

Cumann Lúthchleas Gael Baile Stiabhna
Ballysteen G.A.A.



Mental Fitness

- Practical information & tips for 2017

Download this pdf document for free on www.ballysteengaa.ie

Your health is your wealth. This is particularly the case with your mental health.

The majority of us will at some point in our lives, experience a degree of mental illness, which can range from very mild to severe. With this in mind, Ballysteen GAA club have put together this web based resource, outlining some common symptoms/emotions experienced along with self-help tips, which may help to enhance your mental wellbeing. Emergency contact numbers are also included. The material is well worth a read, and is intended to be a resource for an individual, along with concerned family & friends.

A visit to your GP, is also something to consider, as they will be able to listen to your symptoms, assess the severity and suggest an appropriate management plan for you, which may include some blood tests(to rule out physical causes), Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Psychology referral, Prescription medication or Psychiatry referral. It's not a case of "A pill for every ill"

The first step can be the most difficult, but getting the problem off your chest can bring relief in itself. There is plenty help out there, once you seek it.

We hope you find this informative and helpful.

Remember "No man is an island" Dr. Colum Gavin, G.P., Saffron and Blue Medical Clinic

Unhelpful Thinking Styles

All or nothing thinking

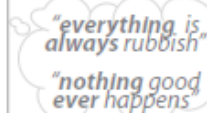


Sometimes called 'black and white thinking'

If I'm not perfect I have failed

Either I do it right or not at all

Over-generalising



Seeing a pattern based upon a single event, or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw

Mental filter



Only paying attention to certain types of evidence.

Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes

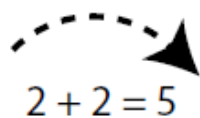
Disqualifying the positive



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

That doesn't count

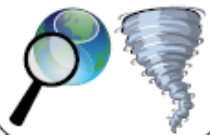
Jumping to conclusions



There are two key types of jumping to conclusions:

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

Magnification (catastrophising) & minimisation



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

Emotional reasoning



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

I feel embarrassed so I must be an idiot

should
must

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

Labelling



Assigning labels to ourselves or other people

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

Personalisation

"this is my fault"

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

Holmes and Rahe stress scale

list of stressful life events that can contribute to illness

Event	Mean value	Event	Mean value
Death of a spouse	100	Change in responsibilities at work	29
Divorce	73	Child leaving home	29
Marital separation	65	Trouble with in-laws	29
Imprisonment	63	Outstanding personal achievement	28
Death of a close family member	63	Spouse starts or stops work	26
Personal injury or illness	53	Beginning or end school	26
Marriage	50	Change in living conditions	25
Dismissal from work	47	Revision of personal habits	24
Marital reconciliation	45	Trouble with boss	23
Retirement	45	Change in working hours or conditions	20
Change in health of family member	44	Change in residence	20
Pregnancy	40	Change in schools	20
Sexual difficulties	39	Change in recreation	19
Gain a new family member	39	Change in church activities	19
Business readjustment	39	Change in social activities	18
Change in financial state	38	Minor mortgage or loan	17
Death of a close friend	37	Change in sleeping habits	16
Change to different line of work	36	Change in number of family reunions	15
Change in frequency of arguments	35	Change in eating habits	15
Major mortgage	32	Vacation	13
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30	Christmas	12
		Minor violation of law	11

Score of 300+: At risk of illness.

Score of 150-299: Risk of illness is moderate (reduced by 30% from the above risk).

Score <150: Only have a slight risk of illness.

Drugs, alcohol and mental health

Drugs and alcohol change the way your brain and body works. They change the balance of chemicals that help your brain to think, feel, create and make decisions. The drugs and alcohol you use can affect you both now and in the future.

Changing drug and alcohol habits can take time, but with support and perseverance you will notice positive changes in your mental and physical wellbeing.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND YOUR MIND

Drug and alcohol use affects the balance of chemicals in your brain, so it's difficult to predict how you will respond to them. Everyone is different. Every drug is different. And what happens each time you use can be different too.

Alcohol and drug use can leave you feeling anxious, agitated, panicked, flat, unmotivated and moody, while your sense of reality can also be affected.

It is important to remember that areas of your brain are generally still developing into your twenties and you are more likely to experience the negative effects of drugs and alcohol.

Heavy alcohol use and drug use interferes with your brain's development and can cause brain damage resulting in learning difficulties, memory problems, as well as anxiety and depression.

For some people using drugs, such as cannabis, may also trigger psychosis.

If you already have a mental health problem, drug and alcohol use can worsen their symptoms, while making recovery much harder.

For further information on cannabis use and psychosis visit druginfo.adf.org.au

It's important to understand the risks.

For more information visit ysas.org.au and theothertalk.org.au

"I'm not telling you how to do your thing, I'm just laying down some facts about indulging, how the shit goin 'round can become your dictator, controller, your world". Damien

Dempsey,  Party On



Cannabis and mental health

Introduction

Research indicates that there is a strong relationship between cannabis use and experiencing mental health problems—especially if mental illness runs in the family. Mental illnesses associated with cannabis include depression, anxiety and psychotic disorders.

What is psychosis?

Psychosis is a symptom of a mental illness, such as schizophrenia, and may include symptoms such as:

- Delusions
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that do not exist or are distorted)
- Disorganised thinking or speech.

The causes of psychosis are not fully understood. However, researchers and health professionals have found a relationship between cannabis use and psychosis.

What is 'cannabis psychosis'?

Cannabis use may cause symptoms similar to psychotic disorders, such as schizophrenia. The symptoms of cannabis psychosis can last several hours or up to 3 days, however this is rare. In many cases the symptoms go away when cannabis use is stopped.

Does cannabis cause schizophrenia?

Cannabis use has been found to have a relationship with mental health problems such as schizophrenia. However, despite major increases in cannabis use in Australia during the past 30 years, levels of schizophrenia in the population have not increased.

