

If you're struggling

WE GOT YOU



SELF SPACE

HELLO

If you are reading this, we want you first to know that you are joined here by others that have felt suicidal and struggled with suicidal thoughts. You are in the company of others who have been there before. People who understand in their own unique way and have joined together with our therapists to create a set of ideas that you might find supportive.

Maybe you are struggling with a constant sense of uncertainty, overwhelm, anxiety, low thoughts and mood, unemployment, loneliness, feelings of inequality, a relationship breakdown, grief, low confidence, condemning feelings of guilt and not being good enough.

Being a feeling human is a lot. We hope you can find something that resonates with you in what our community and therapists have shared.

We are so, so grateful for everyone who submitted ideas, shared their experiences and contributed to the making of this guide. We couldn't have done it without you.

Jodie and Chance (Founders)

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1. BREAK THE SILENCE

Maybe it feels impossible to know right now that you are loved, lovable, or matter to the world.

Letting someone love us when we are struggling to love ourselves can be a challenging experience. To take off your protective cloak and let someone see into you can feel impossible. But you can do it. Yes, right now, even if you feel at your most alone, finding a way to connect to people who care about you can be the most stabilising thing you can do.

Giving people an insight into what's going on for you and how you're feeling can ease the pressure massively.

1. Identify a friend, relation, supporter you trust.
2. Ask if it would be ok to talk or message.

“I am really struggling today. Could we speak or message?”

If they say yes, go ahead. If they say no, ask when or ask someone else.

Some ways to start

- This is hard for me to share.
- I feel so alone/lonely.
- I am not feeling good about myself.
- I am feeling hopeless.
- I do not feel as if I'll matter.
- I do not feel safe being left alone at the moment.
- I am having suicidal thoughts, can we talk about it?



If you cannot identify anyone directly, then you can reach out to:

- Samaritans: 116 123 (24 hrs) or email jo@samaritans.org
Call any time, day or night
- Papyrus: 0800 068 4141 (for help with suicidal thoughts for under 35s)
Every Day 9:00 am to 12:00 am (midnight)
- Shout 24/7: text 'Shout' to 85258
Text any time, day or night.
- CALM: 0800 585 858
Every Day 5:00 pm to 12:00 am



2. ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED

(Even if you aren't totally sure)

Once we have given voice to our often deepest distressed parts, we are then able to encourage connection with others. Once you have explained even a little what's going on for you, of how you're feeling. It will be easier to give voice to what you need.

It might sound like, "what I need is":

- To watch a movie together.
- To eat food together.
- To sleep close to each other.
- To think about the next hour not too far ahead.
- Heavy blankets and sharing cosy spaces.
- To go for a walk.
- To be together, even in silence.
- To hold hands.



3. ONE STEP AT A TIME: THE BASICS

Are you able to connect now to yourself a little, your body and basic needs?

- Hold an ice cube in your hand.
- Take a shower.
- Eat something.
- Drink water.
- Smell a scent you find reassuring.
- Sleep.
- Feel the floor beneath your feet.
- Open a window or step outside.



Breathe in and breathe out:

- Close your eyes and focus on breathing from your belly, not your chest.
- Lie on your back and bend your knees over a pillow.
- Place one hand flat against your chest and the other on your stomach.
- Take slow, deep breaths through your nose, keeping the hand on your chest still as the hand on your stomach rises and falls with your breaths.
- Next, breathe slowly through pursed lips.
- Feel the weight of your muscles, your bones, visualise sinking into a giant marshmallow.

4. UNDERSTANDING

(For yourself and for others)

Try not to expect too much of yourself.

Lower your daily output expectation. Notice what feels relieving or helpful and do more of that: reading, watching TV, staying still, moving, drinking water, touching another human, sorting a cupboard.

Can you make anyone else smile? (A meme, a little joke, a drawing, a pet, a safe place.

Is there anything creative that feels comforting? Reading, journaling, playing, pets, your impact.

Try to share with people in your wider network a little of what's happening for you, so that you don't feel as if you're letting others down. Take time off work, cancel plans that feel too much, tell loved ones that it's a difficult time right now and do not expect too much of yourself.

5. PLACES TO SEEK HELP

There are experts in this field willing to make contact. They understand and have experience in what to say to support you. Give them a go please.

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Self Space: hey@theselfspace.com or www.theselfspace.com
Book time with us and use code SUPPORT for 10% off your first 1:1 session



6. THE EVERYDAY

Our good mental health is not a given, we will all face struggles and challenges in our lives. Life will sometimes feel impossible and unbearable. Things will happen that we can't control. Life events will throw us off-kilter. We will feel hurt, upset, jealous, angry, betrayed, lost, uncertain, hopeless at times. We are human and it is in our makeup to feel it all. We know that the battle to stay can be brutal. Doing the work every day is a commitment to yourself that you matter. Some things we have found helpful in maintaining better mental health are:

- Check in with how you feel: every day ask yourself "what am I feeling?" Say it out loud to yourself: "I am feeling..." and then ask "what do I need?" and answer yourself out loud.
- Routines and rituals: try to keep small commitments/rituals. Light a candle in the evening, grab a blanket, put your phone down when you get into bed, get outside once a day, drink enough water, eat something green, ask for one hug - give one hug if it's possible.
- Sleep: know that in sleep we repair. Try to set yourself up to sleep better. Make your space clean and nice. Don't drink too much caffeine before bed. Have a sleep ritual, bath or shower, read or listen to something calming. Try not to work from your bed and keep that space for nurturing and love.
- Stay connected: tell a handful of people how you are doing each day and ask how they are. Having a symbol, special word or a scale of one to ten, to do this quickly and easily. Share in your inner world a little bit.
- Moving your body: when you can, move your body however feels good for you. Know that you have a powerful system there that likes to be used. It can also reassure our sense of strength.
- Connect to your breath: when it is down, notice your breathing. Deepen it and slow it down. What an incredible being you are, able to breathe as you do.
- Moderation: try not to have too many things that are done in excess. Try to keep a moderate approach to most things including experiences, drinking, food, rest, play so that you do not ricochet between all or nothing.
- Know what doesn't make you feel good and stay away from it as much as you can!
- Set boundaries: even when it feels hard try to say no when you mean no. Explain that it feels too much, that it doesn't make you feel good or feels like over committing. It is ok to disappoint others. Put yourself first.

Know that you are allowed to feel joy.

Even when you feel at your most horrid, know that you have the propensity for joy, and that you do deserve it and that you will feel it. It is not a permanent state of happiness or joy, it is fleeting and monetary, but it is there to feel.

We will all die. This is the only thing we can be sure of. But each day in the space between birth and death is a tapestry for you to create. A place to rest, to grow, to feel miserable, to feel joy, to learn, to love, and alongside all those that have contributed here and so many, many more, get through it together.

Thank you to everyone that stepped forward to offer their experiences. We hear, we see, we've got you.

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