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working together for **independent living**



# BRIDGING THE GAP



A G U I D E T O  
M E N T A L  
H E A L T H

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AND SERVICES AVAILABLE IN  
RICHMOND - UPON - THAMES

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Ruils is a pan disability charity supporting Independent Living. We have noted an increase  
in the need for services to support mental health.

This booklet was brought to us by short and long term service users who wanted to make  
the journey easier to navigate. We have supported them to produce this booklet.

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## HOW SERVICES IN RICHMOND WORK

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Within the London Borough of Richmond, the local council contracts out its services. With regards to mental health services almost everything including the Community Mental Health Teams (recently renamed the Recovery & Support Team) are contracted to service providers.

The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is there to purchase these contracts, whilst the Patient Participation Groups (PPG), are usually made up of GP patients who go on to help improve services for users.

The front-line service is always your GP, although if you are homeless or have more complex issues you may find referrals to some of the other services in this booklet very helpful.

Underlying the above services are local charities (Third Sector providers) which try to plug the gaps in the mainstream services. All are regularly hit by funding cuts. We are not the only borough that suffers this, but as Richmond has the perception of being an affluent area, we are sometimes hit harder despite having the same problems as anywhere else.

## WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

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The term 'mental health' means different things to different people because of our diverse range of upbringings and lifestyles. Realistically it is about how we think, feel and behave.

With good mental health, people can interact socially, have healthy relationships with others, cope with change and loss, and meet the demands of everyday life and the changes it can bring.

When people experience mental health problems they can have difficulties in some or all of these areas.

Having ups and downs, feeling stressed or low at times happens to us all. Unhelpful thoughts at times in our lives are also common. It is when these thoughts and feelings become so frequent and / or so distorted that they affect our ability to cope with daily life, that these can become mental health problems. With the right support and / or treatment we can recover or learn how to manage them effectively.

If you are experiencing emotional difficulties, you are not alone, so try to deal with it positively and practically. It doesn't mean that your life has to go on hold or that you will go on to experience long term issues; many people carry on with work and everyday activities. You may feel up and down, but that's normal – we all feel like that sometimes.

This is a good time to try putting what's known as a support network together. This can consist of people you know well who have empathy for your situation or people you meet at talking groups along the way who you might connect with.

It is important to recognise when things are getting difficult and interfering with your ability to manage. The earlier you get help, the more likely you will cope with the difficulties.

With the right advice and information, people with mental health issues can make a full recovery, or gain coping strategies to manage their feelings.

## WHAT IS EMOTIONAL DISTRESS?

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One in four people will experience a diagnosable mental health condition in any given year, whilst almost everyone will experience emotional distress in some form.

Emotional difficulties can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, disability, race, religion and belief, or sexual orientation.

Emotions are part of our everyday lives. Feeling happy, excited or full of confidence is accepted as normal, yet the same is not often said if someone is feeling stressed, low in mood, anxious or angry.

People sometimes feel as though their distress is a weakness but this is really not the case. Emotions, whether positive or negative, affect us all.

Emotional distress can have a significant impact on a person's day to day life as well as their physical health.

Signs and symptoms to look out for include:

- Feeling very emotional, unusual mood swings, or agitation.
- Poor concentration, memory and decision-making ability.
- Social withdrawal.
- Thoughts of self-harm or suicide.
- Sleep disturbances.
- Frequent headaches and / or minor illnesses.
- Changes in energy levels (can be either listless or more energetic than usual).
- Using alcohol or drugs to cope.

If you recognise the above it is important to know that some of these symptoms may also relate to physical conditions like thyroid imbalance which can be tested by your GP with a blood test.

Some ways of offering support to someone in emotional distress are to:

- Make conversations as easy and relaxed as possible.
- Listen carefully and respond calmly, with acceptance.
- Let the person share as much or as little as they want to.
- Remember that people do not always want advice or answers, sometimes they just need to share their concerns in a supportive environment.
- Encourage the person to seek professional help and advice from their GP.

## FINDING HELP

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This booklet provides a range of advice, information and self-help techniques that we can all use to help maintain and improve our emotional health.

Brief information on other mental health conditions is also provided, alongside details of other services that are able to provide support.

If you would like to discuss anything relating to this booklet, or require more information on local and national services that are able to support you, please contact us at Ruils on **0208 831 6083** or email: **info@ruils.co.uk**

Alternatively, speak to your GP about other sources of help and support.

## SELF-HELP

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The tips and tools provided in this booklet are used by various bodies in the borough, and some have been added to by previous service users in an effort to find useful tools for as many as possible, but it is important to remember we are all different, therefore not every tool will work for everyone.

As with any new skill self-help can take time and practice. Give new coping strategies time to have a noticeable effect and with practice and exploration it is possible for you to experience good emotional health.

Self-help alone may not be adequate for everybody. If you feel that you need more support, it is important to discuss this with your GP.

We are slowly breaking down the barriers surrounding mental health, there is support out there, please reach out! I hope this booklet is useful to someone somewhere, good luck on your journeys!

Take care of yourselves and others you meet along the way.

## SELF-HELP: TIPS & TECHNIQUES

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### Controlled breathing

**TIP 1**

Taking quick shallow breaths is very common if you're anxious, angry, irritable or stressed. Try to recognise if you are doing this and then slow your breathing down by breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Take deeper, slower breaths. Getting into a regular rhythm of 'in-two-three and out-two-three-four' should soon return your breathing to normal. It is recommended that you breathe out a little more than you breathe in. Whilst you are breathing in, push your stomach out as much as you can. It may be helpful to imagine you are trying to inflate a balloon in your stomach. Be aware of any tension in your shoulders and consciously relax them.

### Distraction – thinking of something else

**TIP 2**

Focusing your mind on something other than your symptoms or a stressful event for a few minutes can be helpful. For example, describing an object to yourself, picturing and describing a safe happy place. This technique is mainly useful for moments when distress becomes too much and focusing on something else helps you to feel in control again. Creating a safe place in your mind is a very helpful coping strategy in high stress situations.

## Challenge your thinking

### TIP 3

At some point we usually need to reflect and challenge how we think rather than trying to think of something else.

- Think about the situations that concern you, and how you behave.
- Jot down the unhelpful thoughts you have during that time. Try and counter-argue these thoughts.

To do this, think about the following questions:

- What is the evidence for and against these unhelpful thoughts?
- How many times have you had these thoughts and has your worst fear ever actually happened?
- Imagine what you would say to a friend if they were having similar thoughts about themselves. Then write it all down.
- Think about and visualise how you could behave or think differently in these situations to help you feel better.

## Simple relaxation techniques

### TIP 4

- Taking a five minute break alone to clear your head
- Listening to music
- Watching TV
- Reading a book
- Taking a warm bath
- Exercising
- Stretching

## Lifestyle changes

### TIP 5

- Eat well: a balanced, healthy diet can make you feel better about yourself as well as being beneficial to your body and immune system.
- Be active: regular physical activity increases our confidence and self-esteem, releases muscle tension, relieves anxiety and frustration, helps us relax, helps us sleep better, and helps to prevent physical illness.
- Remember that looking after your physical health can really help your emotional health - try to focus on the things you are able to do, instead of the things you can't.

## Do something creative

### TIP 6

Some people find that creative activities such as painting, writing or playing music can help to make them feel happier and more purposeful.

## Improving communication

### TIP 7

Talking things over with friends, family, loved ones or other people that you trust can be helpful; they can help to lift the burden off your shoulders.

## THINGS TO START DOING FOR 'YOU' LIST<sup>1</sup>

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- 1 Spend time with the right people .....
- 2 Create your own happiness .....
- 3 Make your happiness a priority.....
- 4 Be yourself, genuinely and proudly.....
- 5 Noticing and living in the present .....
- 6 Enjoying the things you already have.....
- 7 Enter new relationships for the right reasons .....
- 8 Start actively nurturing your most important relationships .....
- 9 Look for the silver lining in tough situations .....
- 10 Forgive yourself and others .....
- 11 Listen to your inner voice .....
- 12 Be attentive to your stress levels and take short breaks .....
- 13 Concentrate on the things you can control .....
- 14 Value the lessons your mistakes teach you .....
- 15 Cheer for other people's victories .....