There is evidence that regular cannabis use increases the likelihood of symptoms of schizophrenia occurring in people with certain risk factors. The main risk factor is having a personal or family history of mental health problems. There is evidence that people with schizophrenia who use cannabis tend to have their first psychotic episode at a younger age than people with schizophrenia who do not use cannabis.

How does cannabis affect someone with a psychotic illness?

For people with a psychotic illness, cannabis use can:

- Make psychotic symptoms worse
- Cause those with an illness like schizophrenia to experience more delusions, hallucinations and other symptoms
- Lead to a higher likelihood of hospitalisation for psychosis
- Make treatment less effective
- Make recovery from a psychotic episode more difficult.

Health professionals strongly advise people with psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia and bipolar affective disorder to avoid cannabis use.

There is evidence that regular cannabis use increases the likelihood of symptoms of schizophrenia occurring in people with certain risk factors.

Does cannabis cause depression and anxiety?

Research has found a relationship between cannabis use and depression. The effects of cannabis may seem to help ease depression at the time, however, cannabis use is likely to make depression worse over the long term.

People who use cannabis regularly are likely to have higher levels of depression than people who do not use cannabis. There is some evidence to indicate that cannabis use—heavy or frequent use in particular—can cause depression later in life.

The relationship between cannabis use and anxiety is less clear, but anxiety and panic attacks are among the most common negative effects reported by people using cannabis.

What you can do

People with a family or personal history of mental health problems should avoid using cannabis.

If you are experiencing feelings of depression or anxiety, you should contact your general practitioner or a health professional.

What can family and friends do?

It can be stressful living with or watching someone you care about smoke cannabis, especially when they have mental health problems.

There are a couple of things you can do:

- **Learn about cannabis use and mental health.** The more you know about the symptoms and treatment options, the better equipped you'll be to help your friend or family member.
- **Encourage the person to get help.** Urge your friend or family member to seek professional help—don't wait to see if the person gets better without treatment.
- **Be understanding.** Let your friend or family member know that you're there if they need someone to listen to them, encourage them and assist with their treatment.
- **Be patient.** Getting better takes time—even when a person is committed to treatment.
- **Be prepared for setbacks and challenges.**
- **Don't forget to look after yourself.** Information and assistance is available for family, friends and people who use drugs. There is no need to deal with drug issues alone.

References for this fact sheet and further information are available at: druginfo.adf.org.au.

Factsheet

Stay Informed

twitter.com/AustDrug
[linkedin.com/company/australian-drug-foundation](https://www.linkedin.com/company/australian-drug-foundation)
[facebook.com/AustralianDrugFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/AustralianDrugFoundation)
grogwatch.adf.org.au
adf.org.au/subscribe

Level 12, 607 Bourke Street, Melbourne
PO Box 818 North Melbourne Victoria Australia 3051

Email workplace@adf.org.au Telephone 03 9611 6100

© The Australian Drug Foundation, 2014. ABN 66 057 731 192.

Disclaimer: The Australian Drug Foundation has used its best endeavours to ensure that material contained in this publication was correct at the time of printing. The Australian Drug Foundation gives no warranty and accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of information and reserves the right to make changes without notice at any time in its absolute discretion.

These fact sheets
are funded by



Cannabis and mental
health

Page 2/2

Updated 7 October 2015.



Resilience – bounce, don't crack. Dr. Eddie Murphy (Operation Transformation).



Mental Health
Ireland

Building Resilience & Wellbeing

Reflect on your values

Everybody has setbacks

Stay connected

Invest in yourself

Learn healthy habits

Identify your strengths

Engage with kindness

Nurture friendships

Compassion heals

Express gratitude

www.mentalhealthireland.ie

facebook.com/Mental.Health.Ireland
twitter.com/MentalHealthIrl
youtube.com/user/mhi2011
<https://instagram.com/mentalhealthireland/>

Building Resilience & Wellbeing

To be emotionally resilient means having the ability to cope with a difficult or stressful time.

People do not respond in the same way to traumatic and stressful life events.

Developing resilience is a personal journey.

Resilience involves maintaining flexibility and balance in your life as you deal with stressful circumstances.

Step forward and deal with your problems and meet the demands of daily living, and also step back to rest and reenergise yourself.

Support is available from the Samaritans
free phone 116 123
jo@samaritans.org
www.samaritans.org

Mental Health Ireland
1-4 Adelaide Road, Glasthule, Co Dublin
T: 01 284 1166 E: info@mentalhealthireland.ie
W: www.mentalhealthireland.ie

 facebook.com/MentalHealthIreland
 twitter.com/MentalHealthIrl
 youtube.com/user/mhi2011
 <https://instagram.com/mentalhealthireland/>

Ten Tips to Build Resilience and Wellbeing:

1. Stay Connected.

Nurture relationships with friends and family. When you're going through a hard time, don't withdraw from others. Accept help from those who care about you.

2. Have a Sense of Purpose.

Do things that bring meaning to your life. Create a life that feels good on the inside not one that just looks good on the outside.

3. Learn Healthy Habits.

You'll manage stressful times better if you:

- Exercise regularly
- Eat a balanced diet
- Take time to rest

4. Believe in Yourself.

Recognise your personal strengths and build on the positives. Take pride in your abilities and what you've done.

5. Laugh Often.

Hold on to your sense of humour even when times are tough. Laughter relieves stress and helps you keep things in check.

6. Express your emotions.

Make sure you have outlets to express your emotions and let go of tension. Focus on what you can control, acknowledging that change/difficulties are part of life.

- Meditate
- Write in a journal
- Talk with a friend or counsellor

7. Be Optimistic.

A positive, hopeful outlook will make you much more resilient. Many of the problems you'll face in life are temporary; you have overcome setbacks in the past and you will overcome them again.

8. Keep Perspective.

This too shall pass. Try not to get stressed about the elements you can't control focusing only on the elements you can.

9. Be imperfect.

Accept and work with your flaws and imperfections – everyone has them! Be true to yourself and aim to do your best.

