

Looking After Yourself and Your Teams

Supporting the wellbeing of our workforce in Greater Manchester

Housekeeping

- » Keep your camera on where possible.
- » And your mic on mute to avoid feedback.
- » Raise your hand to speak when you want to contribute.
- » Use the Chat in the main room to share thoughts / documents / links.
- » Answer the door / grab a drink if you need to
- » We will be using Menti participate at a level you are comfortable with.
- » REMEMBER: Be present // Participate // Enjoy

Where are you today?

- » Consider the blob that resembles you the most today.
- » And how about others around you?
- » Each of us need something different day to day – make sure you listen to yourself, and those around you.

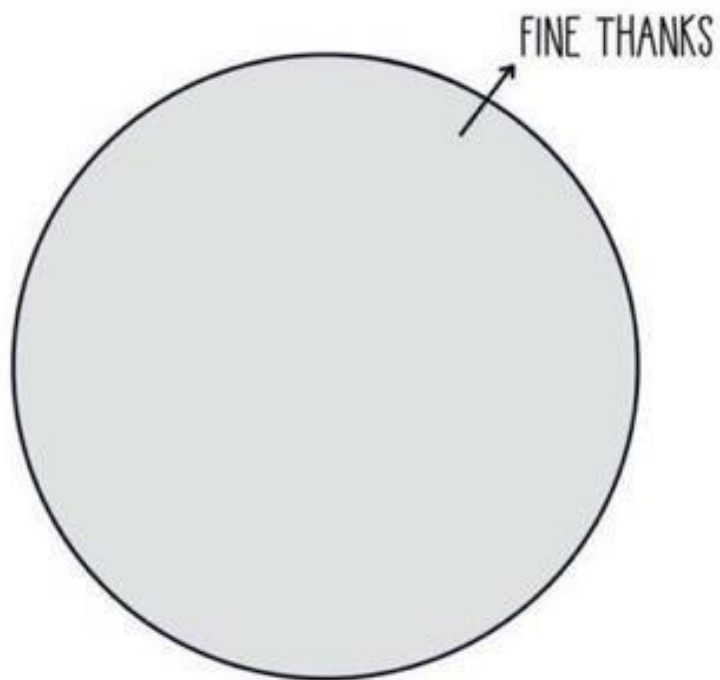
Source: [The Blob Tree](#) by Pip Wilson



