

Mental health sources and links

<https://www.mhnc.uk/about-us> - General, many links to other websites (collaboration website).

<https://www.northamptonshiremind.org.uk/> - Specific to Northampton.

<https://thelowdown.info/> - 11-25 year olds but wide areas of support.

<https://www.nhft.nhs.uk/charities> – NHS charity site.

Free listening services

These services offer confidential support from trained volunteers. You can talk about anything that's troubling you, no matter how difficult:

Call [116 123](tel:116123) to talk to [Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org/), or email: jo@samaritans.org for a reply within 24 hours

Text "SHOUT" to 85258 to contact the [Shout Crisis Text Line](https://www.shoutcrisis.org/), or text "YM" if you're under 19

Call 999 or go to A&E now if:

someone's life is at risk – for example, they have seriously injured themselves or taken an overdose

you do not feel you can keep yourself or someone else safe

A mental health emergency should be taken as seriously as a physical one. You will not be wasting anyone's time.

Call: [999](tel:999)

Returning to work after mental health issues:

<https://www.gov.uk/reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-workers>

Depression

Psychological symptoms

The psychological symptoms of depression include:

- continuous low mood or sadness
- feeling hopeless and helpless
- having low self-esteem
- feeling tearful
- feeling guilt-ridden
- feeling irritable and intolerant of others
- having no motivation or interest in things
- finding it difficult to make decisions
- not getting any enjoyment out of life
- feeling anxious or worried
- having suicidal thoughts or thoughts of harming yourself

Physical symptoms

The physical symptoms of depression include:

- moving or speaking more slowly than usual
- changes in appetite or weight (usually decreased, but sometimes increased)
- constipation

- unexplained aches and pains
- lack of energy
- low sex drive (loss of libido)
- changes to your menstrual cycle
- disturbed sleep – for example, finding it difficult to fall asleep at night or waking up very early in the morning

Anxiety/Panic attacks

Effects of anxiety on your body

These can include:

- a churning feeling in your stomach
- feeling light-headed or dizzy
- pins and needles
- feeling restless or unable to sit still
- headaches, backache or other aches and pains
- faster breathing
- a fast, thumping or irregular heartbeat
- sweating or hot flushes
- sleep problems
- grinding your teeth, especially at night
- nausea (feeling sick)
- needing the toilet more or less often
- changes in your sex drive
- having panic attacks.

Effects of anxiety on your mind

These can include:

- feeling tense, nervous or unable to relax
- having a sense of dread, or fearing the worst
- feeling like the world is speeding up or slowing down
- feeling like other people can see you're anxious and are looking at you
- feeling like you can't stop worrying, or that bad things will happen if you stop worrying
- worrying about anxiety itself, for example worrying about when panic attacks might happen
- wanting lots of reassurance from other people or worrying that people are angry or upset with you
- worrying that you're losing touch with reality
- low mood and depression

PTSD

- vivid flashbacks (feeling like the trauma is happening right now)
- intrusive thoughts or images
- nightmares
- intense distress at real or symbolic reminders of the trauma
- physical sensations such as pain, sweating, nausea or trembling.
- Alertness or feeling on edge
- panicking when reminded of the trauma

- being easily upset or angry
- extreme alertness, also sometimes called 'hypervigilance'
- disturbed sleep or a lack of sleep
- irritability or aggressive behaviour
- finding it hard to concentrate – including on simple or everyday tasks
- being jumpy or easily startled

Bipolar

- down, upset, or tearful
- tired or sluggish
- not being interested in or finding enjoyment in things you used to
- low self-esteem and lacking in confidence
- guilty, worthless, or hopeless
- agitated and tense
- suicidal

Borderline personality disorder BPD

The symptoms of BPD can be grouped into 4 main areas:

- emotional instability – the psychological term for this is affective dysregulation
- disturbed patterns of thinking or perception – cognitive distortions or perceptual distortions
- impulsive behaviour
- intense but unstable relationships with others
- The symptoms of a personality disorder may range from mild to severe and usually emerge in adolescence, persisting into adulthood.

Schizophrenia

- Delusions. These are false beliefs that are not based on reality.
- Hallucinations. These usually involve seeing or hearing things that don't exist.
- Disorganized thinking (speech). Disorganized thinking is inferred from disorganized speech.
- Extremely disorganized or abnormal motor behaviour.
- Negative symptoms. This refers to reduced or lack of ability to function normally.

Psychosis

Someone who develops psychosis will have their own unique set of symptoms and experiences, according to their circumstances.

But in general, 3 main symptoms are associated with a psychotic episode:

- hallucinations
- delusions
- confused and disturbed thought

Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)

Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) affects people differently, but usually causes a particular pattern of thoughts and behaviours.