10. Learn lessons.

Let go of asking "why me?" and instead focus on the positive lessons you can learn from your experience.



Mind Full, or Mindful?

WHAT IS GAMBLING ADDICTION



Gambling addiction (or ludomania, or compulsive gambling), is a **type of impulse-control disorder**. Problem gamblers are unable to control that impulse to gamble, even when their behavior becomes highly destructive - ruining themselves, their jobs or relationships with their loved ones. Gambling becomes their new world and all they want to do, while the consequences simply don't matter. Problem gamblers keep gambling whether they're broke or flush, up or down, happy or depressed - they can't "stay off the bet".

THE PROFILE OF A COMPULSIVE GAMBLER

The term "compulsive gambling" includes a condition known as pathological gambling, a progressive addiction where someone:

- tends to be increasingly preoccupied with betting and gambling
- feels the urge to bet more money and more frequently
- feels irritable or restless when trying to stop losses
- loses control over proper judgement—continues gambling although it becomes destructive
- hides gambling from friends and family members



HEALTH PROBLEMS



Unique factors contribute to health problems like depression and insomnia among compulsive gamblers:

- Medical: Pathological gamblers have higher occurrences of peptic ulcer, insomnia, irritable bowel syndrome, migraines, high blood pressure, and many other stress-related physical issues than general population.
- Psychiatric: Gambling addiction is highly associated with bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, panic and anxiety disorders, and hypomania.
- Addiction: 50% of gambling addicts are also substance abusers.
- Financial: Pathological gamblers also accumulate large debts that often result in bankruptcy and foreclosures on mortgages.



If one feels depressed, is in a critical period in life, feels the need to play excessively, one doesn't need to fight the problem alone, he needs to contact one's physician or psychotherapist or visit support group.

Gambling problems affects individuals in different ways and gamblers often have unique needs for recovery. There's no specific treatment, meaning that one type of treatment will not necessarily work for another. The hardest thing is to admit and realize that you need help.

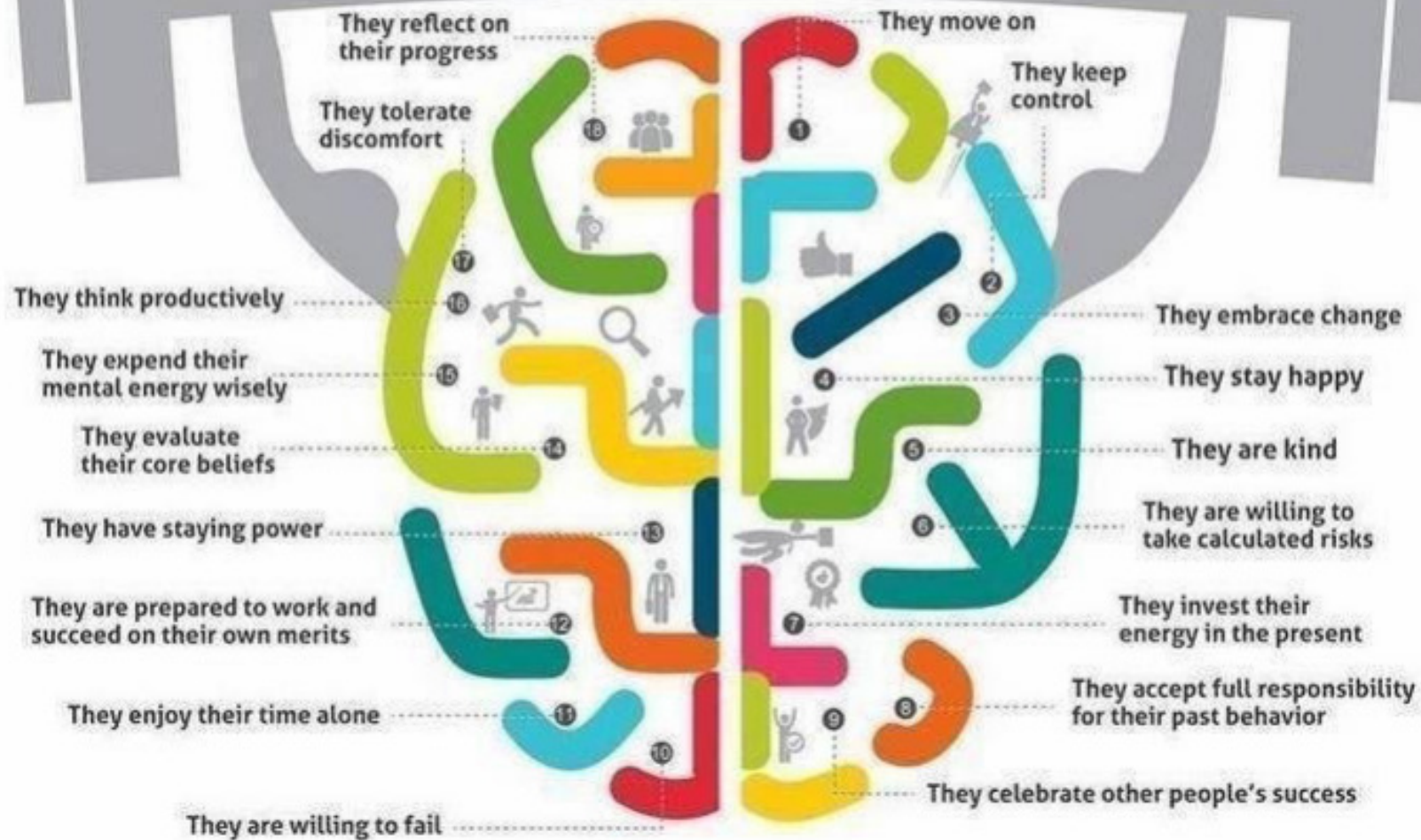
Gambling is also called the "hidden addiction", that's why it's especially important to find support. From family or from a therapist.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy for gambling addiction is focused on changing gambling thoughts and behaviors, such as false beliefs or rationalizations. It helps addicted people fight the gambling urge, handle the tricky emotions rather than escape through gambling, and solve work, relationship and financial issues caused by the addiction.

