

Understanding mental health

Mental health is like physical health

Some days we feel great.

Sometimes we're not feeling at our best but we're OK and we can carry on with day to day activities.

Sometimes we have wounds we need to take special care of.

Occasionally we feel really bad and might need to seek help from others.

This week we are looking at Emotional Check-in and

Improve your mood

When low in mood we:

- Might not want to socialise
- Have less energy
- Sleep more or have disturbed sleep
- Have less motivation to do things we usually enjoy
- Get 'stuck' thinking negatively about things.

Stay Connected

It's really important to stay connected with friends, social groups and family - online, phone or post

Check out *Thinkuknow* or *Own It*

Be Healthy

Keep to a healthy routine

If you're feeling sluggish and tired you probably need to move!

Build Skills

Set yourself a challenge – now is a great time to learn a new skill

Choose a set time and place to complete school work

Improve Your Mood

Here are some ideas about what to do if you are feeling low:

- **Motivation:** You probably feel less motivated to see people, to get up, to look after yourself, etc. – as annoying and difficult as it sounds, the solution is to do more anyway! This means challenging yourself even though you don't feel like it; over time this helps and your mood improves. Go back to hobbies, passions, interests.
- **Switch focus:** You may be stuck thinking about the difficult things. Do something you enjoy, have fun!
- **Relationships:** Friends and family can be a source of help, or be unhelpful, and sometimes both! If there are helpful people, make contact, spend more time with them. If disagreements are getting in the way, ask for help to sort them out.
- **Comparing yourself:** Being stuck at home means more time on social media. This can help us connect, but it can sometimes mean we compare our lives with those of others in a way that gets us down. Remember: they have chosen photos so they look like they're having a good time, doing cool stuff, looking good. Have a break, or remind yourself that photos and posts aren't the whole truth!
- **Look after your body:** Try to eat right, get sleep, exercise.
- **Dealing with problems:** Those you care about maybe dealing with a lot of stress at the moment which is making it difficult for everyone. Find a trusted adult to talk the problem through with - from family, friends, school.

Emotional Check-in

Notice your emotions

Notice your mood and what makes you feel better or worse

Be In the Moment

Calm your body and mind - it's important to take a break from our thoughts even only for a few minutes

The more you practice the more it will help when you most need it

Please contact your GP if you are concerned about your own mental health or someone within your family

Also visit www.epicfriends.co.uk