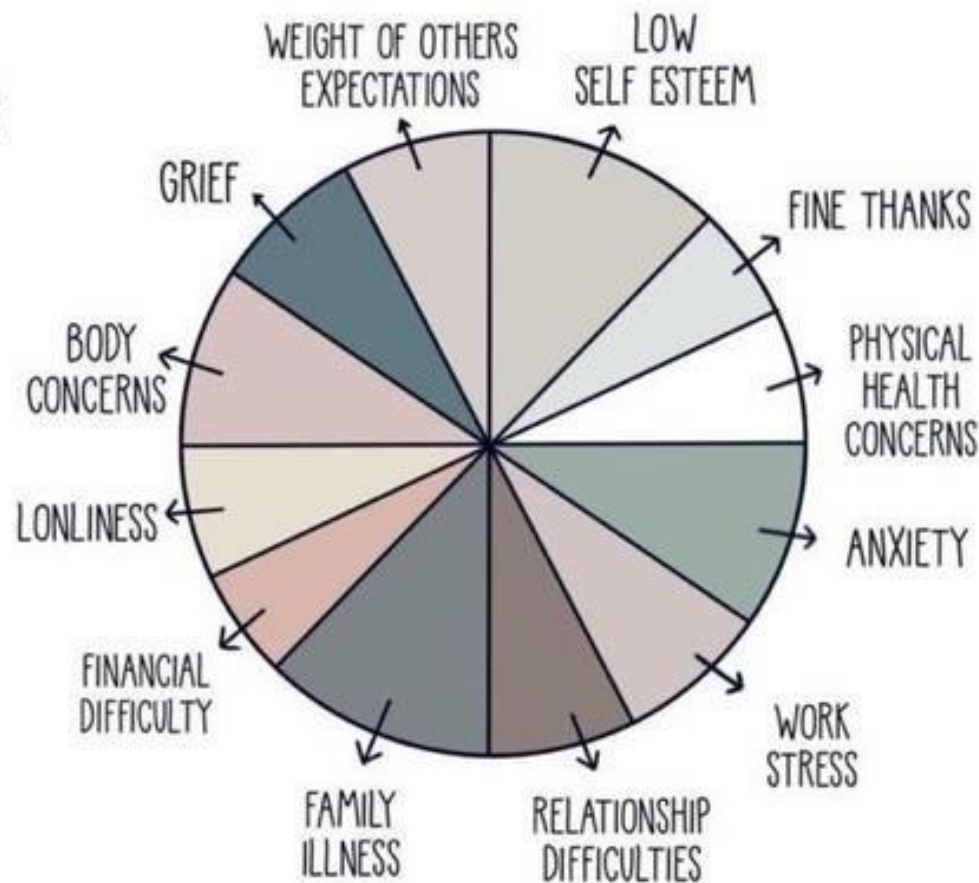
Group Activity Breakout Rooms

- » How can you embed a good day at work?
- » What do you need to do this?
- » What does your wellbeing look like for you?
- » Feed your key points into the main room chat

EXPECTATION



REALITY



How Are You? How Are You Really?

We all have mental health....



1 in 6 people are experiencing a common mental health problem at any point in time.

In Greater Manchester that is almost **half a million** people.

1 in 5 people will think of suicide during their lifetime.

It won't always be the same people.

We all have mental health...

...and some are more vulnerable than others.



Greater Manchester
Integrated Care

LGBTQI+ people are between 2–3 times more likely than heterosexual people to report having a mental health problem in England.

23% of Black or Black British people will experience a common mental health problem in any given week, compared to 17% of White British people

Over a quarter of young women aged between 16–24 years old report having a common mental health problem in any given week, compared to 17% of adults

Around 40% of people in England have overlapping problems including homelessness, substance misuse and contact with the criminal justice system



The Mental Health Toolkit for Employers has been created to help organisations - whether business, public sector or charitable – to support the mental wellbeing of their workforces.



What can you do?

- » Increase physical activity
- » Get enough sleep
- » Be present in what you do
- » Challenge your assumptions
- » Savour the good stuff things
- » Build social connections
- » Manage your emotional energy
- » Create space to 'do nothing.'



Group Activity Breakout Rooms

- » What is your package of self-care?
- » What physical, emotional, mood behavioral changes do you notice about yourself?
- » How does this impact your work?
- » How does it impact on those around you?

Wellbeing For Us All

Good wellbeing is when we are able to be at our best at - work and home.

This is even more important now, as we are working very differently over a sustained period of time.

We know good wellbeing means we feel we:

- » are valued and recognised for our work
- » have psychological safety in the workplace
- » have a sense of belonging / part of a team
- » have permission to access to activities / support



the **physical** support that helps you to be at your best



the **practical** aspects of what makes your working day easier



the **psychological** care to help keep your mental health well

Guides & Resources

Buddy Guide

A buddy is about:

- ✓ Informal support we offer to our colleagues. It is the "how are you?" or a simple "how's your day going?"
- ✓ Paying attention to changes in the behaviour of your buddy*
- ✓ Checking that your buddy is eating, hydrating, and taking breaks
- ✓ Providing a non-judgmental listening ear when your buddy needs to just share how tough their shift/day has been, and validate their experience
- ✓ Encouraging your buddy to approach others for further advice and support if they seem to be persistently struggling and signposting to support when needed

A buddy is not about:

- ✗ Forming deep emotional relationships with others
- ✗ Becoming someone's therapist or counsellor
- ✗ Being available 24hrs a day, becoming dependent, or overly attached
- ✗ Spying on others
- ✗ A substitute for good management or supervision

This is a simple guide to help improve the peer support across a team. If you feel like you need more support, or notice a colleague needs a hand, access the wellbeing support available in the [Greater Manchester Wellbeing Toolkit](#).

Setting up a buddy system in your team

1. Have a discussion at a team meeting to explore whether it is something members of the team feel they would benefit from
2. Ask people to contact a nominated person if they would like to take part, and to share a bit of information about their interests and hobbies to help you match like-minded people
3. Assign buddies in pairs if possible, considering the information people have shared. It works well if they are people who perhaps do not normally work closely together already.
4. Share this guide with those taking part and encourage buddies to agree a meet up routine that works for them. (Ideally at least every couple of weeks)

IMPROVE YOUR SLEEP

Giving our body and mind enough time to get ready for bed is an important part of healthy sleep. The problem is that when we are responding to things with a constant state of alertness, and not quite switching off from the messages and emails, our brain doesn't have an opportunity to wind-down and let go of the day.

