



SAFE FROM HARM MENTAL HEALTH TOOLKIT



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SAFE FROM HARM MENTAL HEALTH TOOLKIT



SAFE SCOUTS

A Safe From Harm
Mental Health Toolkit



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MENTAL HEALTH AND SCOUTING

WHY A TOOLKIT ON MENTAL HEALTH?

Safe from Harm exists to protect young people against all forms of abuse, including physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect in every environment. In Scouting, it is our priority to build a safe environment which promotes the development, well-being and safety of children and young people. For more information, check our World Safe from Harm Policy at the end of the toolkit.

Whether you are currently healthy or unwell, looking after your mental well-being is an essential part of enjoying a long and fulfilling life. This toolkit aims to support adults to equip young people with the necessary knowledge and skills to understand and take care of their mental health and support people around them. In Scouting, it is the responsibility of all to take care and look after each other to ensure everyone feels well.



WHO IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?

This toolkit is part of a series called “Safe Scouts” and was created to support Adult Leaders in addressing everyday situations within a Safe from Harm lens. Rovers are encouraged to use this toolkit for peer-to-peer activities on Safe from Harm topics and follow the how to use the toolkit guidelines to maintain boundaries. The aim is to encourage Scouts, Rovers, and Adult Leaders to learn, share and discuss in a safe space.

As an Adult Leader, your role is to facilitate this experience without lecturing, but rather facilitating and supporting. Since the content of this toolkit was designed to be directly delivered to Scouts, the language and the visuals you’ll find are already children and youth friendly. You will also find more technical explanations for facilitators, to empower you with knowledge to deliver the session.

If you want to better understand the Safe from Harm Framework as an NSO, [click here](#).



NOTE TO THE ADULT LEADER OR FACILITATOR

As for any toolkits in the Safe Scouts series, this toolkit is divided into three main parts: an introduction, hands-on workshops to explore different aspects of mental health with Scouts, and additional resources and printing materials. The workshops consist of three topics: Taking Care of Myself, It's OK Not to Feel OK, and Taking Care of Others.

We invite Adult Leaders to explore the proposed activities in this toolkit and choose the most suitable way to adapt them to their local context with Scouts. Also note that any Safe from Harm activities carried for Scouts should be integrated in the Youth Programme and applied using the Scout Method.



Before starting an activity, be sure to set some ground rules, such as:

- Follow the Scout Promise and Law;
- Respect for self and others;
- Be free to choose whether to share in discussions or partake in activities;
- Maintain confidentiality of everything shared within the group.

See the purple boxes to find inspiration on how Scouting supports Mental Health in different ways →

We encourage you to try the toolkit activities with your Leaders' team before bringing it to Scout groups. This will help you determine which activities are right for you and to define potential challenges and limitations. It is essential that you adapt the activities to your reality and culture.

For some workshops, you might have recourse to a third party to facilitate sessions that requires specific area of expertise. This could allow the young people to express themselves freely and be more comfortable sharing.

As an Adult Leader, it is essential for you to maintain boundaries and to create an environment of trust with Scouts. Before beginning, let the Scouts know that they can speak with you privately if they have questions or experiences that they would rather not share with the whole group. A note for yourself: know that you are not obliged to answer every question Scouts may have, especially if you don't know the answer. You can move on to a different question or encourage them to speak with their parents about it.

As an adult in Scouting, it is your duty to report any potential abuse you witness or hear about from Scouts and support survivors and people who disclose this information. Reach out as soon as possible to your National Scout Organization or Association to receive support and report the situation.

REMEMBER: If you think a Scout in your unit might be depressed or experiencing other mental health issues, try to initiate the conversation with them, maybe with the help of another adult or professional. If you do not feel well-equipped or comfortable to discuss mental health with your Scouts, you could seek help from a professional or external support agency that specialises in the subject, such as a counselor, mental health nurse or a non-profit organisation. It is perfectly normal for subject matter experts to be invited to deliver a Scout session. At the same time, remember that you do not need to be a professional to talk about mental health issues.

LEARNING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Scouts are committed to helping achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To better understand what the SDGs are and how Scouts are contributing, head to our #Scouts4SDGs hub: sdgs.scouts.org!

The Mental Health toolkit is aligned with four learning objectives of the SDGs:



SDG 3 - GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING:

- The learner understands the importance of mental health.
- The learner can interact and empathise with people suffering from illnesses.
- The learner can encourage others to decide and act in favour of promoting health and well-being for all.
- The learner can develop a personal commitment to promoting health and well-being for themselves, their family, and others, including considering volunteer or professional work in health and social care.
- The learner can include health-promoting behaviours in their daily routines.
- The learner has the capacity to perceive when others need help and to seek help for themselves and others.