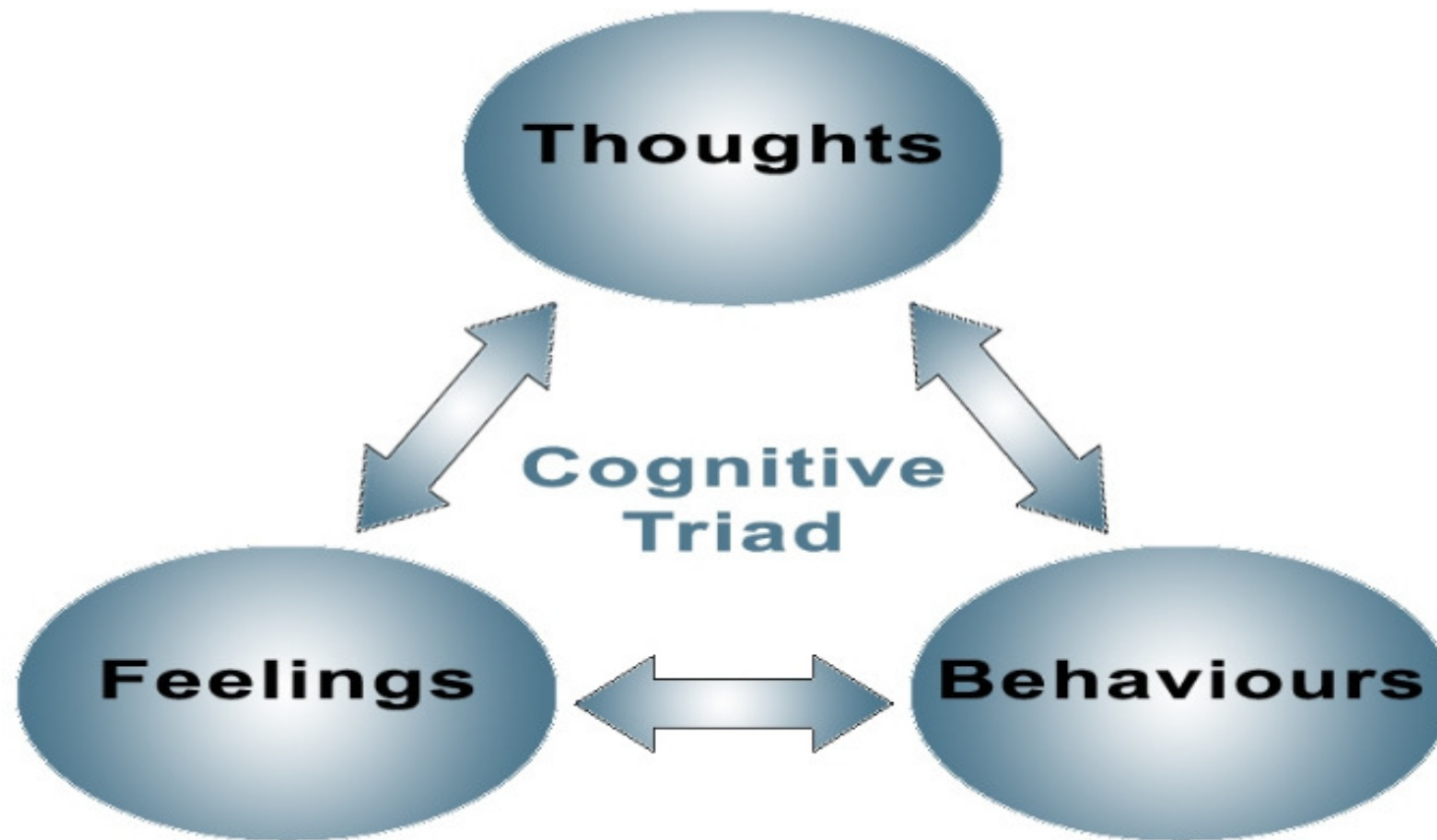
Pathological gamblers should reach out to a therapist for a proper treatment. The goal is to "rewire" the brain by thinking about betting and gambling in a new way. This kind of treatment will change the gambler's beliefs and thoughts.

Know that seeing a therapist doesn't mean that you're weak or can't handle your issues. Therapy treatment is for those who are smart enough to realize they need help.

18 THINGS MENTALLY STRONG PEOPLE DO



Cognitive Behavioural Therapy





Websites: www.humangivens.ie www.hgi.org.uk

Books with a Human Givens basis: “How to lift depression....fast.” “How to master anxiety.” “Navigating the teenage years – a compassionate approach”

Myths vs. Facts

Myth: Mental illnesses only affect the poor and impoverished.

Fact: Mental illnesses do not discriminate. They can affect anyone, at any time.

Myth: Individuals with mental illnesses cannot succeed at university.

Fact: While living with a mental illness may challenge a student's academic performance, a variety of resources exist on campus to support student success.

Myth: A mental illness reflects a personal weakness or character flaw.

Fact: Physiological (biological) factors underlie most mental illnesses. Their onset is often triggered by a stressful environment.

Myth: Individuals with mental disorders are aggressive and violent.

Fact: Individuals with mental disorders are more likely to be the victims of violence themselves.