Here are some tips that may help you improve the quality of sleep and rest:

- Give yourself time to wind down and relax towards the end of your day, including an hour of dim light to allow the body to get ready for sleep. Consider making lists of anything outstanding or that you still need to deal with so you can 'park' these thoughts while you rest.
- Try and keep your phones and technology outside your bedroom. Protect your bedroom from non-sleep activity and technology that might disturb sleep; and if you can, turn off all alerts on your phone while you sleep.
- Stay active during the day and keep up some form of regular and enjoyable physical exercise as part of your routine. Exercise is a helpful way of being alert when you are working and unwinding after a stressful day.

For more support, check out [Sleepio](#) to learn tools and techniques to help get your sleep back on track. For all NHS staff click [here](#). Care staff please click [here](#).

FINDING YOUR MOTIVATION – IKIGAI



You may have heard of the Japanese concept of *ikigai* – which simply means 'your reason for being'.

Many of us have had to work and think differently during the pandemic, and this may have led us to think about our direction or purpose – both in work and at home.

This simple tool can help to clarify the things that motivate us and focus on how to develop those things that give us our sense of purpose.

There are a couple of easy ways that this can help you:

1. Map the different activities/roles, from home and work, across the matrix of what you love, need, are good at, and can do.
2. Reflect on how important each of these areas/drivers are for you?
3. Consider where the areas cross over and create an impact for you. How does this help understand your purpose? Your motivation?
4. How can you apply this to your work, or home life?

Try it! It's helpful to return to this exercise over time – and align your purpose and drive with your motivations and actions.

BETTER BREATHING TO HELP YOUR STRESS

When we are stressed, we tend to breathe faster and shallower. This might feel like a range of physical symptoms, including:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest tightness
- Feeling dizzy and light-headed
- Heart pounding and racing
- Sweating or hot flushes
- Feeling sick

It can be helpful to understand if you normally breathe from your chest (shallow breathing), or your belly (deep breathing) – and how you can practice your breathing techniques to help your stress levels.

Take a minute to test your breathing:

1. Put one hand on your chest, and one on your belly.
2. Breathe for a few seconds. Which hand rises?
3. If it's your chest, you might have developed a habit of shallow breathing.

Try it! It may be helpful to consider yoga or meditation practice, or you may want to download an app to help your breathing – there are lots of options, like Tactical Breather available free from wherever you download your apps.



Here's a **deep belly breathing exercise** you can practice for 5-10 minutes a day:

- Breathe gently, lightly and slowly count to four, expanding your belly as you do so.
- Hold that breath for a count of four.
- Slowly exhale through your mouth for a count of four. Hold.

Research shows that practicing regular belly breathing can help people feel calmer within a matter of weeks.

DEALING WITH ANXIETY – WHAT'S IN YOUR CONTROL?

OUTSIDE MY CONTROL

WITHIN MY CONTROL

It's completely normal to be experiencing a wide range of emotions. Accepting your feelings is an important first step to building resilience.

If you are prone to worrying about the 'what if?' questions it may be helpful to practice actively relaxing these thoughts and then redirecting your attention to things within your control. Research shows that when we direct our focus to what we can control, we see meaningful and lasting differences in our wellbeing, health, and performance.

Write down what you have control over inside the circle.

Then, note the things you cannot control outside of the circle.

What do you notice?

What actions do you need to take?

Remember: You cannot stop thinking about the 'what if's', but you can control your response to them.

THINKING ABOUT MENOPAUSE

Women make up nearly 80% of the health and care workforce, and every woman goes through menopause at some point in their lives. This usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55, although there are many reasons why this would occur earlier. It can affect younger women through a premature, medical or surgical menopause. It can also affect transgender and non-binary people.

Statistics suggest that around one in every three women has either experienced or is currently going through menopause – which will have an impact on both work and home lives. It is important to make sure we have a good understanding of what it is and how we can support ourselves and colleagues.



What is menopause?