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

The World Health Organisation defines **mental health** as **"A state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and make a contribution to her or his community."**

We all have mental health. It defines our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, or react. Mental health is crucial as it determines how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Building a clear understanding of mental health will help us develop positive habits in our daily lives, recognise the signs and symptoms of mental illness, and know when we need to ask for help.

These elements support us to better protect ourselves from severe mental illness. Our mental health can change over time. In the same way that sometimes we get physically sick with a cold or flu, sometimes we can become mentally unwell. It is completely normal to feel down or worried from time to time. What is most important is that we recognise it and take action. Mental health impacts on a person can be as severe and life-threatening as any physical illness, especially if they remain untreated.



WHAT IS MENTAL ILLNESS?

Mental illness refers to a wide variety of conditions that affect an individual's mental health. It can cause behaviour changes, variations in mindset and altered perception of reality, among other things. Mental illness can significantly affect the lives of those afflicted with it. We will explore a few of the most common mental illnesses further in this toolkit and look at how to protect our mental health.

During our lives, we all have good times and bad times, and these experiences are a continuum for most of us. If we are mentally healthy, we are feeling resilient and generally happy. If we are mentally ill, we tend to feel unstable, down, or worried.



WHY IS THIS A GLOBAL ISSUE?

Everyone in the world has mental health, and many people will suffer from mental illness during their lifetime, including numerous young people. Let's look at some facts from the World Health Organisation:

- One in six people aged 10-19 years are suffering from mental illness.
- Mental health conditions account for 16% of the global burden of disease and injury in people aged 10-19.
- Half of all mental health conditions start by 14 years of age, but most cases are undetected and untreated.
- Globally, depression is one of the leading causes of illness and disability among adolescents.
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death in youth ages 15-19 years.
- The consequences of not addressing adolescent mental health conditions extend to adulthood, impairing physical and mental health and limiting opportunities to lead fulfilling lives as adults¹.

This information was sourced from the World Health Organisation. For more, check the WHO web page on adolescent mental health: www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health.

¹Kessler RC, Angermeyer M, Anthony JC, et al. Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of mental disorders in the World Health Organization's World Mental Health Survey Initiative. *World Psychiatry* 2007; 6: 168–76.

SCOUTING IS GOOD FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Scouting gives young people the opportunity to connect and make life-long friends. It encourages members to reflect and practice self-awareness, and to become involved with their communities. Scouts are given opportunities to spend time outdoors, try new things, meet new people, go on adventures, overcome challenges, and build resilience.

A [2017 study of 10,000 men born in 1958 in the United Kingdom](#) found that former Scouts and Girl Guides were 15% less likely to suffer from anxiety or mood disorders compared with others. The authors concluded: "This suggests that youth programmes [sic] that support resilience and social mobility through developing the potential for continued progressive self-education, ... self-reliance, collaboration and activities in natural environments may be protective of mental health in adulthood".

Scouting empowers children and young people to reach their full potential. Through this toolkit, you will find purple boxes which explain how Scouting can support good mental health among young people.