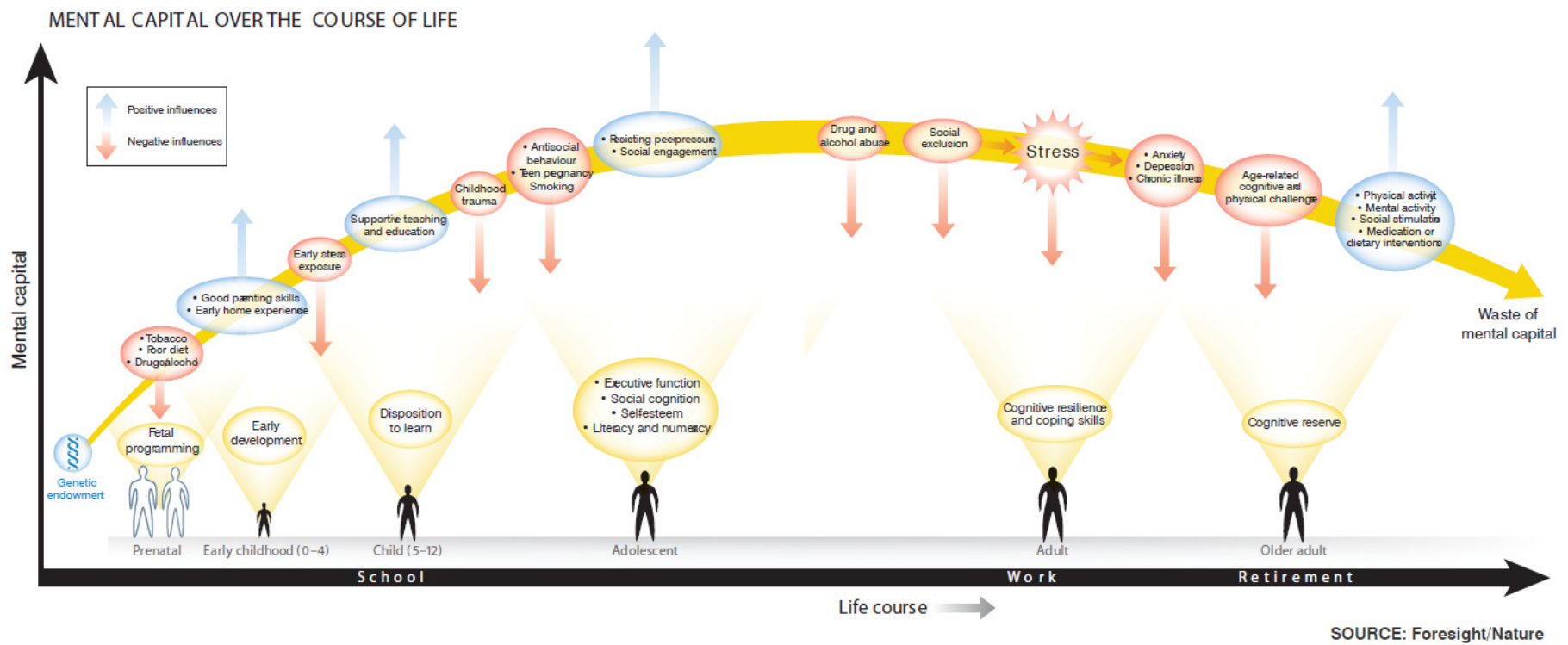
Myth: Medication (e.g., anti-depressants) is the only treatment for mental illnesses.

Fact: A variety of treatments are available for individuals with mental illnesses, including counselling, support groups, cognitive-behavioural therapy as well as medications, all of which can improve one's mental wellbeing.

Myth: I cannot do anything about mental illness.

Fact: Even if you don't have a mental illness you can make a difference by challenging yourself to ReTHINK Mental Health. You can make a difference by raising awareness of mental health and reducing the stigma of mental illness. Here are some of the ways you can start:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Challenge the vocabulary you use. Words like "crazy", "nuts", and "insane" only help to perpetuate the stigma surrounding mental illnesses.
- Learn more about mental illnesses and share that knowledge with those around you.



🔊 Everybody's free (to wear sunscreen) (Baz Luhrmann "Wear Sunscreen")

Five Ways to Wellbeing

1. Connect

... with the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections with support and enrich you every day.

2. Be Active

Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity that you enjoy; one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

3. Take Notice

Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are on a train, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

4. Keep Learning

Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident, as well as being fun to do.

5. Give

Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and will create connections with the people around you.



Wellness Wheel



Desiderata

Go placidly amid the noise and haste,
and remember what peace there may be in silence.
As far as possible without surrender
be on good terms with all persons.
Speak your truth quietly and clearly;
and listen to others,
even the dull and the ignorant;
they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons,
they are vexations to the spirit.
If you compare yourself with others,
you may become vain and bitter;
for always there will be greater and lesser persons
than yourself.
Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.

Keep interested in your own career, however
humble;
it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of
time.
Exercise caution in your business affairs;
for the world is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you to what virtue there is;
many persons strive for high ideals;
and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself.
Especially, do not feign affection.
Neither be cynical about love;
for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment
it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years,
gracefully surrendering the things of youth.
Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden
misfortune.
But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings.
Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.
Beyond a wholesome discipline,
be gentle with yourself.

You are a child of the universe,
no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore be at peace with God,
whatever you conceive Him to be,
and whatever your labors and aspirations,
in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your
soul.

With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.
Be cheerful.
Strive to be happy. **Max Ehrmann**

Skill Set

SKILLS TO HELP YOUR LOVED ONE

ONE

Family environment skills

No blame

Focus on description

Understand their goals

Be sad together

Radical Acceptance

Its Hell

Neither chose to have this

We need to accept what's in the moment

You/they are more than the problem

Source: Family Connections Programme – Deirdre Hayes.

Suffering = Pain + non acceptance

Skill Set

SKILLS TO HELP YOUR LOVED ONE

Validation

Communicate what
you understand

Legitimize facts

Explain own feelings

Acknowledge situation

Respect emotions

Why?

Builds trust

Decreases anger

Enhance self respect

Shows support

invalidation

THE MANY WAYS TO INVALIDATE THE VALID

Invalidation

Warning
signs

Diminish
safety

Be
agressive

Minimize
feelings

Or their
legitimacy

Be critical or
judgmental


Put worst
possible spin
on the
behaviour

Insist on
your
solution

Instead of
solving the
problem

Don't pay
attention to
suffering

Don't
validate
enough



"Will you please just listen?

