

The Big 5

THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR
BETTER MENTAL HEALTH






Our research with over 20,000 people has shown that five types of actions are strongly linked to good mental health.

We call these 'The Big 5' and we know that people who do them regularly each week are likely to have good mental health.

Key Points:

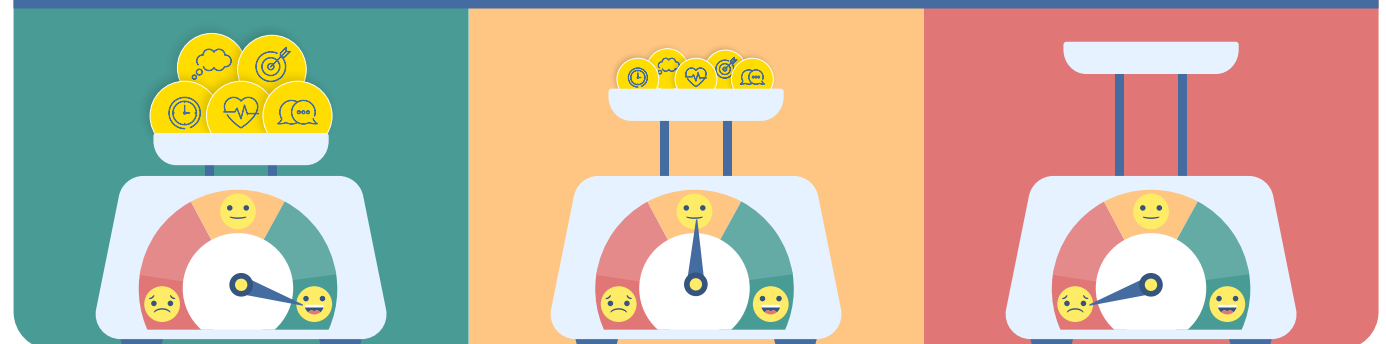
- Doing The Big 5 regularly is the foundation for good mental health.
- Most people stop doing The Big 5 when they feel unwell, stressed, or experience a change in their lives.
- Use The Big 5 Checklist on the next page to check your Big 5 activity and to get ideas about how to do them more often.
- If after two weeks you aren't improving, please visit your GP or MindSpot for professional support.

The Big 5 are things we can all do. They are the building blocks for good mental health and include:

- 1 Meaningful Activities.**  These give us a sense of accomplishment, satisfaction or joy. They can be as simple as listening to a favourite song or watching a good show, and they are often fun and engaging.
- 2 Healthy Thinking.**  This means having realistic thoughts about ourselves, the world, and the future. This also means keeping perspective and treating ourselves with respect, particularly when things are difficult.
- 3 Goals and Plans.**  Having a goal or a plan helps us stay motivated and energised. Goals give us something to look forward to and stop us dwelling on past problems.
- 4 Healthy Routines.**  Routines we do automatically like our sleep routine, eating well or being active, are critical for good mental health. These actions set us up for the day.
- 5 Social Connections.**  Regular contact with people we love and respect, which may include our family, friends or tribe, help us to feel validated and give us a sense of belonging.

REMEMBER THIS SIMPLE BIG 5 RULE:

'DO MORE AND FEEL BETTER, DO LESS AND FEEL WORSE'



The Big 5 Self-Assessment Checklist

- This Self-Assessment Checklist contains five types of activities, which are strongly linked to mental health
- Tick the column which best matches how often you did this type of activity in the past week
- We have listed three examples for each of these areas
- If any of your answers are in the yellow or red section, check the next column to get some ideas about how you might do them more often



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	ACTIVITIES	EXAMPLES	HOW OFTEN DID YOU DO THESE EACH WEEK?					SUGGESTIONS
			Every day	5–6 times per week	3–4 times per week	1–2 times per week	Never	
1	Meaningful Activities. 	I did something enjoyable						Take at least 10 minutes each day to enjoy a favourite piece of music, a show, time outside or a book
		I had something to look forward to						Make a list of the simple things you used to enjoy doing and start to re-engage with that hobby or activity
		I did something that was very satisfying to me						Find activities that align with your values, including doing things for the community, friends, family, pets, or environment
2	Healthy Thinking. 	I kept a realistic perspective on things						Practice accepting that making mistakes is normal and not a sign of weakness
		I dealt with feelings of frustration or impatience in a healthy way						Treat your frustration as a signal to solve or address the problem that is triggering your reactions
		I treated myself with respect						Check, are you treating yourself in the same way that you would treat others?
3	Goals and Plans. 	I did something to help me live my “ideal” life						Visualise your “ideal” life and then plan to do something simple that will help you to start to achieve your vision
		I did something to help me achieve my goals						Use an online calendar or notebook to help remind you of your goals and plans
		I did something to improve or maintain the quality of my life						Make a commitment each day to do something simple that will help improve or maintain your quality of life
4	Healthy Routines. 	I went to bed and woke up at a regular time						Create a relaxing bedtime routine to help you settle at night and get up at a regular time each morning
		I kept a healthy daily routine						Start to take a short (or longer) walk each day
		I prepared and ate a healthy meal						Add a bit more fruit and veggies to your daily diet
5	Social Connections. 	I socialised with positive people						Make a list of the people you care about, then select three you will talk to each week
		I had a meaningful conversation with someone						Think about what you want to talk about and to whom
		I talked about my day with a friend or family member						Make a regular time each week to talk to someone you care about