<sup>1</sup> www.marcdangel.com – (2006-2018) Retrieved from URL

## A - Z

### Anger and frustration

Anger is a normal healthy emotion however it can be a problem if you find it difficult to keep under control at times when you are frustrated or unwell. Anger triggers a powerful physical reaction in the body, in both the person who is angry and the recipient, called the 'fight or flight' response. This can seriously affect your relationships with others.

Anger can be controlled if you can recognise the signs that it is building up, and by learning to manage these. Common signs include an increased heart rate, rapid breathing, tension in your shoulders or neck, and ruminating about past events that made you angry. As soon as you spot any of those signs you can introduce controlled breathing to reduce the build-up. Once you are able to do this you can look into other activities like exercise, being creative or talking to someone you trust.

Uncontrolled anger can often lead to feelings of depression and low self-worth.

The goal of effective anger control is not to eliminate your anger altogether, but to learn to channel it into behaviour that is productive, not destructive.

One possible way to do this is to train yourself to avoid certain negative words that can make the anger worse.

Avoid phrases like:

- **Always:** "You always do that"
- **Never:** "You never listen to me"
- **Not fair:** "It's not fair, it always happens to me"

Speak to your GP or check the sites below for more information and tips.

#### Mood Juice

[www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk)

#### Men's Health Forum

[www.menshealthforum.org.uk](http://www.menshealthforum.org.uk)

#### Better Gym

0208 457 8700

[www.better.org.uk/memberships/all-inclusive-membership/better-hf-conc](http://www.better.org.uk/memberships/all-inclusive-membership/better-hf-conc)

Membership subsidies available for people in receipt of the following benefits: Housing benefit / income support / jobseekers allowance / working families tax credit / Carers allowance / universal credit.

## Anxiety

Anxiety is a normal and healthy response experienced by everyone at one time or another. It occurs when the body is preparing for action after being faced with a threat in most cases. Many different situations can trigger this response, from being attacked to simply being late for work. Anxiety can feel like intense fear or continuous worry that won't go away. Anxiety Disorder affects about 1 of every 10 people <sup>2</sup>. The symptoms of anxiety can include rapid breathing, rapid heart rate, chest pains, feeling faint or dizzy, headaches, poor concentration, sweating, trembling, numbness and memory problems. It can lead to loss of self-confidence and aversion to doing things.

Anxiety can be a problem if it is triggered when there is no real threat. These symptoms can affect the things we do every day especially if they are happening too often or for too long.

The most common type of anxiety is known as generalised anxiety. Other types of anxiety include panic attacks, phobias, social anxiety, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Panic attacks are characterised by a sudden onset of intense feelings of fear or apprehension. The reaction may be triggered by a specific situation or come 'out of the blue'. Panic attacks are:

- Although your heart rate is high, you are not having a heart attack.
- Quite common and affect people differently.
- Not a sign of a serious mental or physical illness.
- Are manageable and treatable.

Phobias are a 'specific' fear attached to a particular object or situation e.g. spiders, blood, heights. The fear is out of proportion to the object or situation, and although it's often irrational the person feels powerless to do anything about it. A phobia can also be 'complex', which is a mixture of fears, anxieties and avoidances, for example agoraphobia (a fear of leaving your home) and social phobia (a fear of social situations).

Social anxiety is a strong fear or embarrassment in social situations e.g. public speaking, social events or eating out. It is often linked to issues with self-esteem, assertiveness and boundaries, but it can be managed with good coping strategies. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is an after-effect of a traumatic event or life threatening experience that can have a long-lasting impact on memory and the way a person acts or feels. For some people this comes from experiencing the event first-hand, while for others they might be witness to, or have knowledge of, the event.

Anxiety is common - speak to your GP if you have concerns.

### No Panic

 **0844 967 4848** (10am-10pm)  **www.nopanic.org.uk**

### Mind

 **www.mind.org.uk** (national) has useful resources or  
 **0208 948 7652**  **www.rbmind.org** (local Twickenham)

<sup>2</sup> AnxietyUK. (2018). Are anxiety disorders common? Retrieved from URL.

## Bereavement and loss

Loss of any kind is something that most people will face at some time in their lives. People's experiences of loss vary, but symptoms often include a combination of shock, numbness, disbelief, guilt, and anger. Bereavement can affect sleep, mood and temper. It can bring on feelings of guilt that more could have been done by you or others and this can lead to anger.

There are many forms loss can take and everybody has different ways of coping. It may be experienced along with trauma and psychological distress.

Although you may think you are just "going through the motions", seek help early so that you can work through it in a healthy way with support.

### Cruse

 **07495 777 401**

Mortlake office 24 hr answerphone, leave a message you will be called back.

 **[www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk)**

### Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide

 **07851 420 526**  **[www.uk-sobs.org.uk](http://www.uk-sobs.org.uk)**

### Crossway (Miscarriage & abortion counselling)

 **0208 892 8483**  **[www.crosswaypregnancy.org.uk](http://www.crosswaypregnancy.org.uk)**

## Bipolar disorder

Bipolar disorder is a condition that causes mood swings alternating between feeling depressed and euphoric. It was formerly known as manic depression. The emotional highs and lows are more extreme than everyday ups and downs and interfere with work, relationships and everyday life. About 1 in every 100<sup>3</sup> adults has bipolar at some point in their life, normally beginning between the ages of 15 and 25 and rarely beginning after the age of 40.

You may experience one or some of the following symptoms:

- The symptoms of depression during low phases as outlined in the section on **Depression and low mood**.

During high (manic) phases, you may experience symptoms that include:

- Excessive energy or movements.
- Recklessly spending your money.
- Grandiose ideas of self-importance or having special powers.
- Talking and / or jumping topics very quickly.
- Making odd decisions.
- Reckless or impulsive behaviour.
- Irritability when others do not share your ideas.
- Hallucinations (e.g. hearing voices that others can't).

People find themselves alternating between two poles on a spectrum (hence, 'bipolar'). During manic episodes it may be difficult for the person to see that there is anything wrong, although others may notice dramatic changes in their appearance and behaviour.

### **What you can do:**

See your GP, who can put you in touch with specialist services to support you in getting treatment.

In the meantime, if you support someone with this condition, practical help is useful. In severe mania, a person can become hostile, suspicious and verbally or physically explosive. In severe depression, a person may start to think about suicide.

- Find techniques and activities that can keep stress in life to a minimum.
- Learn to recognise the triggers and early signs of depressive and manic phases.

For more information advice and support, see **Other Services** section at the back of this booklet.

<sup>3</sup> Mental Health Foundation - (2019) Retrieved from URL

## Body image

Appearance can play an important part in our self-worth. How we view ourselves develops from a young age, and is particularly sensitive in adolescence. If we are dissatisfied with how we look, this can have an impact on our self-esteem and self-confidence. Negative body image consists of a distorted view of your body shape, feeling self-conscious or ashamed and assuming that others are more attractive. If these feelings become an intense preoccupation and involve repetitive behaviours such as mirror-checking, excessive grooming, skin-picking, and reassurance-seeking, they may result in Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD).

If you are concerned please ask your GP to refer you to the correct service.

### Be Real Campaign

 [www.berealcampaign.co.uk](http://www.berealcampaign.co.uk)

### Richmond Wellbeing Service

 **0208 548 5550** to self-refer

 [www.richmondwellbeingservice.nhs.uk](http://www.richmondwellbeingservice.nhs.uk)

## Boundaries

Something common for people with mental health issues is how their personality affects their relationships with others.

Questions to ask yourself:

- Is this a healthy relationship for me?
- Do I get as much as I give in this relationship?
- Is this relationship mutually respectful?

Boundaries are the limits we place on relationships, how close we allow others to relate to us. Boundaries should help create a sense of safety, comfort and trust. Healthy boundaries are clearly defined, understood and respected by both people in a relationship. They are about knowing what each is willing and not willing to do, not taking responsibilities that belong to others and respecting one another's personal space.