When I ask you to listen and you start giving advice, you have not done what I have asked.

When I ask you to listen and you start telling me why I shouldn't feel the way I do, you are invalidating my feelings.

When I ask you to listen and you start trying to solve my problem, I feel underestimated and disempowered.

When I ask you to listen and you start telling me what I need to do I feel offended, pressured and controlled.

When I ask you to listen, it does not mean I am helpless. I may be faltering, depressed or discouraged, but I am not helpless.

When I ask you to listen and you do things which I can and need to do for myself, you hurt my self-esteem.

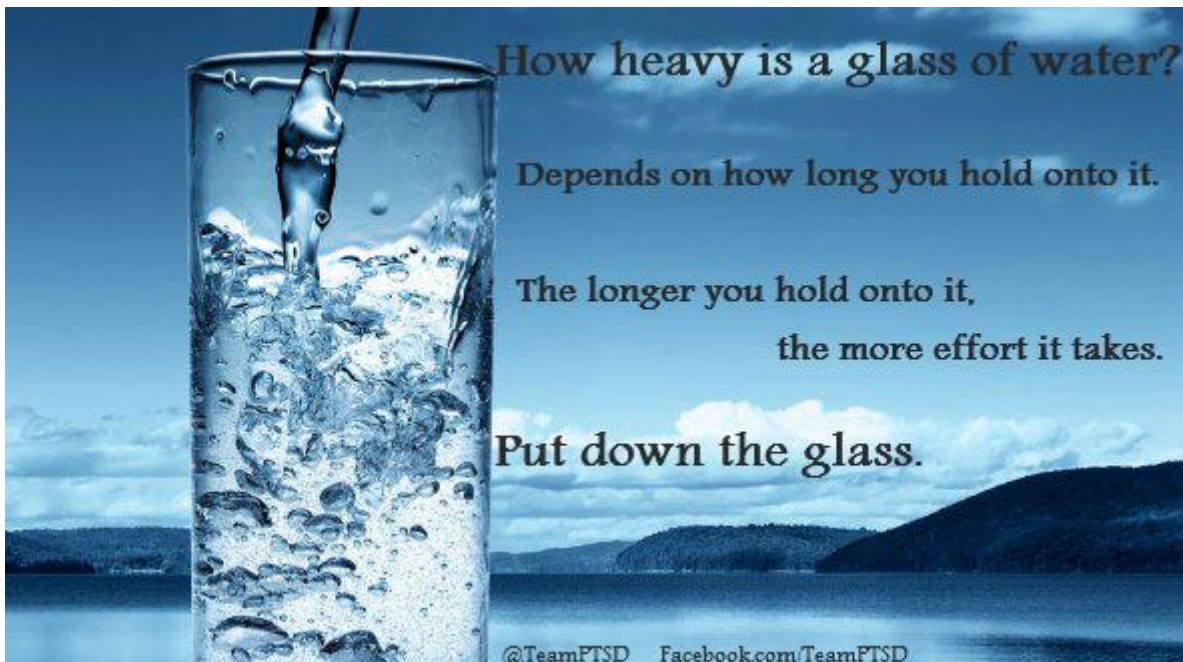
But when you accept the way I feel, then I don't need to spend time and energy trying to defend myself or convince you, and I can focus on figuring out why I feel the way I feel and what to do about it.

And when I do that, I don't need advice, just support, trust and encouragement.

Please remember that what you think are "irrational feelings" always make sense if you take time to listen and understand me. "

A Poem





How heavy is a glass of water?

Depends on how long you hold onto it.

The longer you hold onto it,
the more effort it takes.

Put down the glass.

@TeamPTSD Facebook.com/TeamPTSD

A lecturer, when explaining stress management to a class, raised a glass of water and asked, "how heavy is this glass of water?" Answers called out ranged from 20g to 500g. The lecturer replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long you try to hold it."

"If I hold it for a minute, that's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my right arm. If I hold it for a day, you'll have to call an ambulance. "In each case, it's the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

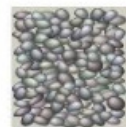
He continued, "And that's the way it is with stress. If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavy, we won't be able to carry on." "As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again. When we're refreshed, we can carry on with the demands of life."



The Glass Jar: Rocks, Pebbles, Sand & Water



- **ROCKS:** These represent your **highest priority** projects and deadlines with the **greatest value**, often *important, but not urgent* tasks that move you toward your goals.
- **PEBBLES:** These represent tasks that are *urgent, and important*.
- **SAND:** Now add sand to fill your jar. In other words, schedule *urgent, but not important* tasks, only after important tasks.
- **WATER:** Finally, pour water into your jar. These trivial time-wasters are neither important nor urgent.



“Don’t sweat the small stuff.”



Food is the
most abused
anxiety drug.

Exercise
is the most
underutilized
antidepressant.

POCKET CHECKLIST

Seasonal Depression

GOT THE WINTERTIME BLUES? YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

Clinically referred to as seasonal affective disorder, SAD affects an estimated 10 million Americans each year. SAD occurs most commonly during late fall and winter, when exposure to sunlight is limited.



SAD Symptoms Checklist:

- ☐ Lack of interest in normal activities
- ☐ Social withdrawal
- ☐ High-carb cravings
- ☐ Weight gain
- ☐ Fatigue

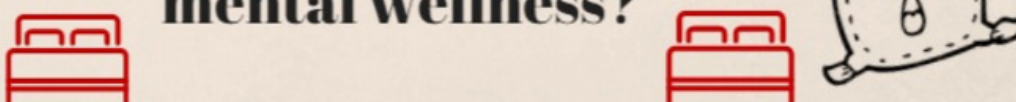
Fight Back

- 1 Get outside** when natural light is brightest.
- 2 Eat well** (fruits, vegetables, whole grains).
- 3 Exercise.**
- 4 Talk to your doctor** about light therapy, which may boost your body's level of serotonin [the "feel good" neurotransmitter] while decreasing production of melatonin, the hormone related to our sleep cycle.

healthfeed.uofuhealth.org

 UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
HEALTH CARE

why is sleep critical to our mental wellness?



