

Wellbeing Journal

Welcome to Marjon

We all know that student life can be stressful and studying can bring a number of challenges to your life. Hopefully these challenges will be enjoyable and interesting but they may be challenges nonetheless.

Mental health just like your physical health is important, we all need to make sure that we look after ourselves. This booklet is designed to help you find a sense of wellbeing by using simple activities and techniques.

There may be times during your studies that you are faced with stresses, whether they be academic or personal, that you need a little help with. Don't worry, we're here to support you.



less stressful route

Contacts

Student Support

studentsupport@marjon.ac.uk or 01752 636891

Counselling

counselling@marjon.ac.uk

Chaplaincy

mparkman@marjon.ac.uk or cmcilroy@marjon.ac.uk

Marjon Student Union

ledwards@marjon.ac.uk or jlynch@marjon.ac.uk

Resident Life Coordinators

scorner@marjon.ac.uk or mhulbert@marjon.ac.uk

Out of hours Campus Support

01752 636700 Extension 22 22





Stress: Identify your triggers

Working out what triggers stress can help you to anticipate problems and think of ways to solve them. You may not be able to avoid your stress triggers, however being prepared for them will help to make a difference.

Make a note of all the triggers you have identified in the space below and start thinking of ways to manage them (you might find that you can use some of the relaxation techniques in this book).

Consider issues that come up regularly that you worry about, for example attending an appointment.

Consider events that are on your mind a lot, such as exams

Consider stressful events, like having problems at work

Relax your body

When you are stressed, your muscles tighten and you become tense. The exercise below can help you notice these feelings and relax.

Lie with your back straight. Close your eyes.

Clench your toes as much as you can for a few seconds and then release them. Notice the difference between the two feelings.

Match your breathing to this action. Tensing your muscles as you breathe in deeply and relaxing as you breathe out.

Move up your body to your thighs, stomach, shoulder and hands. Clenching and relaxing each muscle in turn. Notice if there are any parts of your body that feel tense, tight or tired.

Finally take a moment to relax before slowly and gently returning to stand.





Get organised

Organising your time can be a simple way to help you feel more in control of any tasks you are facing.

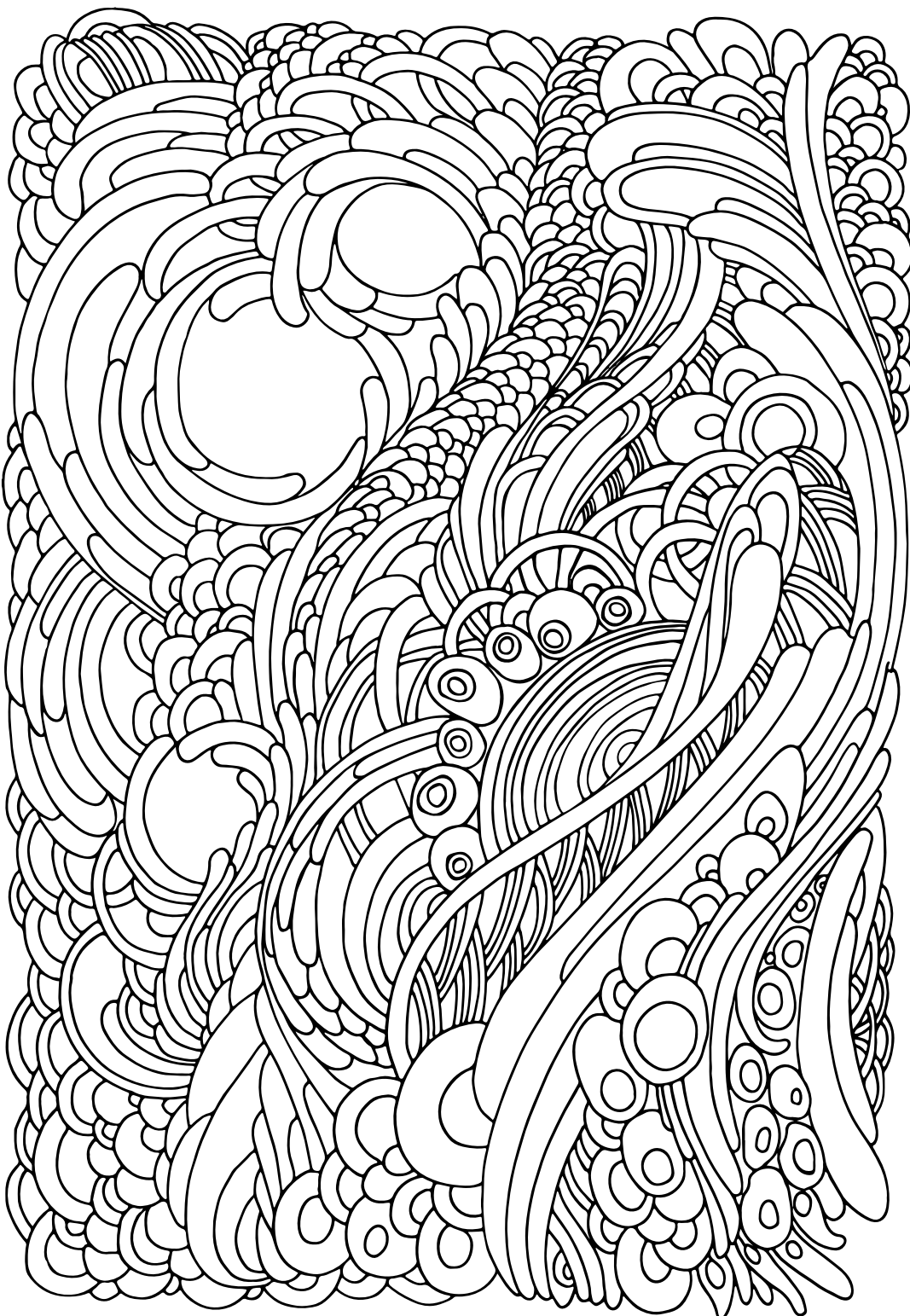
Identify your best time of day; are you a morning or evening person? Plan your most important tasks, those that need the most energy and those that require a lot of concentration at this time.

