When you're on cloud nine, it's easy to feel like you are living your best life. But when the unexpected happens and you hit a low, it's not always easy to see a way out. This is when it's more important than ever to look after your mental health.

Job interviews, exams, driving tests, auditions are all stressful events. Even though they make us anxious, once they're over, we can breathe a sigh of relief. But sometimes, the causes of emotional stress aren't so easy to put behind us.

**Address the stress**

You may be facing ongoing challenges such as money worries, toxic relationships, health concerns, lack of parenting support or problems at work. When they mount up, these pressures can affect your sleep, your mood and, in the longer term, your wellbeing and your mental health. You might be feeling overwhelmed, lonely, heartbroken, unsafe or anxious about your future. Remember, you are not alone and help is at hand. Positive first steps could be:

* Working out the cause of the problem so you know how you might be able to discuss and handle it.
* Taking control of your situation; doing nothing could make things worse.
* Cutting out unhealthy habits like overeating, drugs, smoking or drinking; these will not help you to cope.
* Reaching out to a close friend or relative; having a good social network helps to build emotional strength.
* Managing stress by being active, playing sport and finding time to relax.
* Getting professional help and advice.

**Your mental health**

**For urgent help or immediate support:**

[Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org/) offer free telephone support for anyone who needs help. They’re available 24/7 every single day of the year. Call their helpline on 116 123.

Or, you can text SHOUT to 85258 and chat by text. The service is free on most networks and available 24/7. Trained volunteers will work with to help you take the next steps towards feeling better.

**For help with your mental health and wellbeing:**

[Mind](https://www.mind.org.uk/) offer advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem or encouraging someone to ask for help.

[NHS](https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/tips-to-reduce-stress/) has useful tips to reduce stress as well as helpful guides, tools and activities.

[Rethink Mental Illness](https://www.rethink.org/) offer support services in your area and information and advice to those living with mental illness.

[Anxiety UK](https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/) provide information, support and understanding for those living with anxiety and anxiety-based depression.

[Self Injury Support](https://www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk/) provide support services for women and girls who self-harm including useful downloads and self-help tools.

[Beat](https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/) run a helpline and offer expert advice for those who are experiencing an eating disorder. They also provide online community support and workshops for people supporting someone with an eating disorder.

[Hub of Hope](https://hubofhope.co.uk/) is a database where you can find mental health support and national, local, free and private services. Simply enter your postcode to get started.

[SilverCloud](https://bcuhb.nhs.wales/health-advice/silvercloud-free-online-mental-health-therapy/) offer free online therapy for people living in Wales without GP referral, breaking down the barriers to accessing professional help. Sign-up for a 12-week course of therapy on your phone, tablet or computer.

[The Mix](https://www.themix.org.uk/) offer free information and support for under 25s in the UK online and over the phone on 0808 808 4994.

**Family and relationships**

**For support and advice for your family and personal relationships:**

[Gingerbread](https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/) offer expert advice and practical support to single parents and their families, whatever their shape or size. There is a handy helpline webchat, local and digital single parent groups where you can make connections and a community forum where you can share your views and ideas online.

[Family Lives](https://www.familylives.org.uk/) provides support to families who are struggling with boundaries and discipline, cyberbullying, anger and violence, stress and anxiety and the ups and downs of family life.

[Home Start](https://www.home-start.org.uk/) help families with young children through challenging times offering confidential and compassionate support.

[Relate](https://www.relate.org.uk/) provide relationship support through their online chat or self-help tools. Find help with the challenges of relationships with partners, co-parents, work colleagues, family members or roommates.

[Maternity Action](https://maternityaction.org.uk/) offer free advice to parents or parents-to-be who are worried about their rights to employment, social security and NHS healthcare.

[Childcare and Family Services Finder](http://finder.familyandchildcaretrust.org/kb5/fct/childcarefinder/home.page) is a tool to find registered childcare and family services in your local area. Start by entering your postcode online if you are searching for a childminder, day nursery, playgroup, out of school care or SEND support services.

**Violence and abuse**

**For vital help and support if you are experiencing violence and abuse:**

[Women’s Aid](https://www.womensaid.org.uk/) run a free 24-hour national domestic violence helpline. You can call them on 0808 2000 247.  If you think you might be in an abusive relationship but aren't sure, [answer a few simple questions](https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/the-survivors-handbook/am-i-in-an-abusive-relationship/) online as an important first step. You can search for a support group in your area by region, local authority, city or town.

Galop run a national LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline – you can call them 0800 999 5428.

[Refuge](https://www.refuge.org.uk/) have a free national helpline on 0808 2000 247 available 24/7 and provide a range of services including legal advice for people who have experienced domestic abuse. Abuse may take different forms including physical, emotional or financial abuse. Refuge also provide safe, temporary accommodation for women and children with access to emotional and practical support.

[Rape Crisis](https://rapecrisis.org.uk/) is a charity working to end sexual violence and abuse, listing specialist local services for women and girls. Whether it happened recently or in the past **–** or you're not sure what happened **–** Rape Crisis will help you think through your options and next steps.

**Addiction**

**For help if you are or someone close to you is affected by addiction:**

[We Are With You](https://www.wearewithyou.org.uk/) offer free, confidential support with alcohol, drugs or mental health from local services and online with helpful information and interactive tools.

[Al-Anon](https://www.al-anonuk.org.uk/) Family Groups offer support to anyone whose life is being or has been affected by someone else’s drinking in England and Scotland. You can also get free confidential advice from their advisers through their online chat.

[Alcoholics Anonymous](https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/) will help you on the road to recovery if you think you are addicted to alcohol. Call them on 0800 9177650, chat to an adviser online, or search for a support meeting in your local area. Alcoholics Anonymous have a [video message](https://vimeo.com/472551000) for young people which may help you or someone you know.

[Narcotics Anonymous](https://ukna.org/) helps those who have experienced addiction to drugs with recovery and to stay clean. They also provide in-person or online support meetings, useful downloads and audio shares of personal experiences.

[Action Addiction](https://www.actiononaddiction.org.uk/) offer rehabilitation and community-based addiction treatment and advice. Get the help you need without judgement, discrimination or stigma.