- ✓ Insomnia increases the risk of developing depression
- ✓ Sleep disorders cause damage in the brain
- ✓ Good night's sleep helps foster both mental and emotional resilience
- ✓ Sleeping well, helps your memory to stay in a good condition
- ✓ Treat your sleeping disorder, to avoid sleeping phobia

"Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve of care, The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath, Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course, Chief nourisher in life's feast." **McBeth**

Light Therapy; Dawn Simulators & SAD Lamps. e.g. www.lumie.com

 Until it sleeps (Metallica)

Social Isolation

Known Negative Health Consequences of Social Isolation

- **Health Behavioral**
 - Social isolation impacts the health and behavioral habits of older adults.
 - An older adult's social network can impact health **positively** through encouragement to adhere to medical treatment or to refrain from negative or risky behaviors
 - **Negative behaviors are:** heavy drinking (Hanson, 1994), smoking, and being sedentary (Eng et al., 2002), increased nutritional risk (Locher et al., 2005).
- **Psychological**
 - Social isolation has been demonstrated to impact the psychological and cognitive well-being of older adults
 - Those who have poor social connections and do not participate in social activities are at an increased risk of **cognitive decline** (Beland et al., 2005)
 - Significantly increased risk of depression and **death from suicide**, as well as from other causes (Eng et al., 2002)

A Review of Social Isolation. Nicholas R. Nicholson, J Prim Prev. 2012;33(2-3):137-152.

🔊 Not on your own tonight 🔊 Silence is your saviour

Loneliness and isolation

There are times in everyone's life when we feel lonely or isolated. It can be for straightforward reasons, like being away from home or having problems with [friends and family](#).

You can also feel emotionally cut off from those around you, or feeling alone because of what's going on in your head don't feel able to share with your friends or family.

Times you can experience loneliness

Having low [self-esteem](#) can make us feel lonely, because we feel we're not as good as others.

After a [relationship break-up](#) it can be difficult to adjust to life as a single person again. Spending more time on your own can feel isolating.

When you're young, loneliness can be a big problem as it's not always easy to find people you connect with or places to hang out.

This can be especially true in rural or isolated communities where it might seem hard to find people who share your interests.

No matter where you live, you can feel cut off from people at school or at home.

Some common causes of loneliness:

- ★ Having a hard time with bullying or intimidation at school, college or work
- ★ Finding it hard to talk to others because of shyness or [social anxiety](#)
- ★ Living away from home for the first time
- ★ Friends moving away for work or college
- ★ Growing apart from people you've grown up with
- ★ Unemployment can be a big cause of loneliness and isolation as it means you're at home all day without the opportunity to make new friends and keep busy. You can also feel like you don't have much news when you meet your friends, or feel like you don't want to see people
- ★ Certain stressful events or worries can be a cause of loneliness, if you feel like you're the only person going through something or your life is different to people around you.

Coping with loneliness

There are lots of coping strategies for dealing with loneliness and isolation. A lot of them depend on what's causing these feelings.

For instance, if you've moved out of home or to a different country for college or a new job, it's natural you'll be lonely at first.

If there's no clear reason why you feel lonely, it might be a sign something's wrong.



Also www.thefitindian.com/negative-effects-of-loneliness-on-health/

Self-management – 10 tips

Many people with physical health problems already use self-management to help them control their symptoms but the technique has proven to work as a strategy to control things such as bi-polar disorder and schizophrenia.

Taking a self-management course helps you understand how your own mental health problems affect your life and how to recognise the early signs and prevent or minimise the impact of an episode of ill health.

Here are ten things you should know about self-management to help you understand it better:

It's not rocket science

It's simply about acquiring the necessary tools and techniques to empower individuals to take control of their lives, to put themselves back in the driving seat and regain the initiative. Learning to manage your mental health effectively is a fundamental prerequisite to experiencing and sustaining long-term recovery from mental ill-health.

Self-management of a long-term mental ill-health is a means of encouraging an individual to help themselves

With the relevant support towards establishing a good routine of self-care, it involves setting goals to achieve personal hygiene; regular sleeping patterns; healthy eating plans; building relationships both on a personal and professional level; taking regular exercise; establishing voluntary or paid employment; gaining an understanding of how to deal with money and finances and having a say in their medical and associated treatment, and in doing so, bringing stability, a sense of self-worth and hope for the future with quality of life and ultimate recovery.

Recovery is a journey through which an individual learns to manage their problems or condition more effectively

The word recovery is widely used these days and denotes different things to different people. Recovery may take place over a longer period of time. The key to recovery has to be around the realisation that the person with mental ill-health must learn to help themselves.

A key principal of self-management is hope

The individual can themselves take necessary steps to still move forward and enjoy life, in spite of the problems which they might be experiencing. Experiencing mental ill-health need not be the end of meaningful life.

Goal setting is really important in self-management

The individual with the problem needs to appreciate that they must do everything in their power to help themselves. At the same time those that are tasked with helping the individual need to have in place the necessary tools and techniques to be able to help that person on their journey into recovery. Goals enable you to look forward and focus on the future.

It helps us to develop healthier and more meaningful relationships

Humans are not equipped to travel on the journey of life in isolation from one another and so the key to good mental health is the ability to nurture and sustain healthy relationships with others. With effective self-management comes the realisation that life is not all about an individual's needs but also about seeking to meet, as best as possible, the needs of others, of sharing and taking as full a part as possible in family life and friendships.

It can help some people back into work

Another important aspect of self-management is re-establishing and sustaining worthwhile activities and occupations. That may not mean, depending on the degree of severity of illness that a person has gone through, paid employment, but may well mean participating in voluntary work. Research has shown that meaningful work can be therapeutic too.

