

Mental Health & Isolation

Worry is a part of life. Many people worry about things such as health, money, work, or family problems. However, when we start to worry too much, or it starts to interfere with getting on with life, then it's important to seek professional advice and support.



SIGNS YOU MIGHT BE WORRYING TOO MUCH

- Your worrying affects your daily life, including school, your job and your social life
- Your worry is uncontrollable about all sorts of things, such as work or health, and minor concerns, such as household chores
- You have difficulty getting to sleep or staying asleep and constantly feel restless or on edge
- You feel irritable, tense and have difficulty concentrating



WHERE TO FIND ADVICE AND SUPPORT

The important thing to remember is that you will not be wasting anyone's time. Mental health issues are real and experienced by many people.

- The first step is to talk to your GP who will be able to refer you to professional help.
- Many local NHS trusts have mental health services that you can contact without a referral. Find an NHS psychological therapies service (IAPT): <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-nhs-talking-therapies-service>

URGENT HELP FOR MENTAL HEALTH



Call **Samaritans** free on **116 123** if you want to talk to someone now.

Contact the **NHS urgent mental health helpline** for you or someone you care for:
www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline

SHOUT is a free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging service. You can **text 'SHOUT'** to **85258** to be connected with a volunteer for an anonymous conversation by text.



TIPS FOR HELPING YOURSELF

These five tips can help everyone manage day to day worries:

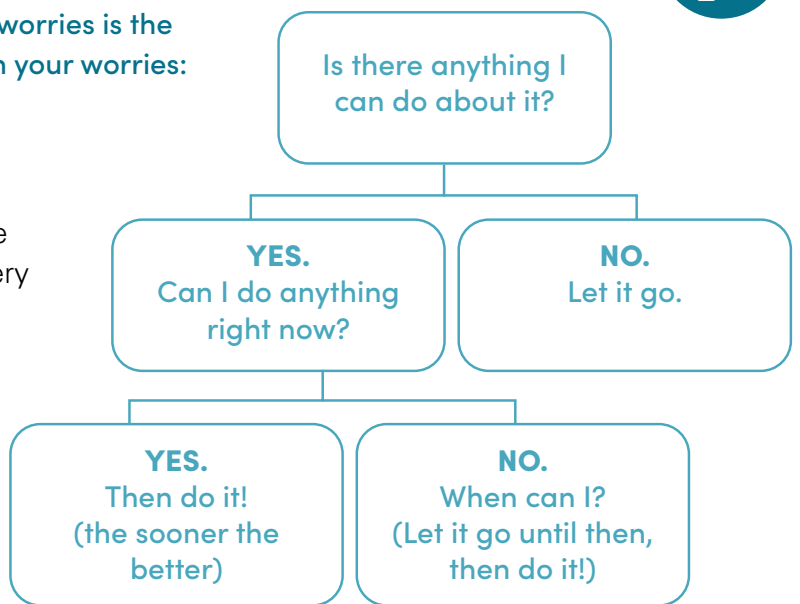
- 1 LOOK AFTER THE BASICS:**
Get enough sleep, eat a healthy diet and take regular exercise.
- 2 TALK:**
Talk to a friend or family member about how you're feeling.
- 3 SWITCH OFF:**
Find something that helps you 'let go' or 'switch off' and do it regularly. This might be walking or another form of exercise; a hobby like cooking or a craft; learning how to meditate; reading or listening to an audio book or podcast.
- 4 GET OUTSIDE:**
Take 30 minutes to go for a walk in nature. It could be a stroll through a park, or a hike in the woods. Research shows that being in nature can increase energy levels, reduce depression and boost well-being.
- 5 MEET OTHER PEOPLE:**
Find out about free things in your area where you can get out of the house and meet other people. Talk to your local library or church about local groups that you could join, or seek out a Place of Welcome: www.placesofwelcome.org.uk/locations or Warm Hub: www.warmwelcome.uk

IMPORTANT!
If you are struggling with worry, anxiety or depression it is important to get professional advice and support.

THE WORRY TREE

Another tool that may help manage your worries is the 'worry tree'. It is a process for dealing with your worries:

1. Start by asking yourself, what are you worrying about right now?
2. Ask yourself, is this a worry that can be resolved or is it something you have very little control over
3. Move on, either by making an action plan for your worry (making a plan to do something about it either now or later) or by finding ways to let go or distract yourself from your worrying thoughts.



WORRYING ABOUT MONEY

Worry, anxiety and money problems are closely linked. If you're in a debt crisis it's important to know that free professional help is available and it is possible to get back on track.

Three steps you can take now to start taking control of your money:



STEP 1

WORK OUT WHERE YOUR MONEY IS GOING.

- Create a simple budget to make it easier to manage your money and see what is regularly coming in and going out.
 - See our guide to building a budget: <https://www.justfinancefoundation.org.uk/budgeting-money>
- See if you can reduce your spending. Look at your standing orders and direct debits. For example, you might be able to cancel and save on subscription services you no longer use.
- Review contracts and policies, like utility bills, broadband, phone and insurance to make sure you are getting the best deal.
 - Money Saving Expert has some advice on getting a good deal: www.moneysavingexpert.com/deals/



"You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

STEP 2

CHECK YOU'RE GETTING EVERYTHING YOU ARE ENTITLED TO.

- Benefits and other government support can help if you're out of work or on a low income, but you may be eligible for other types of support too. For example, free childcare, or a Council Tax discount if you live alone.
 - Check what benefits you can claim: <https://benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk/>
- Local authorities and charities may offer grants to buy clothes, school uniform or household items.
 - Find out more at: www.gov.uk/school-uniform

STEP 3

GET HELP WITH DEBTS

- If you are in debt it can be hard to know where to turn, but there are lots of free advice services available. A professional debt adviser won't judge you, however big or small your problem might be.
 - Find a local debt adviser here: www.moneysavingexpert.com/loans/debt-help-plan/#step4