



# Sunderland Carers Centre Guide To: Emotional Wellbeing

Being a carer can have a huge effect on how you feel, your emotional wellbeing. It is so important to look after your own emotional wellbeing while you are caring. Many carers tell us that caring can be lonely, isolating and stressful, however when they begin to take steps to look after their emotional wellbeing and be kind to themselves, it can make a difference in their caring role.

## What is emotional wellbeing?

The term refers to an awareness, understanding and acceptance of your emotions and the ability to deal with challenges and change. Remaining in the present moment is also vital to your emotional health.

Put simply, your mental health is the way you feel on any particular day. Our mental health and wellbeing can also be known as our 'emotional wellbeing'. Generally, we all have days where we feel good and days when we don't. Don't be too hard on yourself.

## Be positive

While occasionally being in a bad mood is normal, constantly having a negative attitude can undermine your internal happiness. To develop a more positive mindset, try to speak with people who make you feel positive. This could be family, friends or other carers. Make a list of things you're grateful for, remember you are not only a carer, there is more to you than that.

- Give yourself credit for the good things that you do each day
- Everyone makes mistakes. Forgive yourself and others and learn from what went wrong, but don't dwell on it.
- If possible, surround yourself with positive, healthy people.
- Focus on the good. Few things are all good or all bad. You will feel better if you look at the positive aspects of people, try new experiences or a new hobbies or be involved in everyday activities.

## Relieve carer stress

Stress is normal, and its energy rush can help us get things done. Chronic stress is being on 'high alert' for a long time and does more harm than good. Here are some healthy ways to cope with stress and boost your resilience:

- Get enough sleep, this is vital to our wellbeing; sleep affects both our mental and physical health. Try to relax before bedtime with a warm bath or by reading
- Just 30 minutes a day of walking can boost your mood and reduce stress. Why not join our monthly Carers on the Move walking group
- Try to build a social support network. This could be online such as joining our carers WhatsApp groups, join in with our weekly online programme, 'Like our Facebook page or join our monthly online coffee morning
- Set priorities by deciding what must get done and what can wait. Say no to new tasks if they are putting you into overload. It is OK to say NO!

- Establish boundaries. Make sure you spend time doing things that bring you joy and help you feel better about yourself. **Remember you can't care for someone else if you don't look after yourself too**
- If someone asks you to do something and you don't think you are the right person for the job, suggest someone else. Remember you can't do everything yourself, let someone help you
- Don't let people talk you into things you don't want to do or out of things you want to do.
- Note what you've accomplished at the end of the day, not what you've failed to do.
- Exercise really helps to lift your mood. Walking, swimming or gardening may help you relax, do whatever works for you. Contact us to receive a free swimming pass or join our volunteers to help keep our garden tidy.
- Spending time in nature can create more positive feelings and better mental health, along with lower levels of depression and stress.
- Download our [20 Top Tips for Carers](#)