Menopause is a natural transition stage in most women's lives. It is marked by hormonal changes in a woman's reproductive cycle, and has four key stages:

- **Pre-menopause:** the stage before any menopausal symptoms occur
- **Peri-menopause:** when a woman experiences menopausal symptoms due to hormone changes, but still has her period
- **Menopause:** when a woman has not had a period for 12 consecutive months
- **Post-menopause:** the time in a woman's life after she has not had a period for 12 consecutive months

EATING FOR WELLBEING

Eating a healthy balanced diet is a vital part of maintaining good wellbeing and being able to work at your best. It also helps with having a stronger immune system, better sleep and improved mood and energy levels.

We all know about the advice to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day, as well as drinking plenty of water across the day to make sure you stay hydrated – but very few of us actually do this at the best of times.

It's hard when you are running low on your energy reserves, and grabbing a quick fix of snacks can seem like the thing that you need the most. More often than not, food and drinks that give you that immediate energy boost will wear off just as quick, leaving you hungry for more.

They also tend to be high in sugar and calories, making you more likely to gain weight over time.

And don't forget to drink plenty of water! It's easy to overlook, but choosing healthier drinks is a key part of getting a balanced diet. It is suggested



that we should drink 6 to 8 glasses of fluid a day. Remember as well as water, lower fat milk and sugar free drinks, including tea and coffee, all count.

Having a balanced diet of food and drink, with regular exercise and restorative sleep are the key to maintaining good wellbeing.

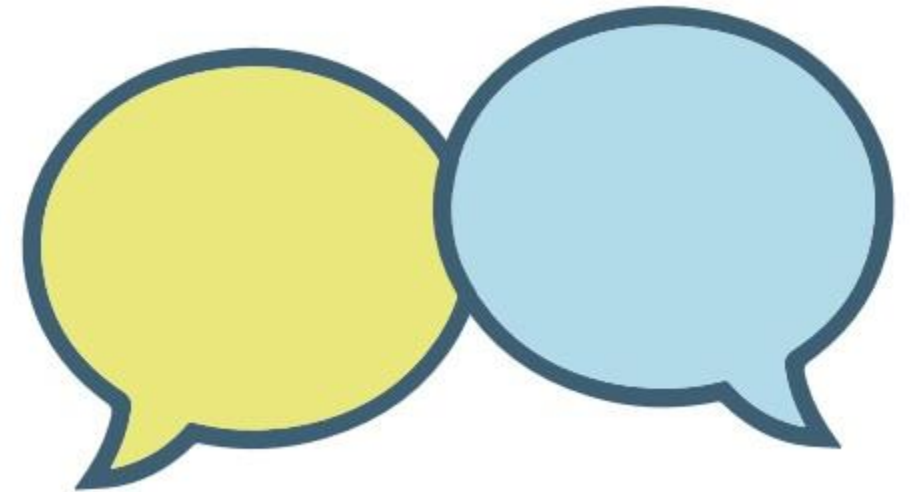
TOP TIP – Plan your food as much as you can and carry healthier choices of drinks and snacks with you to work. Check the nutrition labels on food, especially for those hidden sugar and calorie levels – all foods should be labelled with a clear guide to what they contain.

Have a look at the [NHS Live Well, Eat Well](#) guides to find the advice that suits your lifestyle and dietary needs the most.

The importance of Wellbeing Champions

A **Wellbeing Champion** is a colleague who role models and supports good wellbeing practices. They are:

- » recognised as the 'go to' person to share and signpost peers to wellbeing provision;
- » provide a listening ear for peers;
- » familiar with the tools and guides in their workplace or network, including the GM Wellbeing Toolkit;
- » and know where to direct wellbeing queries.



Check in / Check Out

- Take a moment to reflect on what you have been involved with today.
- Identify 3 things that went well
- Acknowledge what may have been difficult
- Remind yourself that it is ok to ask for help
- Remember to be proud of the work you did today
- If you can, take a moment to check in with your colleagues.
Are they ok?
- Choose an action that signifies the end of your working day
- Switch your attention to home. How are you going to rest and recharge?



