



Well-Being

Five Tips for Better Mental Well-Being

by Emma Sims, Holistic Therapist

From suicidal depression and anxiety to embracing life's ups and downs, here are the holistic tips I've gleaned over the last 20 years and why I do the job I do. They helped me, but 'take what you need and dismiss the rest'. You are all different, build your own tool kit!

Meditation

Meditation, often known as mindfulness, helped me observe and notice what was happening within. **A meditation myth is that we 'should' clear the mind of thoughts.** However, this isn't realistic for someone new to meditation.



Instead, meditation means "to be aware" and we can do this even while walking or eating. **Meditation increases self-awareness and acceptance.** It allows us to experience and notice emotions as they are, rather than wishing they were different.

When we can accept that things change, I no longer felt anxiety about the anxiety! **Metta meditations** encourage a compassionate approach towards ourselves.

Nutrition

Good nutrition and our five-a-day can be difficult if we lack motivation or time. A

starting point can be a good multivitamin which contains a probiotic. I noticed a difference in my physical and mental health within a few weeks. There is much interest now in the gut-brain link and how what we eat affects our mental well-being too. **Food is our fuel: we wouldn't put petrol in a diesel car.**

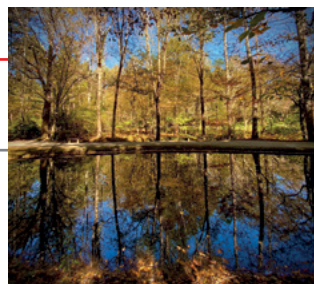
Holistic Therapies

Regular holistic therapies can retrain the body from tension to relaxation. **Therapeutic touch can help to soothe frazzled nerves,** a head massage may help calm a mind that can't switch off and aromatherapy oils promote relaxation. After a treatment, some clients say they feel like they've had a nice glass of wine or two!



Nature Therapy

Nature therapy and exercise includes the grounding, soothing and calming benefits of being out in the woods, in the mountains or by the sea. Combined with the physical effects of exercise which release endorphins, it can burn up the adrenaline, the anxiety of 'fight and flight' and help maintain weight. **We can also feel inspired by wildlife, birds and beautiful views.**



Intuition

Listening to my intuition was another **big turning point** for me. Many relate to having gut feelings about someone or something. Listening to that (but knowing it's also different for everyone) can help us to navigate through difficult times and guide our choices and decisions. **Learning more about how we can increase and enhance our intuition in a grounded way is a fascinating process** and helps to build self-confidence and trust in ourselves.

Mood-wise, remember it is always darkest before the dawn and 'this too **does** pass'. On numerous occasions, that darkness, which can feel trenching, does eventually make way for better things. It is like the winter cycle of our life when we feel like that and when things are tough. **Knowing we'll eventually feel the spring** helps us to hold on when at rock bottom.

Do seek counselling and professional support from local organisations such as Advanced Brighter Futures, Papyrus, MIND and CAIS.

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