Building resilience, promoting wellbeing

mental health foundation

mind

Mental health

We all have mental health.

Mental health relates to how we think, feel, behave and interact with other people.

Just as we can develop problems with our physical health, mental health problems will be experienced by many of us over the course of our lives.

One in **four** people will experience a **mental health problem** each year

- Anxiety and depression are the most common problems, with about 1 in 10 people affected at any given time.

- 1-2 people in every 100 will experience a serious mental health problem such as bipolar disorder, psychosis or schizophrenia in their life.

Not all mental health problems are preventable. But there are some things we can do to look after our mental health, for example, promoting mental wellbeing and building resilience

Wellbeing

This presentation focuses on mental rather than physical wellbeing

How would you define wellbeing?

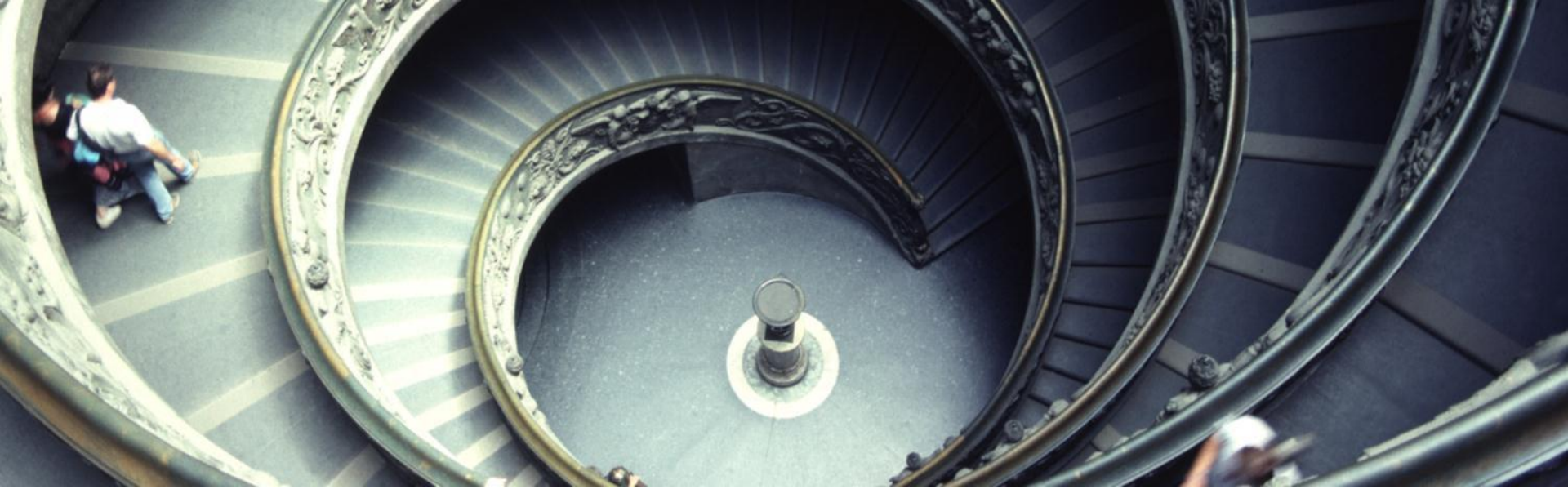
The World Health Organisation defines wellbeing as:

‘a state of mind in which an individual is able to realise his or her own abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.’

Wellbeing is made up of two key elements:

1. Feeling good
2. Functioning well

What kinds of things contribute to your own sense of mental wellbeing?



Resilience

Resilience is the ability to cope with life's challenges and to adapt to adversity.

Your levels of resilience can change over the course of your life.

Why are wellbeing and resilience important?

Resilience is important because it can help to protect against the development of some mental health problems. Resilience helps us to maintain our wellbeing in difficult circumstances.

What type of things make you feel more or less resilient and able to cope?