Unhealthy boundaries can involve sharing too much with the wrong person, allowing people to run or control your life, trusting the wrong people, switching quickly from being emotionally close to being emotionally distant, being too tolerant of another person's inappropriate behaviour, and feeling that you don't have the ability to ask for what you need in a relationship.

(The above was adapted from the STEPPS program for Borderline Personality Disorder run by the Community Mental Health Trust).

## Carers

A carer is someone who provides unpaid support to family or friends who can't manage without help due to a physical or mental health condition or disability. A carer can be any age. Children who care for another person are referred to as young carers. 24% of carers in Richmond are under the age of 18<sup>4</sup>. Many carers feel a need to put on a brave face, feeling their own difficulties are far outweighed by those of the person they care for, leading to carers often neglecting their own needs and emotional well-being. It is very common and normal for carers to feel angry, guilty, isolated, stressed or low.

### Richmond Carers Centre

 **0208 867 2380**  **www.richmondcarers.org**  **info@richmondcarers.org**

Richmond Carers Centre supports unpaid adult carers who live in, or care for, someone in the borough. We offer a programme of activities, outings and workshops (many free), a telephone support line, counselling and complementary therapies. We also have a programme of events and mentoring for young carers.

### Sitting & Befriending Service (Ruils)

 **0208 831 6413** (Richmond Borough) or  **0208 831 6073** (Kingston Borough)

Befriending service for children & young people, helping them access social and leisure activities or hang out with them at home whilst you go out.

### Carers In Mind

 **0208 9407384**  **Carers@rbmind.org**

Service for people who are carers for someone with a mental health issue and in need of support.

<sup>4</sup> Richmond Carers Centre. (2015). Richmond Carers Centre. Retrieved from URL.

## Communication and assertiveness

Communication allows us to make contact and exchange information with others. Effective communication is important because it influences all relationships (personal and others) and decision-making processes. Poor communication can lead to misperception, disputes and isolation which, in turn, can affect self-esteem and self-worth.

There are three essential skills in communication: listening to what the other person is saying, expressing what you think and feel, and accepting the other person's opinions and feelings.

Being assertive means being able to clearly communicate our feelings to others, without being either too aggressive or submissively accepting what you feel is wrong. Finding a comfortable compromise, allows for equality and trust. If you are consistently unable to express your feelings in an honest way to someone, you might want to re-evaluate whether the boundaries of that relationship are healthy enough.

(See also our section on **Boundaries**).

## Debt

Although anyone can be a bad budgeter, poor at handling money, or just plain unlucky, people with mental health conditions can be prone to specific spending habits. Some people over-budget spending only on the basics even to the detriment of appearance, whilst others spend vigorously on themselves in a bid to feel better. As with most things, it is the extremes to watch out for.

- One in two adults with debts has a mental health condition.
- One in four people with a mental health condition is also in debt<sup>5</sup>.

A low income, job loss, family separation or being unwell can all contribute to how you come to be in debt.

Remember:

- Don't ignore debt – it will only get worse.
- Explain your problems to someone you trust.
- Be sure to seek expert independent advice.
- Take control of your money and spending.

### Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Richmond

- ☎ 0208 712 7800
- 🌐 [www.citizensadvice-richmond.org](http://www.citizensadvice-richmond.org)

There are CAB offices in Hampton Hill and Sheen.

### Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity

- ☎ 0208 941 7866
- 🌐 [www.hfac.co.uk](http://www.hfac.co.uk)

Supports the areas of Hampton / Hampton Hill / Hampton Wick / Teddington / Twickenham & Whitton, by providing grants for Electric & Gas to those on low incomes. The fuel grant is paid directly to the fuel company into a customer's account. They work with the following fuel companies: British Gas / Co-Operative Energy / EDF / EON / Npower / Scottish Power / Southern Electric and Utility Warehouse. The application form is available to download from the website.

### Richmond Parish Lands Charity

- ☎ 0208 948 5701
- 🌐 [www.rplc.org.uk](http://www.rplc.org.uk)

Supports the areas of Richmond, Ham, Sheen, Mortlake & Barnes although individual applications now need to be made through the following associations: Richmond Borough Support Team / CAB / Social Services / Age UK / Richmond & the Community Mental Health Teams.

### Grace Advocacy & Debt Advice

- ☎ 0207 183 4456
- 🌐 [www.graceadvocacy.org](http://www.graceadvocacy.org)

### Richmond AID

- ☎ 0208 831 6070
- 🌐 [www.richmondaid.org.uk](http://www.richmondaid.org.uk)

### Crosslight Advice

- ☎ 0207 052 0318
- 🌐 [www.crosslightadvice.org](http://www.crosslightadvice.org)

<sup>5</sup> RCPSYCH. (2017). Debt and Mental Health. Taken from URL.

## Depression and low mood

We all feel down, fed up, miserable or sad at times. These feelings don't usually last longer than a week or two, and they don't interfere too much with our lives. Sometimes there is a reason, sometimes not, we might talk to a friend but not need any other help. If these feelings last longer or become so bad that they interfere with your life, it could be a sign of depression.

Symptoms to look out for are low mood or sadness that lasts for more than two weeks with no change, loss of interest or pleasure, changes in appetite or sleep, difficulty concentrating, slowed functioning or agitation (e.g. thinking or talking), lower sex drive, less energy, feelings of guilt, loss of self-confidence or self-esteem, thoughts of death, suicide or self-harm.

See also section on **Healthy eating** regarding vitamin deficiencies.

If you are concerned, speak to your GP or the organisations below.

### Depression Alliance

☎ 0845 123 2320 🌐 [www.depressionalliance.org](http://www.depressionalliance.org)

### Richmond Mind

☎ 0208 948 7652 🌐 [www.rbmind.org](http://www.rbmind.org)

## Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been in a relationship together, or between family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

It is abuse if your partner or a family member:

- Threatens you
- Shoves or pushes you
- Makes you fear for your physical or financial safety
- Puts you down
- Controls where you are allowed to go, or what you are allowed to do
- Is jealous and possessive
- Frightens you
- Takes control of your finances

There are a number of organisations that can support you if you are or have been a victim of domestic abuse.

### Refuge

 **0208 943 8188** (local)  **0808 2000 247** (24 hour helpline)

 **www.refuge.org.uk**

### The Survivors Trust

 **0208 541 1951**  **0808 8010 818** (free confidential helpline)

 **info@aurorafoundation.org.uk**

### National Association for Adult Survivors of abuse

 **www.NAASCA.org**

## Drugs, alcohol and other addictions

Addictions are defined as not having control of a particular behaviour or use of a substance to the point where it could be harmful to you. Addiction issues can be the start, middle or end of a person's mental health issues. Doing this to deal with difficult situations is known as self-medication.

Signs that you might be dependent on a substance include:

- Using drugs or alcohol to block out physical or emotional pain.
- Using drugs or alcohol to distance yourself from issues like loneliness or relationship and family problems.

Alcohol dependence (alcoholism) is the most serious form of a drinking problem and signs of it include compulsion to drink when stressed, finding it hard to stop, waking up and drinking, and withdrawal symptoms such as sweating, shaking and nausea which stop once you drink alcohol.

Drug addiction isn't just about street drugs like heroin and cocaine. You can also get addicted to over the counter and prescription medications. Signs of this include taking more than the prescribed dosage, buying drugs or medications on the internet or using someone else's prescription.

Gambling addiction is often referred to as 'the hidden addiction' as many people are unaware of how addictive it is. Symptoms include the urge to gamble, increasingly taking larger risks, loss chasing (trying to win back your losses), and spiralling debt.

If you are concerned please speak to your GP or reach out to the organisations listed below.

### GAMCARE – National Gambling Helpline

 0808 8020 133  [info@gamcare.org.uk](mailto:info@gamcare.org.uk)

### Change Grow Live (CGL)

 0208 891 0161  [www.changegrowlive.org](http://www.changegrowlive.org)

### FRANK

 0300 123 6600  [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

### Catch-22

 [www.catch22.org.uk](http://www.catch22.org.uk)

(Young people's alcohol / substance misuse service – up to 25 years old)

## Eating disorders

Eating disorders tend to develop as a way of coping with challenging situations and emotions, which then have an impact on a person's physical and emotional health. Anorexia nervosa, binge eating disorder and bulimia nervosa are the most commonly known eating disorders.