Make a list of all the things that you have to do. Arrange the list by order of importance.

Try to find a balance between doing interesting tasks with mundane ones, and difficult tasks with easier ones.

Try not to do too much at one time.

Take breaks and avoid rushing. It can be difficult to do this when you are stressed, but it can make you more productive.



Do a bit of colouring

Colouring is an easy and relaxing way to spend a little 'me' time. It also comes with a number of benefits including:

1. Helps you enter a meditative state
2. Stress and anxiety levels have the potential to be lowered
3. Can help expel negative thoughts
4. Promotes creation



definitely bake though

Get creative

Try painting, drawing, crafts, music, dancing or baking. Don't worry about how the finished product will look, just spend the time enjoying what you are doing.

Being creative can help:

1. Distract you from worrying thoughts
2. Give you an outlet and focus for your emotions
3. Stimulate your senses



Pen to paper

If you need to relax but aren't sure what to do try this simple exercise.

1. Sit comfortably with your feet on the floor, your back straight and your shoulders relaxed
2. Take your pen and draw a circle that fills most of the page
3. Keep drawing without allowing your pen to leave the paper
4. Take time to focus on what you are drawing, but do not worry about the finished picture
5. Think about how the pen feels on the page, the sound it makes and the flow of the ink
6. Once you have done this for a few minutes try using a different colour or changing the pattern



Get yourself moving

Exercising has a big impact on your mood and your ability to cope with stress. Even just going for a walk has great benefits for your physical health and mental wellbeing.

You could try:

- Yoga
- Walking
- Running
- Cycling
- Swimming
- Going to the gym
- Dancing



Mindful walking

Mindful walking is a great way to clear your mind and restore your focus.

Here's how to do it:

- As you walk, notice how your body feels paying attention to how your legs, feet and arms feel with each step you take.
- Feel the contact of your foot as it touches the ground, and the movement of your body as you move into your next step.
- Now using your sense of sight, look around and try to notice every detail.
- Using your sense of smell, notice any aromas or scents.
- With openness and curiosity, notice any sensations, thoughts or feelings that arise, without lingering on anything in particular.
- If you become lost in thought as you continue to walk, use the next step as an opportunity to start over.



How much technology do you use?

While technology can be great for keeping you connected it can also contribute to making you feel busy and stressed. Taking a break, even a little one, can help you to relax.

Try turning your phone off for at least an hour.

Instead of watching TV, or checking emails and social networks spend an evening doing something else.

Identify times when you automatically turn to your phone, such as when travelling on a bus, and plan to do something else like listening to music or reading a book.



Pause

Give yourself a break

Being kinder to yourself in general can help control the amount of pressure you feel in different situations.

Reward yourself for achievements such as finishing a piece of work.

When you feel low take a look back at the list of things you enjoy page in this book and make a plan to do one of the activities in the next few days.

Take a break from your normal routine.

Forgive yourself when you make a mistake, or don't achieve something you had hoped for. No one is perfect.



Just breathe

Learning to breathe more deeply can be an easy way of boosting your wellbeing. Try this simple exercise when you are in the midst of a difficult day and need a moment to collect yourself.

Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to keep your shoulders down and relaxed, and place a hand on your stomach – it should rise as you breathe in and fall as you breathe out.

Count to four as you breathe in and four as you breathe out.

Turn

TO DO

into

TA DA

Think about the positive

We all have to-do lists, but do you have a ta-da list?

A ta-da list is a celebratory and affirming productivity tool.

When you feel that you aren't having a productive day make a list of all the things you have already accomplished. Write down any win, or task, no matter how small it may seem.

It maybe that you made a pack lunch, booked a doctor's appointment or went for a walk today.

It's time to celebrate the positive and focus on what you did get done, instead of what you didn't.



FOCUS

Focus on what you can control

There are lots of variables in life, things that you have no control over.

It can be difficult but try to remain focused on the things you can control:

- Determine what you can control
- Focus on your influence
- Identify your fears
- Differentiate between ruminating and problem-solving
- Create a plan to manage your stress
- Develop healthy affirmations

If you are struggling with the things you cannot control try one of the exercises mentioned in this book to give yourself a bit of breathing space.

hello



Other Resources available

Student Space is a collaborative mental health programme to support students through the coronavirus pandemic. You can contact them by both phone and text:

Visit studentspace.org.uk

Call 0808 189 5260 between 4pm and 11pm

Text 'STUDENT' to 85258 24/7

Student Minds is a mental health charity focused on empowering students to look after their own mental health, support others and create change:

Visit studentminds.org.uk

Students Against Depression aim to provide a calm environment and resources to help those with low mood, depression and suicidal thinking:

Visit studentsagainstdepression.org

Samaritans are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to support you with whatever you're going through:

Visit samaritans.org

Call 116 123

Rethink Mental Illness work to improve the lives of those affected by mental illnesses:

Visit Rethink.org

Marbles lost and found offer links to local and national mental health organisations. They also have lots of self-help ideas:

Visit marbleslostandfound.co.uk

The Mental Health Foundation have joined forces with the WWF to create 'Thriving with Nature', a free online guidebook which helps explore the relationship between nature, wellbeing and mental health:

Visit mentalhealth.org.uk

SHOUT - CRISIS is a text service available 24/7 for immediate support by texting SHOUT to 85258

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