High levels of wellbeing and resilience in a community don’t just lead to fewer mental health problems…

Good levels of wellbeing are associated with:

- Improved learning and academic achievement
- Reduced absence from work due to sickness
- Reductions in risk-taking behaviours like smoking
- Improved physical health
- Reduced mortality
- Increased community involvement

People at higher risk of low wellbeing

Some people in our community face significant challenges and may need more support than others to improve their wellbeing, for example people who are:

- Socially isolated
- From Black or minority ethnic groups
- On low incomes or unemployed
- Living with a long term health condition

How could you support these groups in your community?

Men from households with the **lowest 20%** of incomes are almost **3 times** more likely to have a **common mental disorder** than those with the top 20%

Black and minority ethnic people are nearly **3 times** more likely to attempt **suicide**

People with **less than three close relatives or friends** are more likely to experience mental health problems

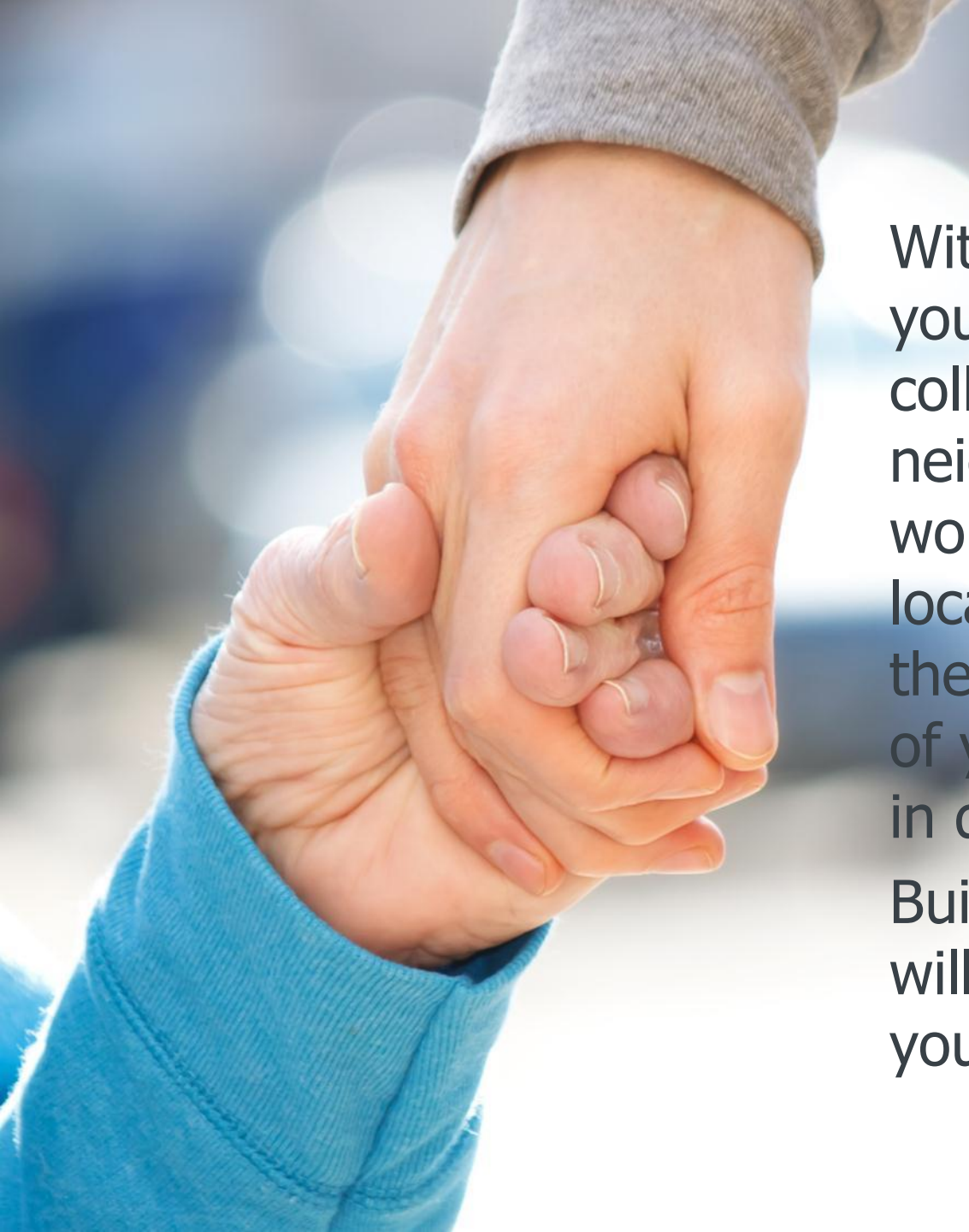
Rates of **depression** are **double** in those with long term health conditions than in the rest of the population

22% of gay and bisexual men are currently experiencing moderate to severe levels of depression

Improving wellbeing

There are a whole range of ways that we can improve our wellbeing and resilience.