Eating disorders are often mistaken for being all about image, when actually they are more associated with the need to take control of something in life. Often people who suffer these conditions have high anxiety and low self-esteem and self-worth.

Anyone can develop an eating disorder and it can affect men as well as women. It can be triggered by a wide range of reasons, including traumatic events, bullying and family problems.

Often GP services may have access to a dietician who can give you guidance on nutrition and vitamins, and can provide referrals to an eating disorder service if they feel you need more support.

### Beating Eating Disorders (beat) - adults

☎ 0345 634 1414 🌐 [www.b-eat.co.uk](http://www.b-eat.co.uk)  
@ [help@b-eat.co.uk](mailto:help@b-eat.co.uk)

### Beating Eating disorders (beat) – young people

☎ 0345 634 7650 🌐 [www.b-eat.co.uk](http://www.b-eat.co.uk)  
@ [fyp@b-eat.co.uk](mailto:fyp@b-eat.co.uk)

## Healthy eating

Taking care of our bodies is vital for mental and emotional health. A balanced, healthy diet can make you feel better about yourself as well as being beneficial to your body and immune system.

**Fruit and vegetables** have a variety of natural minerals and vitamins. Be careful with consuming too much fruit, as these contain free sugars which are bad for the teeth.

**Carbohydrates** provide the starch and grains required for the production of natural body chemicals and the production of energy.

**Protein** is also good for energy production as well as a good source of vitamins like folate.

**Dairy** is good for calcium, vitamin B12 and bacteria. The body needs some bacteria to be healthy.

**Oils and fats** should be consumed in very small quantities but are used by the body for energy and to help move the rest of the food through the bowel smoothly.

**Vitamin** deficiencies can cause symptoms such as dizziness, fatigue and can be mistaken for more serious health conditions.

See your GP for further nutritional advice or if you are concerned.

NHS Live Well

 [www.nhs.uk/livewell](http://www.nhs.uk/livewell)

## Homelessness

In 2015 a national survey showed that 80% of homeless people reported suffering mental health issues, whilst 45% of those actually had a diagnosis<sup>6</sup>. This shocking percentage shows the risk of not adequately supporting mental health issues and homelessness in our communities. Once in a position of homelessness it can be very difficult to access help, for most things will require an address, a means of contact (phone, email, address) or a bank account number, none of which you are likely to have.

**! Warning** – To apply for housing in the borough of Richmond all applications must be made online. If you are affected by this please contact one of the following organisations below for assistance.

### Spear

 **0208 288 6506**  **[www.spearlondon.org](http://www.spearlondon.org)**

The website can also be used to report rough sleepers so they can get help.

### Vineyard Project

 **0208 439 9735**  **[www.vineyardcommunity.org](http://www.vineyardcommunity.org)**

<sup>6</sup> Mental Health Foundation. (2015). Homelessness and mental health. Retrieved from URL.

## Long-term health conditions

The emotional effects of having a serious physical illness or long term health condition can affect every area of your life. It may make you feel out of control, helpless and isolated which can lead to feeling sad, frightened, worried or angry. It is important to recognise how you are feeling and know that it is normal and common to experience strong emotions during a difficult time. It is important to remember that although long-term illness does make things difficult, you can cope. A few tips that might help:

- Live as normal a life as possible.
- Maintain a healthy balanced diet where possible.
- Be independent but not to the detriment of getting the help you need.
- Meet people with similar experiences.
- Seek help if you feel you are not managing.

### Richmond AID

 0208 831 6070  [www.richmondaid.org.uk](http://www.richmondaid.org.uk)

### Find or Employ a Personal Assistant (a Ruils Service)

 [www.find-a-pa.co.uk](http://www.find-a-pa.co.uk)  [www.employ-a-pa.co.uk](http://www.employ-a-pa.co.uk)

You may be in receipt of a Direct Payment, a budget approved by the Local Authority which allows you to have more control over how your care is organised. If so you may choose to employ a Personal Assistant, someone who can support you to carry out daily tasks and to get out and about. Ruils are contracted by the Local Authority to support you to manage your Direct Payment, understand your responsibilities and assist you to recruit and manage your support staff safely. The web-links above will help to explain this.

## Men

Being portrayed throughout history as the strong, dominant figures who support their families and bear the responsibilities of life has its downside. Men often feel that showing emotion is a sign of weakness and it will affect how they are perceived by others. Mental health issues have a greater stigma for them and they are less likely to reach out for help.

- In 2017 75% of all UK suicides were male, and this has been the case since the mid-1990's<sup>7</sup>.

Feeling angry, frustrated, having regular headaches, muscle pains or digestive problems are all common symptoms of low mood, and for men these are often the signs that are noticed first. They may be worried that it will affect their career, the respect of their friends and families and their image of themselves as 'real men'.

Remember – all forms of official treatment are confidential. You could be your own worst enemy denying yourself the help you need. Emotional issues do not make you less of a man. They affect everyone at some point and are generally short-term problems if managed correctly.

Also see section on **Domestic Abuse** for other resources.

### MALE – Men's advice line

☎ 0808 802 0327 🌐 [www.mensadvice.org.uk](http://www.mensadvice.org.uk)

### Survivors UK

☎ 0203 598 3898 @ [help@survivors.org](mailto:help@survivors.org)

### CALM – men aged 15-35

☎ 0808 802 5858 (5pm-midnight 365 days of the year) 🌐 [www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)

### Men's health forum

☎ 0207 922 7908 (24/7 phone line) 🌐 [www.menshealthforum.org.uk](http://www.menshealthforum.org.uk)

### Sheddington

@ [teddingtonshed@gmail.com](mailto:teddingtonshed@gmail.com)

This is a very interesting project which needs your help in the local area. This is a development of the shed movement designed to bring men together to meet, make stuff and mend things, in a bid to reduce isolation & loneliness. It is also a great way to pick up skills you have always wanted to learn from others on a practical level. Originally just for men, the project is now encouraging women, and are looking for a community space in the vicinity of Teddington. Currently the closest shed is Roehampton. Contact: David Peers 07950 931 626 / [Davidw.peers@gmail.com](mailto:Davidw.peers@gmail.com)

🌐 [www.menssheds.org.uk](http://www.menssheds.org.uk)

This will tell you more about the shed movement.

<sup>7</sup> Office for National Statistics. (2018). Suicides in the UK: 2017 registrations. Retrieved from URL.

## Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) is an anxiety disorder. About 1 in 50 people in the UK are diagnosed with OCD at any time<sup>8</sup>. It is normally associated with two specific behaviours:

- **Recurring thoughts (obsessions)** – unpleasant or unwanted thoughts, images or urges that cause the person intense worry. Obsessions are usually about something terrible or dangerous happening, or about losing self-control.
- **Repetitive actions (compulsions)** – repeating things over and over to cope with the obsessions and to make them go away. These coping strategies can become ritualistic, following a set pattern every time they are used.

The obsessions and compulsions stop the person from getting on with their daily life. Most people with OCD recognise that their thoughts and behaviour are irrational, but feel unable to control them. There are a number of ways professionals can tackle OCD depending on the severity of your obsessions and compulsions. If you are concerned, please speak to your GP for advice and ask about a referral to the OCD Services at South West London St Georges Trust.

### OCD Action

 0845 390 6232

 [www.ocdaction.org.uk](http://www.ocdaction.org.uk)

<sup>8</sup> RCPSYCH. (2015). Obsessive Compulsive Disorder - key facts. Taken from URL. Currently being updated.

## Older people

Older age is a time when there are usually a number of life changes, such as retirement, becoming a carer, bereavement, and changes in physical health. Adapting to these changes can be challenging and can have an impact on your emotional health.

The most common issues negatively affecting mental health in older people are depression and dementia, with depression being the more common. It's important to remember that neither is inevitable.

