- Small growing pot
- some instructions and top tips for planting your seeds

We would love to hear or see progress of your plants as they grow. Please email us any pictures at [activities@ageuksutton.org.uk](mailto:activities@ageuksutton.org.uk) If this sparks your inner gardener, and you would like to be more involved with any gardening projects we run, then please email us as we would love to be able to have some members to set up a gardening club. We

could create a club where we share tips on gardening and talk about our favourite elements of gardening and so on.

### Relaxation Exercise

Sutton Uplift offers one to one sessions along with group workshops where they discuss and practice the importance of relaxation techniques and self care. Below is a relaxation exercise that you can try at home. This exercise has been taken from one of the workshops, to give you an idea of how Sutton Uplift can work with you to improve your wellbeing and mental health.

You can do this exercise at any time of the day, but it is a good addition to your night time routine to aid a restful sleep.



**This exercise is a simple, effective way to improve your self image. Follow this script before bed and you'll be on your way to falling asleep in a joyful state of mind.**

Let's begin.

First lie or sit down in a comfortable position. Consider your thoughts and how your body feels right now.

We're going to inhale through the nose, and exhale through the mouth.

Again. Inhale....exhale. As you exhale, relax.

Inhale calmly... and as you exhale, just let go of all the stress in your body.

Keep breathing, calmly and peacefully, and just relax.

Where are you tense? Think about these areas, and every time you inhale and exhale, imagine your body is becoming more and more relaxed.

Envision how relaxation feels ... gentle.... peaceful.... warm... open and happy. Nourish that beautiful feeling and let it grow.

Consider where you feel tense, and the relaxation will soften those tight muscles. Continue to let that feeling of serenity expand and spread a sense of peacefulness through your body.

*Inhale relaxation ...exhale tension*

*Inhale serenity ... exhale tension*

Continue this slow breathing, and bask in the serenity with every breath. The more you breathe in and out, the more relaxed you become. You're at ease. You feel peaceful.

Next, visualize a setting that inspires true happiness and relaxation. It can be imaginary, or it can be real. It just needs a setting that is special to you, a setting that inspires joyful thoughts.

What do you hear? ..... See? .... Smell? How does this place make you feel physically? Lose your thoughts in all the comforting sights, sounds and smells of this joyous place. You feel carefree, completely at ease, serene and protected. So let's stay here for a while.

As you relax in this beautiful setting, we'll work on developing a healthy self image.

Pretend the following statements are true. Repeat each statement with a sense of sincerity:

*I appreciate who I am... I am a good person.. I have much to offer*

## How to get support from Sutton Uplift

Please fill out the Sutton Uplift First Contact information form which you can find in this pack, and send it back to:

Sutton Uplift - Wellbeing Team

6 Stanley Park Road, Wallington SM6 0EX

Should you have any queries with regards to filling in the form please do not hesitate to contact **Suzanne Osborne on 07971725386**

**Age UK Sutton**  
1 Carshalton Road  
Sutton, SM1 4LE  
t: 020 8078 0002

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