The New Economics Foundation has set out five things that we can all do to improve our wellbeing….



Connect…

With the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them.

Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

Be active…

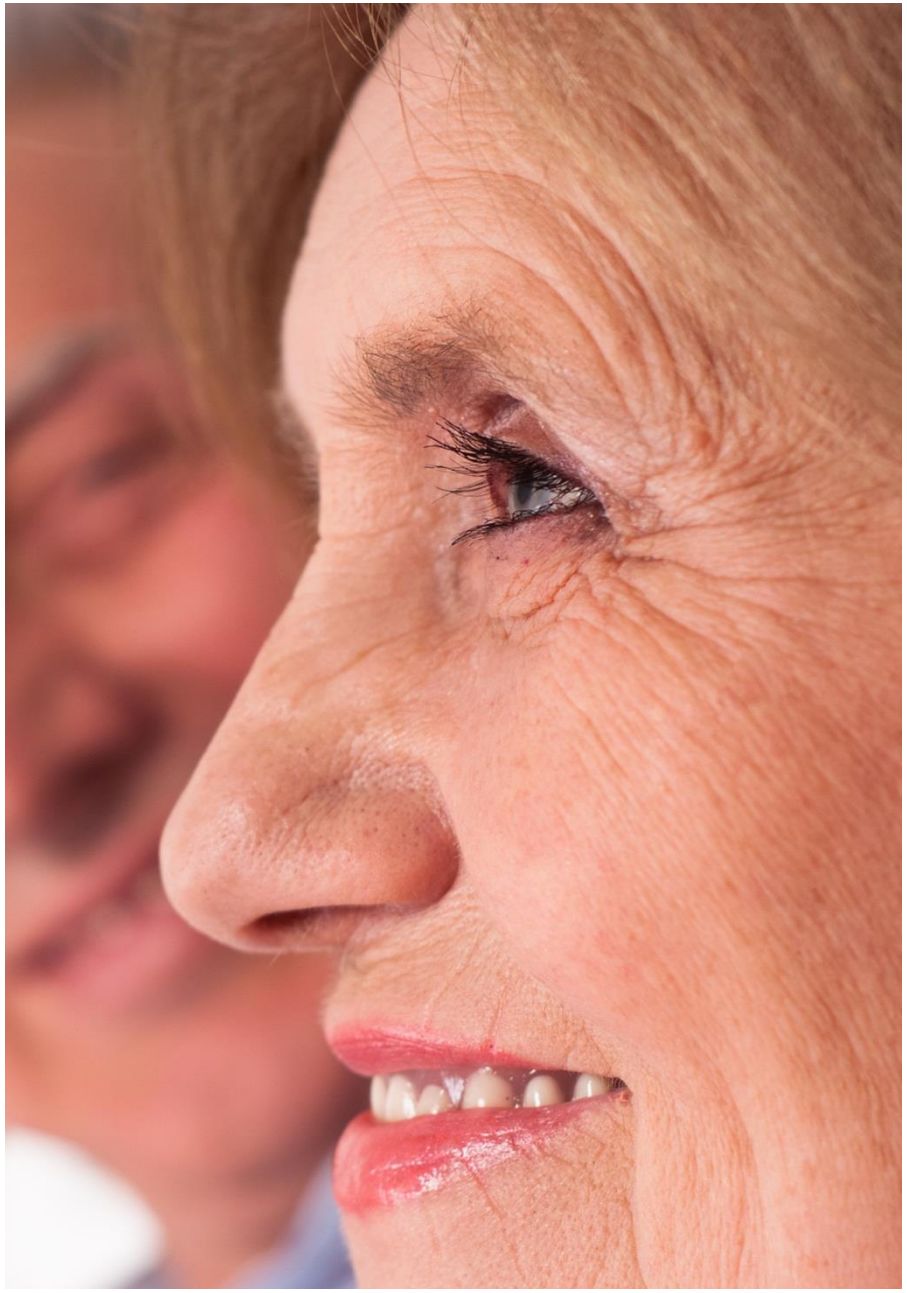
Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

Take notice…

Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

Give…

Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.