The groups below have many interesting activities, which not only keep you stimulated but help you remain socially connected which helps to maintain healthy emotional well-being and reduce time for unhelpful thoughts.

Please see section on **Other Neurological Conditions** for symptoms and different types of dementia.

### Age UK Richmond

☎ 0208 878 3625 – First Contact Helpline  
🌐 [www.ageuk.org.uk/Richmonduponthames](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/Richmonduponthames)

### Dementia Friends

☎ 0300 222 5855 🌐 [www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk)

### Alzheimer's Society Richmond

☎ 0208 036 9570 🌐 [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)  
@ [richmondservices@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:richmondservices@alzheimers.org.uk)

### Arthritis Care

☎ 0808 800 4050 🌐 [www.arthritiscare.org.uk](http://www.arthritiscare.org.uk)

### Integrated Neurological Services

☎ 0208 755 4000 🌐 [www.ins.org.uk](http://www.ins.org.uk)

This is a charity that provides long-term support to people with neurological conditions and their families and carers. Has access to a range of physiotherapists and speech & language therapists.

## Other neurological or developmental conditions

ADHD, Autism and Asperger's Disorder, learning difficulties and dementia all involve a neurological component and currently fall under the NHS mental health services for support.

### **ADHD:**

Potential symptoms for ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) include:

#### ***Inattentiveness:***

The main signs of inattentiveness are:

- Having a short attention span and be easily distracted.
- Appear forgetful or lose things.
- Be unable to stick to tasks that are tedious or time-consuming.
- Appear to be unable to listen or carry out instructions.
- Struggle with constantly changing tasks or organising an activity.

#### ***Hyperactivity and impulsiveness:***

The main signs of hyperactivity and impulsiveness are:

- Be able unable to sit still, especially in calm or quiet surroundings.
- Be unable to concentrate on tasks.
- Have excessive talking or physical movement.
- Be unable to wait their turn.
- Acting without thinking or interrupting conversations.
- Have little or no sense of danger.

### **AADUK**

 [www.aadduk.org](http://www.aadduk.org) a site run for and by adults with ADHD

### **ADDISS – National Attention Deficit Disorder Information & Support Service**

 0208 952 2800  [www.addiss.co.uk](http://www.addiss.co.uk)

## Other neurological or developmental conditions *continued*

### **AUTISM:**

Autistic people, including those with Asperger Syndrome have difficulties interpreting both verbal and non-verbal language.

- Persistent difficulties with social communication and social interaction – they may struggle to understand facial expressions / tone of voice / jokes & sarcasm / vagueness and abstract concepts.
- Restricted & repetitive patterns of behaviours, activities or interests since early childhood, to the extent that these limit and impair everyday functioning – may struggle to recognise or understand feelings and intentions / can seem insensitive / seek out time alone when overloaded by other people / do not seek comfort from others / make strange or inappropriate comments. They can also be over or under-sensitive to sensory information such as noise or bright lights.

You could try introducing a good routine / preparation for changes / more time to process things and extending highly-focused interests as these can be very beneficial coping strategies.

#### National Autistic Society

- ☎ 0808 800 4104
- 🌐 [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

#### Mencap

- ☎ 0808 808 1111 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)
- ☎ 0207 454 0454 (London office)
- 🌐 [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

#### Dyspraxia Foundation

- ☎ 01426 454 986
- 🌐 [www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk](http://www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk)

#### British Dyslexia Association

- ☎ 0333 405 4567 (helpline)
- 🌐 [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)

#### 21 & Co

- 🌐 [www.21andco.org.uk](http://www.21andco.org.uk)
- A parent run support group based around South West London & Surrey to support families who have children & young people with Down's Syndrome.

#### RHLT – The People Hive

- ☎ 0208 977 5447
  - 🌐 [www.rhlt.org.uk](http://www.rhlt.org.uk)
- This group connects adults with a learning disability with the community.

#### Family Matters (Ruils Service)

- ☎ 0208 831 6083
- 🌐 [www.ruils.co.uk/services/family-matters](http://www.ruils.co.uk/services/family-matters)

#### Skylarks (formerly Me Too & Co)

- ☎ 07946 646033
  - 🌐 [www.skylarks.charity](http://www.skylarks.charity)
  - @ [info@Skylarks.Charity](mailto:info@Skylarks.Charity)
- This charity provides a supportive and active community for children with disabilities and additional needs, supporting the whole family helping to empower and remove isolation.

## Other neurological or developmental conditions *continued*

### **DEMENTIA:**

The word 'dementia' describes a set of symptoms that may include memory loss and difficulties with thinking, problem-solving or language. These changes are often small to start with, but for someone with dementia they have become severe enough to affect daily life. A person with dementia may also experience changes in their mood or behaviour. There are also different types of dementia such as Alzheimer's, Early Onset dementia, Lewy Bodies dementia or Korsakoff's Syndrome (caused by vitamin B1 Thiamine deficiency). Some signs to look out for are: Memory loss / changes in behaviour / problems with communication or language / aggression or frustration / sight & hearing loss / perception & hallucinations / excessive walking about / sleep disturbances / apathy, depression & anxiety. Of course some of the above are also pointers for other medical conditions like thyroid conditions and mental health issues. If you have noticed marked differences in someone's abilities it is wise to speak to your GP if you are worried that you or a family member may have one of these conditions.

#### **Alzheimer's Society Richmond**

☎ 0208 036 9570 🌐 [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)  
✉ [richmondservices@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:richmondservices@alzheimers.org.uk)

#### **Dementia Friends**

☎ 0300 222 5855 🌐 [www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk)

## Parents

Being a parent can be hard and even more so if you have mental health problems. Being perceived as a bad parent or concerns that a child will be taken away may stop parents talking about their mental health. However, most parents with mental health conditions are great parents. It is an important time and a challenging time, providing a home and managing routines, helping your child to develop good self-esteem as well as teaching him or her values and social skills. Sometimes you may feel too exhausted to keep the rules and boundaries clear for your child. Or you may feel the need to compensate for your illness by stretching the boundaries to allow behaviour you wouldn't normally allow. In the long term this will have a greater impact on the child's behaviour and in turn, on your ability to manage.

Children can also be affected by mental health issues themselves, which can be upsetting for their parents. Do not panic and don't blame yourself. You can learn strategies to manage worries as a parent and to support the emotional health of your child. See the list of organisations below for more information and support.

You may have noticed changes in your child's behaviour which are similar to the symptoms of depression, anxiety or stress. However, not every child will display distress in the same way, and the symptoms shown will also depend on the age of your child. It is also important to remember that even if your child is experiencing emotional distress, this does not necessarily mean that they have a mental health condition, but you may still want to seek advice from your GP.

### Family lives

 **0808 800 2222 / 01163 666 087** (for London)

 **[www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)**

### Young Minds

 **0808 802 5544** - 9.30am - 4pm Mon-Fri (free for mobiles & landlines)

 **[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)**

This is one of 8 charities working together with Princes William and Harry in 2018 to provide support for mental health issues. If you have concerns the above number is the parent helpline. Children may contact them via a text service, that information is provided under the Young People section to provide them a sense of confidentiality.

### Challenging Behaviour Foundation

 **01634 838 739** (General enquiries)

 **0300 666 0126** (Family support line)

 **[www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk](http://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk)**

## Personality disorder

Personality is made up of the characteristic ways we think, feel and behave and they shape how we see the world and relate to other people. Being extroverted, cautious, or sensitive are all examples of personality traits. If personality traits are too intense or rigid, they can cause problems in how we cope with life and relate to people, or in how we feel emotionally.

The main symptoms are:

- Being overwhelmed by negative feelings such as distress, anxiety, worthlessness or anger.
- Avoiding other people and feeling empty and emotionally disconnected.
- Difficulty managing negative feelings without self-harming (see **Self-harm** section).
- Difficulty maintaining stable and close relationships, especially with partners, children and professional carers.
- Occasionally periods of losing contact with reality.

Symptoms typically get worse with stress and often present alongside other mental health conditions, especially depression and substance misuse.

Personality disorders may be mild, moderate or severe, and people may have periods of remission where they function well.

