

# Looking after your mental health

Your mental health and wellbeing is always important. Christine Husbands from FSB Care shares tips for how you can look after your mental health.



The first step is to recognise that things are becoming too much for us and acknowledge it.



Notice small changes in your thoughts, behaviours, emotions e.g. are you feeling overwhelmed by tasks that you usually wouldn't think twice at, more irritable than usual, are you apprehensive about going out of the house or talking to others? Sometimes it helps to keep a diary of how you feel.



Often, we feel better after we've talked it through with someone, whether it's with friends, family or an FSB Care nurse.



Accept that it's normal to have sad or anxious thoughts, it doesn't necessarily mean you are mentally unwell.



Practice good self-care by looking after yourself, being kind to yourself and giving yourself a break – give yourself permission to rest.



Getting active increases serotonin and dopamine whilst decreasing adrenaline and cortisol, which increase during times of stress.



A good night's sleep makes our brains more alert, helps our memory and boosts our metabolism.



Set short-term goals and celebrate the success of achieving those.



Practice gratitude – be grateful for the positive things in your life and what you've achieved.



Seek help if you need it and appreciate the value of your network.



Remember, feelings of stress, anxiety and worry are normal reactions to a very difficult time in our lives.



FSB Care are here to guide you if you're struggling to get the help you need. One of our qualified mental health nurses can provide emotional support, whether it's talking through your worries, sharing your concerns or answering your questions.

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Whilst not a substitute for professional mental health support, your small business has a key role to play in supporting employees who may be concerned about their mental health.



**Practice empathetic active listening.** Take the time to speak to employees, ask open questions and most importantly listen non-judgementally and without interruption.



**Ask what would help them.** It may not always be possible to deliver on all needs, but it will help to understand their situation.



**Try to pick-up on verbal and non-verbal messages** and signs that something may not be right.



**Be self-aware** and appreciate the impact of employer communication on your employee. Do they seem comfortable with the conversation? Would they prefer a different method, for example a phone call or email?



**Summarise what has been said.** Be supportive and non-judgemental.



**Signpost to relevant sources of help,** including charities such as Mind or The Samaritans, or employee benefits that are available. FSB Care can help you to provide the right resources.



**Follow-up regularly** and constantly reassess.



Visit [fsb.org.uk/care](https://fsb.org.uk/care) to learn more about how FSB Care can support you.

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