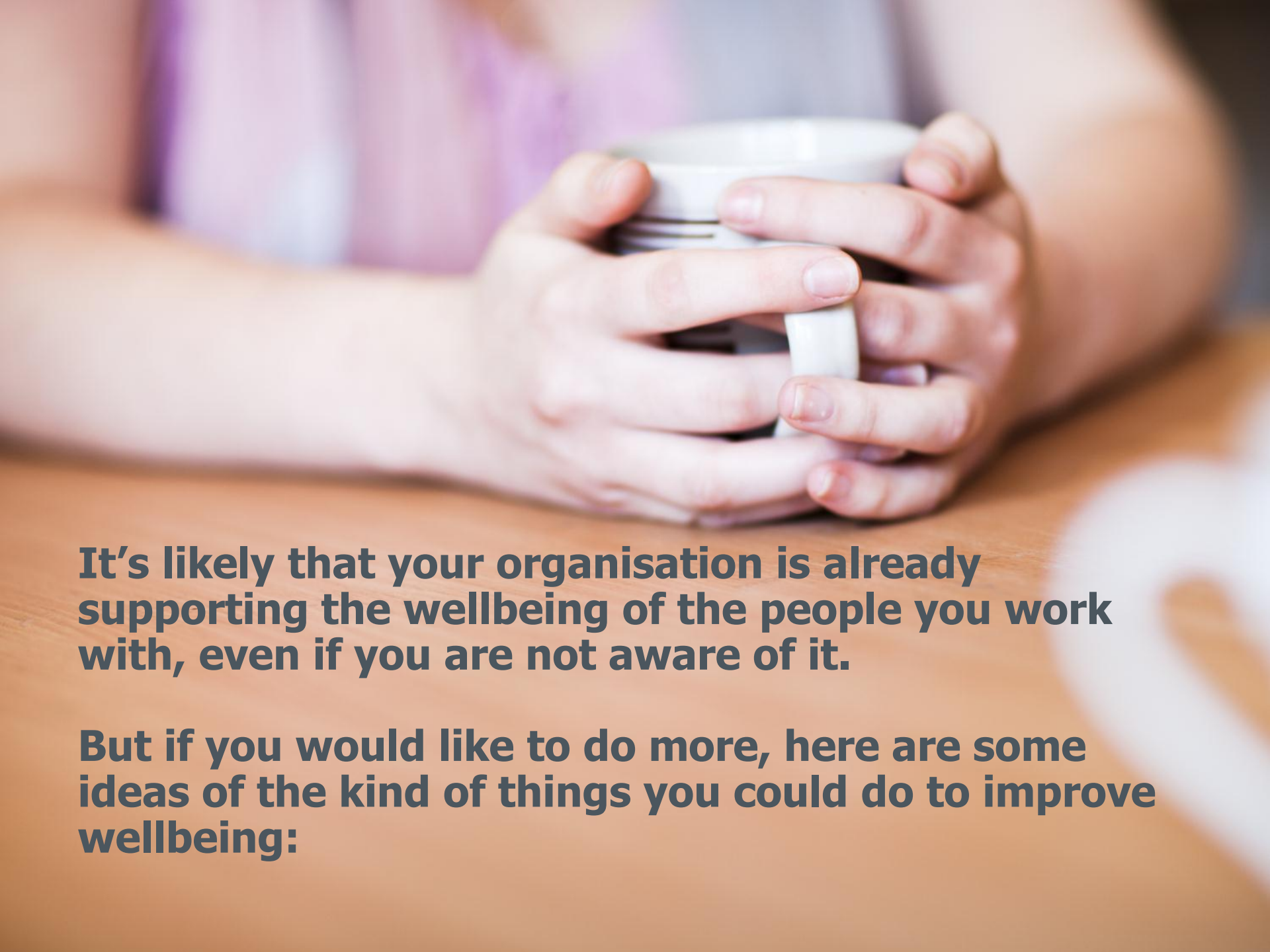
Keep learning…

Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.