For more information advice & support see **Other Services** section at the back of this booklet.

## Postnatal depression

Up to half of new mothers experience a period of sadness called the 'baby blues' in the first few weeks following the birth of their baby. It is usually mild and lasts a few weeks. 10 to 15% of new mothers experience a form of depression known as postnatal depression. This usually begins after four to twelve weeks, but may occur up to one year after the birth. It is also common for fathers to experience emotional distress or depression following the birth of their baby.

Common symptoms include: feeling emotionally disconnected to your baby, feeling rejected by your baby or having thoughts or visions about harming your baby. Your health visitor will know the difference between baby blues and depression, and is a good source of support.

### Association for Post Natal Illness

 **0207 386 0868** (10am-2pm)  [www.apni.org](http://www.apni.org)

### PANDA'S – Pre & Post Natal Depression Advice & Support

 **0843 2898 401** (helpline)  
 [www.pandasfoundation.org.uk](http://www.pandasfoundation.org.uk)

### Richmond Wellbeing Service

 **0208 548 5550**  
 [www.richmondwellbeingservice.nhs.uk](http://www.richmondwellbeingservice.nhs.uk)

## Psychosis

Psychosis is a condition that can distort a person's perception of reality by disrupting their thought processes.

The two main symptoms of psychosis are:

- **Hallucinations** – where a person senses things that are not really there, for example, hearing voices coming from outside their head, telling them to do something, or seeing things that other people can't see.
- **Delusions** – where a person believes things that, when examined rationally, are obviously untrue.

The combination of hallucinations and delusional thinking can cause an often severe disruption to perception, thinking, emotion and behaviour.

The person can also display muddled or disrupted thoughts and speech (thought disorder).

There is no single specific test for psychosis as the symptoms are common to a number of disorders, including schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, and can be triggered by substance misuse (drug psychosis). There are also a few medical conditions which may present similar symptoms, if you are unsure discuss this with your GP.

For more information advice and support, see **Other Services** section at the back of this booklet.

## Relationships

Having and maintaining healthy relationships is key to our overall well-being and mental health. When we have a genuine, positive effect on someone and we receive that in return, it gives us a sense of security and of being valued and supported. Positive relationships can also fulfil our need to feel that we belong to the wider community. Without this sense of belonging we can often feel isolated and overwhelmed.

Not all relationships are healthy. Some can be negative and destructive. Relationships should be equal for both parties providing a safe environment for honesty and trust.

See the sections on **Boundaries** and **Communication and assertiveness** for tips on identifying and managing healthy and unhealthy relationships.

### Relate

 0333 320 2206  [www.relatelondonsw.org](http://www.relatelondonsw.org)

## Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a long-term mental health condition that causes a range of different psychological symptoms, including:

- **Hallucinations** – hearing or seeing things that do not exist.
- **Delusions** – unusual beliefs not based on reality which often contradict the evidence.
- **Muddled thoughts or speech** – finding it hard to put your thoughts across logically to others.
- **Feeling controlled** – feeling your thoughts are not your own.

The exact cause of schizophrenia is unknown. However, most experts believe the condition is caused by a combination of genetic and environmental factors. It affects around 1 in every 100 people over the course of their life, and normally affects people between the ages of 15-35<sup>9</sup>. The main misconception is that it makes people violent. This is the exception, not the rule, as they are more likely to be victims of violence by others.

For more information, advice and support see **Other Services** section at the back of this booklet.

<sup>9</sup> RCPSYCH. (2015) – Schizophrenia - Retrieved from URL

## Self-esteem and self-confidence

Self-esteem refers to the way we think, feel and value ourselves as individuals. Low self-esteem is having a generally negative view or opinion of yourself, judging and evaluating yourself harshly. The difference between self-esteem and self-confidence is:

- **Self-esteem** – perceived worth and self-worth.
- **Self-confidence** – perceived ability to do something.

Both of these can be affected by negative relationships and unhealthy boundaries, or from childhood circumstances and bullying. Symptoms can include: being highly critical of yourself or your actions and abilities, blaming only yourself when things go wrong, ignoring positive qualities or finding it hard to accept compliments, predicting things will not turn out well, or easily feeling depressed, anxious, guilty or frustrated.

For some the introduction of a new activity or hobby can help how you feel about yourself and allow you to meet new people in a neutral environment. Various charities including Ruils / Mind / Age UK and many more run activities across the borough such as creative writing / art / walking groups etc. There are also some subsidised courses available at some adult colleges.

Ruils / Age UK & Castlenau Community Centre all have allotments if you like a little light gardening or just fancy catching some sun and topping up your vitamin D levels.

### Richmond Wellbeing Service

☎ 0208 548 5550 🌐 [www.richmondwellbeingservice.nhs.uk](http://www.richmondwellbeingservice.nhs.uk)

### Richmond Mind

☎ 0208 948 7652 🌐 [www.rbmind.org.uk](http://www.rbmind.org.uk)

### Ruils

☎ 0208 831 6083 🌐 [www.ruils.co.uk/activities](http://www.ruils.co.uk/activities)

### Let's Go Outside & Learn

☎ 0208 401 6837 @ [outdoor.learning@outlook.com](mailto:outdoor.learning@outlook.com)

This group offers monthly walks in the borough which can be tailored around disability needs if required, and also participates in local conservation projects in local playgrounds and parklands. This is a great way to get back to nature, to learn about our local area and give a little back.

### Castlenau Community Centre

🌐 [www.Castelnaucentreproject.co.uk](http://www.Castelnaucentreproject.co.uk)

Has a range of activities for all ages and includes yoga, men's over 50's walking football as well as a crafty café.

## Self-harm

Self-harm means intentionally damaging or injuring the body. Most people self-harm as a way of coping with or expressing overwhelming emotional distress – such as intense feelings of anxiety, anger, sadness, depression, guilt or shame.

Reasons for self-harming might be different on different occasions.

Types of self-harm include: cutting or burning, punching oneself, pulling hair out, poisoning, misusing alcohol or drugs. The intention is usually to punish oneself, express distress or relieve unbearable tension – not to die. Self-harm is generally not about suicide; self-harm can also be a cry for help; however some individuals who self-harm can become suicidal, especially when the behaviour repeatedly goes unsupported.

Anorexia Nervosa & Bulimia Nervosa are not normally intentional forms of self-harm, although they do damage to a person's physical health in the long term.

For more information advice and support, see **Other Services** section at the back of this booklet.

### National Self Harm Network

 [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk) (online support forum)

## Sleep

Sleep is a key part of maintaining good mental and physical health, but research has shown that 1 in 5 people feel unusually tired and 1 in 10 suffer prolonged fatigue<sup>10</sup>. Sleep problems can be physical, psychological, or both. People who have certain physical long term health conditions such as multiple sclerosis, diabetes, hypothyroidism and cancer often suffer insomnia. Poor sleep can also be a side effect of some medications such as strong painkillers. Insomnia can be a key sign of common mental health conditions and symptoms include:

- Difficulty getting to sleep, waking early and not being able to get back to sleep.
- An irregular sleep pattern.
- Tiredness and exhaustion leading to low mood, anxiety, poor concentration, memory problems, irritability and frustration.

Everyone needs different amounts of sleep. Worries, stress, depression, high expectations, work stress, unemployment and bereavement can all affect your ability to sleep well.

Basic tips for a better night's sleep:

- Keep regular hours. Going to bed and getting up at roughly the same time, every day, will help to structure a healthy sleep pattern.
- Make your bed and bedroom comfortable, not too hot or cold, not too noisy. Make sure your mattress supports you properly.
- Don't eat or drink a lot late at night.
- Alcohol may help you fall asleep initially but will interrupt your sleep later on in the night.
- If something is troubling you, and there is nothing you can do there and then, try writing it down and telling yourself to deal with it in the morning.
- Avoid bright screens like mobile phones, tv's and computers at least an hour before going to bed so that the brain is not over-stimulated.
- Find a way to relax before bed by reading, listening to soft music or using a relaxation technique like meditation or progressive muscle relaxation.
- If you wake in the night, try to avoid looking at the time as it can create anxiety about the lack of time left until you have to get up.