Routine is the key to stability in a person's mental health

A routine where both physical and emotional needs are being met on a regular basis offers the opportunity for greater stability. In addition, that all-important sense of health and wellbeing is reinforced, as well as that sense of self-worth which is so vital in giving meaning, hope and purpose in a person's life.

Crisis plans enable sensible steps to be taken in the event of things going out of control

Losing control can often make it tougher to manage the other areas of life and so things such as keeping control over finances are necessary. This involves keeping track of day-to-day spending and if necessary drawing up a budget plan to ensure finances are kept on a sound footing.

It's not about throwing away the tablets


Appropriate medication can still play a large part in the effective management of long-term mental ill-health for some people.

Who Ya Gonna Call?



Your local GP

Dr. Suzanne Fitzgibbon (061)392267

Shannondoc 1850 212 999



Suicide Intervention Response in Limerick

Find us on:   @CCRTLim
Crisis Number: **085 1777 631**
(5pm - 6am distress calls only)

[HOME](#) [SERVICES IN IRELAND](#) [HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?](#) [BLOG](#) [IN THE PRESS](#) [FUNDRAISING EVENTS](#) [CONTACT US](#) [DONATE](#)

HOME

Community Crisis Response Team is a team of volunteers who travel out to people in suicidal distress.

Our crisis line is open every night **from 5pm**, you can call or text us on **085-1777631**.

*Please note this number is for **distress calls only**.

We operate from **5pm to 6am** 365 days of the year. We respond to calls from people who may have spotted someone in distress, from family or friends that have discovered a loved one is thinking about suicide and to people who bravely call us on behalf of themselves.

Our volunteers are **trained** in safeTALK, ASIST, Child Protection Policies, water safety, first aid and more. We not only **respond** to people in their homes but to any location where someone may be in distress eg towns, secluded areas and waterways etc.

In addition to the above we also carry out **community patrols** visiting various communities around **West Limerick** throughout the week meeting locals and informing them of our service and offering an opportunity to talk.

Pieta House Midwest

Ardaulin

Mungret

Limerick

V94 T258

Phone: 061-484444

Centre Manager: Marian Long

Opening Hours:

Monday, Wednesday & Friday: 9am to 5pm

Tuesday and Thursday: 9am to 8pm

Saturday: 10am to 2pm

www.pieta.ie

www.samaritans.org 116 123

Support Groups

www.aware.ie 01 661 7211 www.grow.ie/resources/

Advice/Information/Services

www.oakwoodpsych.com/ Psychology & Psychotherapy in Castletroy (086) 3718602

<http://www.yourmentalhealth.ie/> HSE

<http://spunout.ie/health/category/mental-health>

<http://www.charteredaccountants.ie/Stress-Guide> Free to download short book (20 pages) on managing stress etc.

Random quotes/paraphrasing and Ideas

(many from Mental Health and Wellbeing Summit 2016)

"O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall
Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed. Hold them cheap
May who ne'er hung there". Gerard Manley Hopkins



Thoughts are like waves, they keep coming, but you can choose which ones to surf. Amy Cuddy

Anger – focus it into assertiveness, don't suppress it, re-focus it. ← especially good for teenagers.

Self-compassion – be careful how you are talking to yourself because you are listening.

What lens do you wear to look at the world? – what do you filter in. (see page 2 above, mental filter).

Don't engage with toxic people or environments, & if you have to then limit the dose. 🗣️ Bustin Outta Here

The difference between try and triumph is a bit of umph. Dr. Eddie Murphy (Operation Transformation Psychologist & author of "Becoming your Real Self")

Emotional wellness – the idea is to narrow the gap between highest point and lowest point (even keel).

There's 4 legs on the trampoline; physical, mental, relational, emotional/spiritual. If all of them are not in place then you'll get thrown when you bounce. Gerry Hussey (Bressie's Ironmind)

Men talk shoulder to shoulder, not face to face. You get better interaction through doing than just talking – 2 guys building a wall could chat all day, put them sitting in a room and there's nothing to say after 2 minutes.

Chinese Bamboo Tree story (google it) – basically try hard for 5 years and nothing, then it grows 90 feet in 6 weeks. Moral – be patient, hang in there, it is often years later you see the rewards. Dr. Noel Richardson

"All I know is what I have words for". (Ludwig Wittgenstein). Learn the vocabulary so you are able to express yourself more effectively. Professor Jim Lucey (author of "In my room.")

Depression is not a biological disease. The chemical imbalance theory is not proven. That said medication can help – like paracetamol can help a headache, but no-one is claiming you had a headache because of a paracetamol deficiency.

In some cases medicating depression can be like putting fresh bandaging on an infected wound, it may help, especially at the start at the most acute phase, but at some stage you have to deal with the underlying infection to really help the patient. ← *These last two paragraphs are heavily paraphrased, more the sense of the discussion rather than direct quotes – so don't quote me. ☺ It's a controversial area.*

Anhedonia – the loss of capacity to feel pleasure. Is the product of wounding (undiagnosed trauma). So you are blocking the past intensity of distress, but this also blocks pleasure. Dr. Terry Lynch (author of 3 books & provides an online course for the general public). <http://doctorterrylynch.com/>

There's a crack in everything, that's how the light gets in. Leonard Cohen

Suicide doesn't end the pain. It just passes it on to someone else. David Foster Wallace 🗣️ Chris and Stevie

Overall – knowledge is power, keep learning ('inoculate yourself'), finding out about mental health won't make you sad or more at risk – the opposite is true. Do whatever works for you to relax – exercise, socialising, sauna & steamroom, get a back & shoulder rub (even from one of the family), music, watch sports, walk the dog/play with the dog, yoga, mindfulness – it doesn't matter which, just find one or more. Eat well, try to sleep well, stay social, pace yourself, keep talking, moderate your alcohol intake, avoid drugs but not any prescribed meds!