What can you do?

These are not just things that people should do by themselves. Community groups, services, resources and facilities also play a role in helping people to understand the things they can do for their wellbeing, and supporting people to do them.

What services/activities do you provide that promote each of the five ways to wellbeing?



It’s likely that your organisation is already supporting the wellbeing of the people you work with, even if you are not aware of it.

But if you would like to do more, here are some ideas of the kind of things you could do to improve wellbeing:

1. Promote the five ways to wellbeing

Think about ways you could make the five ways to wellbeing a central part of the services, activities or support you provide.

Could you organise some physical activities, like a sports team or walking club, helping people to be active?

Could you organise creative activities that help people take notice and learn, perhaps art or cooking classes, or run a book group?

Could you facilitate opportunities for people to give their time and volunteer in the community

2. Improve opportunities for social connection

Can you do more to bring people together in the work that you so, helping them to build more social connections?

Could you provide a befriending service for the most isolated people in your community?

Could you facilitate peer support groups for people with similar life experiences to come together?

3. Raise awareness of mental health, wellbeing and resilience

Lots of people don't feel confident talking about mental health and wellbeing or know enough about what they can do to help.

Raising awareness about mental health can be an important step in making every contact we have with someone in the local community count for wellbeing.

4. Make sure your services are accessible and welcoming

Ensure that your services are appropriate to people of all ages, sexual orientations, disabilities, gender, and race

5. Think about the impact your services have on the wellbeing of your community

Could you measure the impact your group has on community wellbeing, using a tool like the New Economics Foundations handbook, ‘measuring wellbeing’?

6. Connect with other community organisations

Consider ways you could work together with other organisations in the community to improve wellbeing.

7. Provide information about other services in your area

Think about pulling together a list of other groups and services in your area that you think might be helpful in supporting the wellbeing of the people you work with.

Recognising mental health problems

You may come across people who you think might be experiencing more than just low wellbeing, but may be developing a mental health problem.

The first signs of mental health problems will differ from person to person and are not always easy to spot.

Some common early signs of a mental health problem that you may notice in someone include:

Poor motivation

Increasingly anxious

Indifferent

Being on edge

Dramatic change of personality

Irrational

Hearing and seeing things that others don't

Self-absorbed

Highly emotional

Restlessness

Unresponsive

Poor personal presentation

Becoming socially isolated

Lack of energy

Problems with sleep

Hyperactivity

Lack of interest in activities that were previously enjoyed

Making statements of self-worthlessness

Distracted

Poor concentration

Extreme mood swings

Helping people get the right support

If you think someone is experiencing a mental health problem and needs help, there are a range of people and organisations that offer advice, support and treatment:

– GPs can be the first point of contact for many people – they can offer treatment and advice and can make referrals for more support.

– If someone is experiencing severe mental distress they can make an emergency appointment with their GP, or go to the local A&E department. If you are worried that someone is at immediate risk of harming themselves or others you should call 999.

Helplines and websites

There are lots of national telephone helplines and websites that can be contacted for support, with many available 24/7. The booklet that accompanies this presentation contains the contact details for many of these.

How to change things in your area

If you feel strongly that more needs to be done to support the wellbeing of people in your community there are local decision-makers and organisations that you can contact:

- Your local MP
- Your local councillor
- Healthwatch

For more information, the accompanying booklet and full report please see www.mind.org.uk/publicmentalhealth

We're Mind, the mental health charity.
We believe no one should have to face a mental health problem alone. We're here for you. Today. Now. Whether you're stressed, depressed or in crisis. We'll listen, give support and advice, and fight your corner.

Registered Charity No. 219830 Registered No. 424348 England

The Mental Health Foundation is a UK-wide charity that carries out research, campaigns for better mental health services, and works to raise awareness of all mental health issues to help us all lead mentally healthier lives.

Registered Charity Nos: (England & Wales) 801130: (Scotland) SC 039714.

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