If the issue persists, speak to your GP.

### The Sleep Council

 [www.sleepcouncil.org.uk](http://www.sleepcouncil.org.uk)

### The British Snoring & Sleep Apnoea Association

 0800 085 1097  [www.britishsnoring.co.uk](http://www.britishsnoring.co.uk)

<sup>10</sup> RCPSYCH. (2015). Tiredness. Retrieved from URL.

## Social isolation and loneliness

Social isolation is when you feel alone (sometimes despite being surrounded by people) and not part of social or cultural groups and activities. Feeling isolated can often be detrimental to a person's well-being.

There are many things that can increase feelings of social isolation including bereavement, relationship breakdown, role changes, job loss, having a baby, moving home, social anxiety or shyness.

Possible signs and symptoms of feeling isolated are a sense of not being accepted (real or imagined) by others in the community, reduced confidence, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, shortened attention span, increased forgetfulness, general ill health or increased risk of substance or alcohol misuse.

### Together As One

 **07504 824 657** (call Ron)  [www.togetherasone.co.uk](http://www.togetherasone.co.uk)

### Sheddington

 **teddingtonshed@gmail.com**

This is a very interesting project which needs your help. This is a development of the shed movement designed to bring men together to meet, make stuff and mend things, in a bid to reduce isolation & loneliness. It is also a great way to pick up skills you have always wanted to learn from others on a practical level. Originally just for men, the project is now encouraging women, and are looking for a community space in the Teddington area.

## Stress

Most of us will know the feeling of struggling to cope with the demands of everyday life, or with an important or distressing event such as a big change in our lives. "Stress" is the way that our bodies and minds react when that is happening. We may worry, get irritable with other people or just be unable to relax. It includes emotional feelings, physical symptoms and changes in how our bodies work.

We often can't control stressful events but we can control our reactions to them. The amount of stress we feel is often due to the importance we place on the event or situation, our beliefs about ourselves and how we are feeling emotionally. Basic tips to help cope with and reduce stress:

- Establish the root of the problem (if possible) and tackle this rather than the consequences.
- Talk to friends or family – this can be difficult to do as stress can affect your ability to get on with other people, but they may be able to make allowances for you or give you help and support. Work colleagues may be able to share the load a little in the short-term.
- Break down big tasks or problems into smaller parts that are easier to deal with. This helps you not to become paralysed by how big the problem seems.
- Look after your physical health – regular meals, exercise and good sleep can all slip from view when you are stressed.
- Declutter your environment – this will help you feel more in control (think of the saying, 'tidy house, tidy mind').
- Set time aside – put regular time aside for something you actually enjoy.

Stress can also lead to many of the issues covered in this booklet such as anxiety, debt, unemployment & social isolation.

### ACAS

 0300 123 1100  [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

### Richmond Mind

 0208 948 7652  [www.rbmind.org.uk](http://www.rbmind.org.uk)

## Unemployment

Often when we meet new people, one of the first questions asked is, “what do you do for a living?” Our sense of identity and purpose is usually linked to the paid work that we do. In the current economic climate, many people are now finding it harder to find or stay in work. Lack of available work, redundancy, retirement, and being unable to work through ill health, can all impact on our emotional well-being. The types of issues that might be adding stress could be financial worries, responsibilities towards family members, attending interviews and worries about letting yourself or others down. However, by giving yourself a sense of achievement, a reason to get up in the morning, financial security and keeping the body in a natural routine all benefit healthy emotional well-being. It is always good to keep your options open where possible, regularly assess which parts of your life are the most stressful and work at finding solutions. If you are unhappy at work, perhaps look into retraining or re-education.

### Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Richmond

 0208 712 7800  [www.citizensadvicerichmond.org](http://www.citizensadvicerichmond.org)

### Richmond Fellowship

 [www.richmondfellowship.org.uk/surrey](http://www.richmondfellowship.org.uk/surrey)

### Twining Enterprise

 [www.twiningenterprise.org.uk](http://www.twiningenterprise.org.uk)  
(access to education for people with mental health conditions)

### Richmond AID job club

 0208 831 6070  [www.richmondaid.org.uk](http://www.richmondaid.org.uk)

## Veterans

Serving members or veterans of the British Armed Forces can experience the same mental health difficulties as the general population. However, fear of stigma and discrimination is particularly high for this community group, which may prevent people seeking help.

Serving members or veterans may also have experienced unique risks in service. This may have exposed them to a wide range of emotions, sometimes leading to isolation.

### Combat Stress

 **0800 138 1619** (24 hour helpline)

 [www.combatstress.org.uk](http://www.combatstress.org.uk)

### SSAFA

 **0845 241 7141**  [www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk)

### Contact

 [www.contactarmedforces.co.uk](http://www.contactarmedforces.co.uk)

This is one of the charities supported by Princes William and Harry - see the Other Services section at the back of this booklet for more helpful links and information.

## Welfare Benefits

If you are too unwell to work or on a low income, you may be able to claim Benefits. It is up to you to make the claim. You can check what you may be eligible to by going online to Turn2us [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk) and/or you can get support from the organisations below:

### Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Richmond

 0208 712 7800  [www.citizensadvice-richmond.org](http://www.citizensadvice-richmond.org)

### Richmond AID

 0208 831 6070  [www.richmondaid.org.uk](http://www.richmondaid.org.uk)

### Ruils – Pathways Service

 0208 831 6083  [www.ruils.co.uk](http://www.ruils.co.uk)

If you have been turned down for a Benefit and would like to make an appeal or need help with representation contact Pathways.

### Turn2us

 [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

## Young people

Being young is an exciting time but it can also be a difficult time as there can be lots of changes and some uncertainty about the future. Young people can face many issues which can be hard to deal with and making decisions can be difficult. For instance:

- Stress
- Life changes
- Relationships
- Self-esteem
- Alcohol & drugs
- Life decisions
- Peer pressure
- Exam pressure

### Off The Record (Counselling for ages 11-24)

☎ 0208 744 1644 🌐 [www.otrtwickenham.com](http://www.otrtwickenham.com)

### Papyrus (Young Suicide prevention Society)

☎ 0800 068 4141 (Mon-Fri 10am-10pm / 2-10pm w/e & Bank hols)  
🌐 [www.papryus-uk.org](http://www.papryus-uk.org)

### Young Minds

🌐 [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

text YM to 85258 the Young Minds Crisis Messenger for free 24 hour support across the UK. All texts are answered by trained volunteers, with support from experienced clinical supervisors. Texts are free from: EE, O2, Vodafone, Three (3), Virgin mobile, BT mobile, GiffGaff, Tesco mobile & Telecom Plus networks. This charity is one of the charities working with Prince William & Harry to improve help & support for Mental Health Issues set up in 2018. Please see the Other Services section at the back of this booklet for more information. If you are a concerned parent see the Parents section for the Parent Helpline number.

### Childline

☎ 0800 1111

### Relate

☎ 0333 320 2206 🌐 [www.relatelondonsw.org](http://www.relatelondonsw.org)

### BuddyUp – Richmond AID

☎ 0208 831 6070 🌐 [www.richmondaid.org.uk](http://www.richmondaid.org.uk)

### Skylarks (formerly Me Too & Co)

☎ 07946 646033 🌐 [www.skylarks.charity](http://www.skylarks.charity) @ [info@Skylarks.Charity](mailto:info@Skylarks.Charity)

Provides a counselling service for young people with Additional needs.

## OTHER SERVICES

### Safe havens or retreats

The Retreat in New Malden is a short-term crisis intervention unit that provides an alternative to hospital admission during crisis. Referrals are taken from the following services:

- GP services
- Out of hours GP's
- Kingston & Richmond Assessment service
- Psychiatric liaison services at Kingston hospital
- Home Treatment Team
- Police

It provides a short-term place of safety where you can formulate what treatment you might need, from hospital admission to going home with a care plan and appropriate support. There is support for more of these units to be provided as an alternative to psychiatric inpatient treatment, but currently the Retreat is the only one serving Richmond. We share it with 2 other boroughs and it only has 6 beds for those 3 boroughs, so if you get a bed utilise your time wisely!