OCD has 3 main elements:

- obsessions – where an unwanted, intrusive and often distressing thought, image or urge repeatedly enters your mind
- emotions – the obsession causes a feeling of intense anxiety or distress
- compulsions – repetitive behaviours or mental acts that a person with OCD feels driven to perform because of the anxiety and distress caused by the obsession

Eating disorders

The most common eating disorders are:

- anorexia nervosa – trying to control your weight by not eating enough food, exercising too much, or doing both
1. missing meals, eating very little or avoid eating any foods you see as fattening
 2. lying about what and when you've eaten, and how much you weigh
 3. taking medicine to reduce your hunger (appetite suppressants), such as slimming or diet pills

4. exercising excessively, making yourself sick, or using medicine to help you poo (laxatives) or to make you pee (diuretics) to try to avoid putting on weight
 5. an overwhelming fear of gaining weight
 6. strict rituals around eating
 7. seeing losing a lot of weight as a positive thing
 8. believing you're fat when you're a healthy weight or underweight
 9. not admitting your weight loss is serious
- bulimia – losing control over how much you eat and then taking drastic action to not put on weight
 1. fear of putting on weight
 2. being very critical about your weight and body shape
 3. mood changes – feeling very tense or anxious, for example
 4. thinking about food a lot
 5. feeling guilty and ashamed, and behaving secretly
 6. avoiding social activities that involve food
 7. feeling like you have no control over your eating
 - binge eating disorder (BED) – eating large portions of food until you feel uncomfortably full
 1. eating when not hungry
 2. eating very fast during a binge
 3. eating alone or secretly
 4. feeling depressed, guilty, ashamed or disgusted after binge eating

ADHD

Some specialists have suggested the following as a list of symptoms associated with ADHD in adults:

- carelessness and lack of attention to detail
- continually starting new tasks before finishing old ones
- poor organisational skills
- inability to focus or prioritise
- continually losing or misplacing things
- forgetfulness
- restlessness and edginess
- difficulty keeping quiet, and speaking out of turn
- blurting out responses and often interrupting others
- mood swings, irritability and a quick temper
- inability to deal with stress
- extreme impatience
- taking risks in activities, often with little or no regard for personal safety or the safety of others – for example, driving dangerously

Anger

The following are some of the possible causes of anger issues

Depression, OCD, Alcoholism, ADHD, Bipolar Disorder, Intermittent explosive disorder, Grief.

- irritability
- frustration
- anxiety
- rage
- stress
- feeling overwhelmed
- guilt
- increased blood pressure
- increased heart rate
- tingling sensation
- muscle tension

Intermittent explosive disorder

A person with intermittent explosive disorder (IED) has repeated episodes of aggressive, impulsive, or violent behaviour. They may overreact to situations with angry outbursts that are out of proportion to the situation.

Episodes last less than 30 minutes and come on without warning. People with the disorder may feel irritable and angry most of the time.

Some common behaviours include:

- temper tantrums
- arguments
- fighting
- physical violence
- throwing things

Addiction

- Defensiveness
- Agitation
- Inability to focus or concentrate
- Poor judgement
- Memory problems
- Diminished self-esteem and self-worth
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Secretive or dishonest behaviour
- Poor performance and/or attendance at work or school
- Withdrawing from responsibility and socialising
- Losing interest in activities, hobbies or events that were once important to you
- Continuing to use the substance, or engage in certain behaviours, despite the negative consequences that these cause
- Trying but failing to reduce or stop misusing a substance, or engaging in certain behaviours
- Lack of concern over physical appearance/personal hygiene
- Disrupted sleep patterns, including insomnia

Loneliness

- Inability to connect with others on a deeper, more intimate level. Maybe you have friends and family in your life, but engagement with them is at a very surface level. Your interaction doesn't feel connected in a way that is fulfilling and this disconnection seems never ending.
- No close or "best" friends. You have friends, but they are casual friends or acquaintances and you feel you can find no one who truly "gets" you.
- Overwhelming feeling of isolation regardless of where you are and who's around. You can be at a party surrounded by dozens of people and, yet, you feel isolated, separate, and disengaged. At work, you may feel alienated and alone. Same on a bus, train, or walking down a busy street. It's as if you're in your own unbreakable bubble.
- Negative feelings of self-doubt and self-worth. Does it feel like you are always less than enough? These feelings--long-term--are another possible symptom of chronic loneliness.
- When you try to connect or reach out, it's not reciprocated, and you're not seen or heard.
- Exhaustion and burn out when trying to engage socially. If you're dealing with chronic loneliness, trying to engage and be social with others can leave you feeling exhausted. Continued feelings of being drained can lead to other issues like sleep problems, a weakened immune system, poor diet, and more.