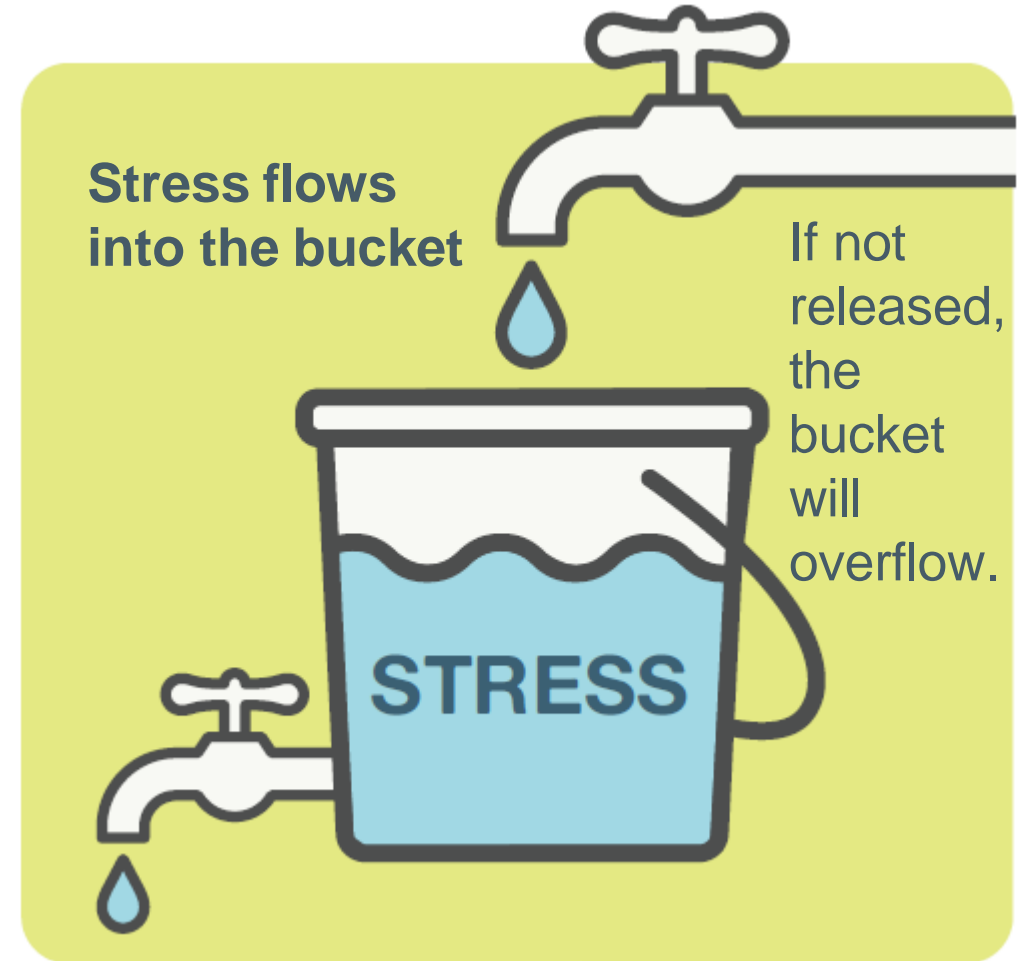
Taking Care of Your Stress Bucket

Where are you today?

- » How did you sleep last night?
- » Were you rested / energised when you got up?
- » Are you hydrating / eating well?
- » Is there anything distracting you?

How focussed are you on what you are doing?

- » Are you able to think clearly & make decisions?
- » How full is your stress bucket?
- » What are your release strategies?
- » Are they working?



WHAT'S IN YOUR CONTROL?

OUTSIDE MY
CONTROL



WITHIN MY
CONTROL

Write down what you have control
over inside the circle.

Then, note the things you cannot
control outside of the circle.

What do you notice?
What actions do you need to take?

Setting Our Boundaries

- » Combination of working from home and a personal connection to the work can make it difficult to separate work life from home life.
- » Take on the trauma of the people who we work with – both peers and service users
- » Dealing with the guilt / resentment towards developments around us
- » Reflecting on the reality VS our perceptions of others
- » Considering the isolating positions our leaders are in

Do one thing:

- » **Change something** in your everyday practice, and pay attention.
- » Find out who your **wellbeing champion** is in your function / locality get in touch with us if you don't know.
- » Take a look at the **GM Wellbeing Toolkit**, designed to support you and your teams, with practical tools and templates, as well information on where to access support when you need it.
- » Join us for **practical workshops or masterclasses** to support you, and encourage your teams to join in - with the **psychological**, **physical** and **practical** aspects of wellbeing.



Final Thought

*“If you don’t look after your wellness,
you will be forced to look after your
illness”*

Read that again...



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Thankyou

#GMWellbeing