#### The Retreat

 0208 239 0445

 [Theretreat@comfortcareservices.com](mailto:Theretreat@comfortcareservices.com)

#### Maytree

 0207 263 7070

 [Maytree@maytree.org.uk](mailto:Maytree@maytree.org.uk)

The Maytree is a suicide respite centre offering a 4 night 5 day stay. It is not local it is in Finsbury (N4), but if other services do not have space it offers another option.

## Recovery cafes

After the last recommissioning of the mental health services in Richmond, it was decided that people might benefit from alternatives to hospitalisation so two recovery cafes were introduced. For those in the further reaches of the borough these are still a considerable journey, but you can interact with the Home Treatment Teams here, as well as access peer support, and work towards crisis intervention or a hospital stay if needed.

**They are open 365 days a year:**

**Monday to Friday, 6pm - 11pm**

**Weekends and Bank Holidays, 12 noon – 11pm**

The service is for anyone over the age of 18, and serves the residents of the following boroughs: Kingston / Merton / Sutton / Richmond & Wandsworth. Unlike some services these are open to people not under the Community Mental Health teams, anyone can access these services.

### South West London Recovery Cafe

 **07794 394 920**

966 Garratt Lane, SW17 0ND (this is 3 minutes from Tooting Broadway tube station)

### Sunshine Cafe

 **07908 436 617**

296a Kingston Road, Wimbledon Chase (opposite Wimbledon Chase Train station)

## List of useful services and contacts

### **NHS Non-Emergency**

111

### **NHS Choices**

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### **Home Treatment Team**

0800 028 8000

### **Kingston CMHT**

0208 513 5200

### **Richmond CMHT (Recovery & Support Team)**

0203 513 3200

### **Refuge**

0808 2000 247

### **Mind (National Organisation for Mental Health)**

0300 123 3393

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) is the national Mind site and has an A-Z resource section available with PDF downloads.

### **Richmond Mind**

0208 948 7652

[www.rbmind.org](http://www.rbmind.org)

### **Heads together**

(Founded by Princes William & Harry)

[www.headstogether.org.uk](http://www.headstogether.org.uk) is the hub name with valuable extra resources for families, young people and veterans.

### **Royal College of Psychiatrists**

[www.rcpsych.ac.uk](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk)

This site also has an A-Z of resources on Mental Health under the problems & disorders tab. These are updated about every 3 years within national guidelines & include updated research.

### **Rethink**

0300 5000 927

[www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) (09.30-4pm Mon-Fri)

### **Sane**

0300 304 7000

6-11pm weekdays & weekends including bank holidays

[www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk)

**Aachal (for Asian women experiencing domestic abuse)**  
[0845 451 2547](tel:08454512547) (24 hour crisis line)

**Emag (Ethnic support & advocacy service)**  
[0208 893 9444](tel:02088939444)  
[ravi@emaguk.org](mailto:ravi@emaguk.org)

**The Retreat**  
[0208 239 0445](tel:02082390445)  
[Theretreat@comfortcareservices.com](mailto:Theretreat@comfortcareservices.com)

**Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group**  
[0203 941 9900](tel:02039419900)

2nd Floor, Thames House, 180 High St, Teddington TW11 8HU.

As a service procurement group if you are struggling to find services to help you, this group may be able to help guide you to what is available.

**Healthwatch**  
[0208 099 5335](tel:02080995335)  
[www.healthwatchrichmond.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchrichmond.co.uk)

This is the local watchdog for independent, local NHS & social care.

**Cambridge House**  
[0207 358 7007](tel:02073587007) 9am-5pm Mon-Fri  
[Richmond@ch1889.org](mailto:Richmond@ch1889.org)

They provide both statutory & generic advocacy for issues arising from or related to Health and social care. This includes providing independent advocates who can support you to understand your Rights under the Mental Health Act.

**Crosslight Advice**  
[0207 052 0318](tel:02070520318)  
[info@crosslightadvice.org](mailto:info@crosslightadvice.org)

**Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity**  
[0208 941 7866](tel:02089417866)  
[www.hfac.co.uk](http://www.hfac.co.uk)  
Provides grants towards electric & gas bills.

**Recovery College** (CMHT patients only)  
[0203 513 5818](tel:02035135818)  
[swlstg.nhs.uk](http://swlstg.nhs.uk)

Please be aware that when you are discharged from the CMHT you may use this service for up to a year after discharge, utilise this resource whilst you have the opportunity.

**Richmond Wellbeing Service**  
[0208 548 5550](tel:02085485550)  
8.15am-8pm Mon-Thurs. 8.15am-6pm Fridays.  
[www.richmondwellbeingservice.nhs.uk](http://www.richmondwellbeingservice.nhs.uk)

**The People Hive**

0208 977 5447

[www.rhlt.org.uk](http://www.rhlt.org.uk)

Connects adults with a learning disability with the community.

**Kingston Women's Counselling Service**

0208 541 1941

Tues / Weds or Thursday 10-1pm for an assessment. This service can provide counselling for up to 2 years, and on a sliding scale for income. They do not accept walk in enquiries. It is run by women for women.

**National Gambling Helpline (GAMCARE)**

0808 8020 133

[info@gamcare.org.uk](mailto:info@gamcare.org.uk)

**Change Grow Live**

(Current Service Provider for Addiction Services)

0208 891 0160

[www.changegrowlive.org](http://www.changegrowlive.org)

**The Samaritans**

116123 (24 hour crisis line)

0208 399 6676 (Kingston office)

**Crisis line** (CMHT Patients only)

0800 028 8000

If you are not a CMHT patient then you need to contact your GP.

**Alzheimer's Society Richmond**

0208 036 9570

[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

[richmondservices@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:richmondservices@alzheimers.org.uk)

**Adults Emergency Duty Social Work Team**

0208 744 2442

Type Talk-1800102087449414

A trained social worker will speak to you over the phone to assess the situation and decide the best course of action. (Remember to get the name of the person your speaking to, it helps!)

**PALS (Patient Advice Liaison Service)**

0203 941 9911 (for complaints)

[leigh.broggi@nhs.net](mailto:leigh.broggi@nhs.net) (for complaints)

PALS offers confidential advice, support and information on health-related matters.

They provide a point of contact for patients, their families and carers. See the website [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) under services & treatments to find out more.

- Note the Urgent treatment Centre at Teddington Memorial Hospital does not treat mental health or crisis patients. Always present to Kingston or West Middlesex A & E Departments for crisis intervention and assessment by the Home Treatment Team if you are able.
- An out of hours GP Hub service operates in GP surgeries throughout the borough 8am-8pm where you may be able to obtain referrals to the Retreat or Home Treatment Teams. In order to get an appointment, you can call your GP out of hour's number or 111. If you run out of medication you may be able to get an emergency supply (7 days). If you call 111 have some information ready, including GP details & medication dosages – this will shorten the length of the call to 111. With some medications you may be asked to see an emergency GP for a prescription.



working together for **independent living**

**Ruils, Disability Action & Advice Centre  
4 Waldegrave Road, Teddington TW11 8HT**

**Opening hours:**

**Monday to Friday: 9am - 5pm**

**Phone: 0208 831 6083**

**Email: [info@ruils.co.uk](mailto:info@ruils.co.uk)**

**[www.ruils.co.uk](http://www.ruils.co.uk)**

**[www.twitter.com/Ruils](https://www.twitter.com/Ruils)**

**[www.facebook.com/Ruils](https://www.facebook.com/Ruils)**

**We welcome calls from friends, relatives and carers too.**

First edition (2019) of the Ruils pocket book for Mental Health. Please contact us if you would like more booklets or wish to distribute them to your client group. If you would like a version with larger print please get in touch, or see our printable PDF version on the website.

Disclaimer: We have done our best to ensure that the information in this Guide is correct. However, changes to legislation and service provision might affect the accuracy of some of the information. Where this could be important to you, you should check the details with the provider or contact a local advice centre. If you think something in this handbook is incorrect, please contact us and tell us.

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