

# Mental health & mindfulness

Some people call mental health 'emotional health' or 'well-being'. Mental health is a way of describing someone's social and emotional wellbeing. Just as we can experience poor physical health (for example if we break our leg or have the flu) we can also experience poor mental health. Also just like physical health, our mental health can change daily; sometimes changes in our mental health may be a response to something that has happened in our lives and other times it may be due to hormonal or chemical changes in our bodies.

The purpose of this lesson is to help you understand mental health, be able to spot signs of poor mental health, know how to seek help and have some tools for developing positive mental health.

Some emotional changes are normal and don't require support from family, friends or a doctor. For instance, it is normal to have 'bad days' and it is normal to feel angry or upset from time to time however sometimes poor mental health can become a problem we need support with.

**Task 1. Youtube "what are mental health problems?"** and watch the below video. As you watch, write down five signs that someone may be struggling with their mental health. If you do not have access to the video you may try to come up with your own or ask someone at home.



We would like to **celebrate** work completed by students during Character Week 2020. If you would like to, please send any photos or copies of your work to [CW2020@bishopchalloner.bham.sch.uk](mailto:CW2020@bishopchalloner.bham.sch.uk)



During recent months, all of our lives have been turned upside down with the global pandemic and being on lockdown. All of our usual daily tasks and routines have changed and for some of us, this creates anxiety and stress.

## Task 2. Imagination Task

- Create a made up person. This person should be 13 years old and living in Birmingham. Pick their name, some facts about their family and a list of things they enjoy doing in their free time.
- This person has had three difficult feelings recently...
  1. "Everything is pointless at the moment – there is no point doing school work or hobbies when we can't even do these things like normal!"
  2. "I haven't spoken to friends in ages, I bet no one likes me anymore"
  3. "Nothing is going to be normal again"

When people have these automatic negative thoughts (ANTs) it is important that they challenge them! Below are a list of questions.

Your next task is to take each of the three feelings above (ANTs) and challenge them... answer each of the below questions from the perspective of your made up person and their above feelings.

Is that thought helpful?  
Is there another way of looking at this?  
Is there evidence this is true?  
How would someone else respond to this situation?  
What advice would I give someone who felt like me?

### Task Three: Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing. When we are practicing mindfulness we not focusing on what is going on in our lives generally or things that have or will happen. Mindfulness is trying to focus on the 'now'.

Practicing mindfulness can be difficult, it is natural to let your mind wander but if we can forget about everything and focus on one thing (or even clear our mind completely) we are less likely feel stress or anxiety during this time.

There are many ways to practice mindfulness. Which ever way you do it you must ensure that you do not multi-tasks or have distractions around you. This includes turning off any TV, phone or computer near to you.

**Pick one of the below ways to be mindful and practice it for 10 minutes. Before you begin, reflect on how you feel, list three words to describe your current feels.**

- **Mindful art** – take a fresh piece of paper and draw, paint or colour something, anything at all! Do not worry what it looks like, you can throw it away at the end. The purpose is to focus only on what your hands are doing.
- **Music meditation** – put a song you enjoy and find relaxing. Sit comfortably and listen to the lyrics or sounds, focus only on them. When your mind begins to wander, stop it and focus it back on the music.
- **Youtube** “Headspace meditation basics day 1” and complete the meditation challenge. The video should look like the one below.



### Task 1 Answers. Some signs of poor mental health include...

- poor concentration
- worrying more
- finding it hard to make decisions
- feeling less interested in day-to-day activities
- low mood
- feeling overwhelmed by things
- tearfulness
- tiredness and lack of energy
- sleeping more or less
- talking less and avoiding social activities
- talking more or talking very fast, jumping between topics and ideas
- finding it difficult to control your emotions
- irritability and short temper
- aggression



Headspace | Meditation | Basics | Day 1

Headspace • 465 views • 2 months ago

Headspace | Meditation | Basics | Day 1.

### For more information:

<https://www.crisisnetwork.org/find-help/behavioral-health-conditions/managing-change/>

**Still not sure how to cope with change?** Speak to an adult at home or speak to childline

