

KINDNESS FOR CARERS

Tips for kindness towards yourself



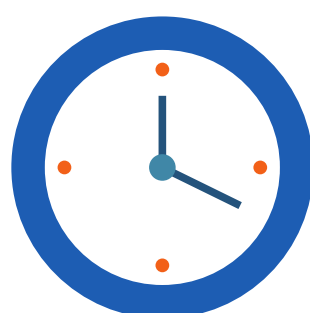
CREATE MINI MOMENTS OF RESPITE

It doesn't have to be a whole day or afternoon, go for mini moments of respite: water the plants, listen to a podcast or do a sudoku.



CONNECT WITH OTHERS

If you feel isolated, pick up the phone or send an e-mail; connect on the Carers UK Forum. Reach out for a chat with someone. Remember, you are not alone.



SCHEDULE AND LIMIT WORRY TIME

When you find yourself overthinking things or are unable to switch off, schedule some worry time. For 10 to 20 minutes worry as much as you want, ruminate and dwell - then move on to something productive.



REMEMBER TO BREATHE:4/8

Your breath is your friend. When you feel overwhelmed, stop and take a deep breath in through your nose, hold and then breathe out slowly through your mouth. A good technique is breathing in for a count of 4 and breathing out for a count of 8 - elongating the out breath really helps to calm things down. Repeat 10 times (or more ...).

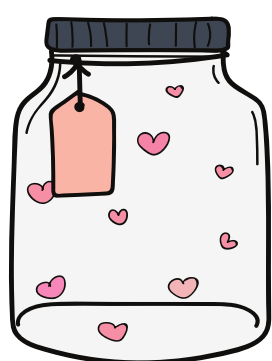


KEEP MOVING

Exercise is a great way of getting rid of stress hormones, be it 10,000 steps a day or a dance to the radio while you wash the dishes - it works!

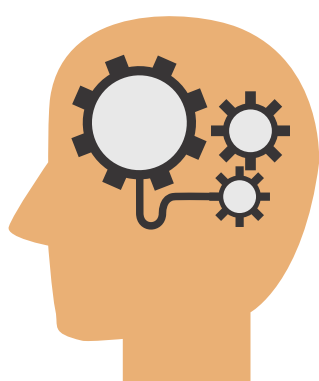
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START YOUR JAR OF JOY

Your happiness depends on frequency, not intensity. Don't look for happiness in the BIG things, joy is all around us in the little things. It could be just watching a small robin in a tree or starting your day with a good shower. When you find your slice of joy, write it down and slip it into your Jar of Joy. At the end of the week or the end of the month, open your jar and enjoy!



YOUR THOUGHTS ARE NOT FACTS

Sometimes thinking can be our number one bad habit, It can launch us into downward spirals or automatic negative thinking. choose to remind yourself that not all thoughts are facts. They are just thoughts.



KEEP ON LEARNING

Setting goals and achieving them are really good for us, it helps us feel good about ourselves and we gain confidence and self-worth. So go ahead, if it is learning to play the keyboard or how to fix a tap with a Youtube video, go for it!



LET GO OF COMPARISON

Comparison is indeed the thief of joy. Try and let go of it, it isn't helpful and is often quite hurtful. We are all on different journeys and at different parts of those journeys. We all shine at different times. There is no need to compare.



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TRY MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is a great way of grounding yourself and being in the present. Download an app such as Headspace or Calm to get started. There are many ways to practise mindfulness so find what works for you. For some of us it is focusing on our breath while holding a pebble, for others it is cooking or running.



CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENTS

When we are busy and caught up in things, we sometimes don't stop to recognise what we have achieved. Give yourself some credit and pause to celebrate your achievements, big and small. Sometimes it is opening the curtains when you don't feel like it and sometimes it is building that greenhouse you have wanted to do for years.



WRITE IT DOWN

Keeping a journal or just writing down words or notes can be a helpful way to disclose feelings and emotions. You can choose to keep it or discard it. What sometimes help is coming back to it the next day, reading it and seeing things in perspective. It also helps you to spot triggers and patterns.



ASK FOR HELP

You were not meant to do it all alone. It sometimes take courage because we might think we don't need it. Speak to your GP, a friend or an organisation when you think you need help. Visit carersuk.org to find out what help is available for carers.