2. Workshops

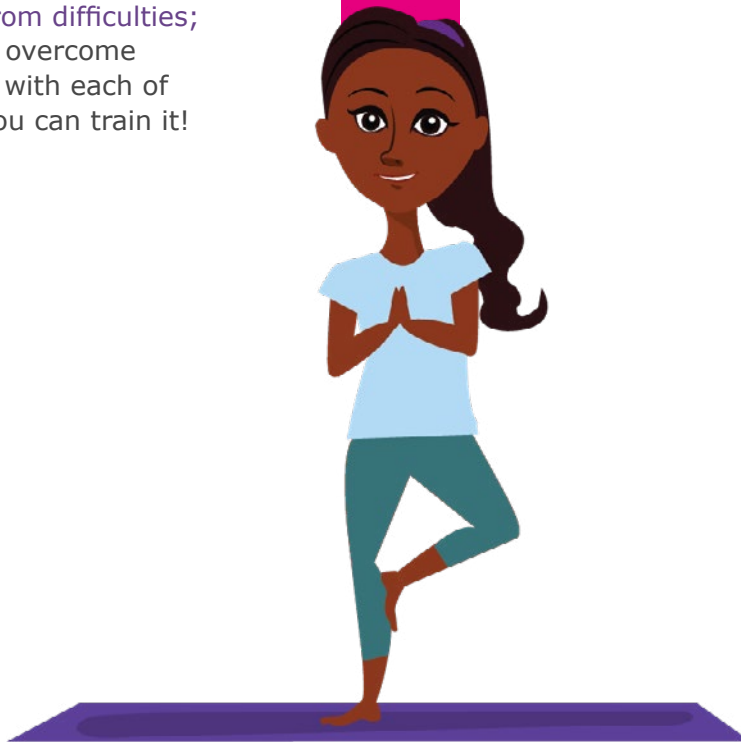
WORKSHOPS

TAKING CARE OF MYSELF

Everyone has the potential to cope with and regulate their emotions in different situations. It's important to support that ability and develop related skills.

One of the ways to protect ourselves from mental health challenges is to work on our resilience.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, "Resilience is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness". Resilience helps you overcome challenges and become stronger with each of your experiences. Good news: you can train it!



How are you
guys feeling
today?



Well-Being and Strengthening Resilience IN A SCOUTING ENVIRONMENT

Being involved with Scouting should support you to feel happy and empowered. It should help build resilience and develop a strong foundation for emotional and mental health. It is the responsibility of everyone to ensure that Scouting is a supportive environment for all Scouts. Here are some reminders of activities that we already do according to the Scout Method which help create an emotionally balanced life:



- Spend time in nature – It reduces stress, anger, fear and increases pleasant feelings.
- Discuss feelings and emotions – Being able to share our opinions in a safe environment helps us cope with challenges and understand our emotions and those of others.
- Get involved with your community – This helps build self-confidence and sense of bringing change to the world.
- Think about positive aspects – While summarizing the day at a Scout camp or meeting, share what you are grateful for. It helps shape our thinking when we notice and appreciate even small positive things in our lives.
- Courtesy and kindness – These bring us closer together and support mutual respect.
- Live in the moment – Enjoy the present, here and now. Reflect with Scouts on where you are and what is around you.
- Acknowledge and celebrate successes – Remember to celebrate new achievements. Recognise, congratulate and reward Scouts.
- Play – Games and laughter boost endorphin levels in our brains which reduces stress and brings relaxation and calm to mind and body.
- Sing – Singing together reduces stress and creates a sense of belonging.
- Team support – In Scouting, patrols and teams are made to support each Scout in reaching their potential, feeling fulfilled and progressing in a safe space.
- Spiritual development – There is an opportunity in Scouting for young people to explore their inner selves and find peace.
- And more – The benefits of Scouting can go on, such as support in overcoming new challenges, creating friendships, and discovering new places. Brainstorm which are most important to you.

Do not underestimate the impact what you are already doing!

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

WORKSHOP 1 THE FIVE WAYS TO WELL-BEING



Goals

Scouts: Learn how to regulate their emotions and ways to improve their well-being (taking care of myself).

Adult Leaders: Create a safe space for young people to share and show the importance of emotions self-regulation.



Age section

12-16 (Scouts)
16+ (Venturers
& Rovers)



Total time

45 minutes



Preparation

- Print "Five Ways to Well-being" worksheet for each participant
- Distribute pens and clean sheets of paper

Activity



1. The Adult Leader asks everyone to express how they are feeling today by drawing a face representing their mood (or you can use cards with pictures evoking emotions). Then the Adult Leader asks the participants to share the face they have drawn and why.
 - Based on their answers, the Adult Leader can explain that people might feel differently at any particular moment, from happiness to sadness and anything in between. There are many ways to cope with unhappier moments and prevent them from lingering too long. Being upset is perfectly normal. It is essential not to stay in those bad feelings for a long time without asking for help.



2. The Adult Leader asks the group to share ideas on what to do when someone around them is sad or upset.
 - The Adult Leader can explain that it is important to actively take care of ourselves in the same way we would care about others.



3. The Adult Leader shares the "Five Ways to Well-Being" resource with participants and explains that by filling in the sheet, they will have a ready-to-use list of ways to take care of themselves.
 - Each participant gets a worksheet and is asked to answer all questions individually.
 - Then, in pairs, they share what they have written on the sheet (only the parts they want to share).

At the end of the activity the Adult Leader asks everyone how they feel after this exercise, letting those who want to share their thoughts speak.



WORKSHOP 2

RAINBOW OF EMOTIONS



Goals

Scouts: Identify and understand the types of emotions they can experience.

Adult Leaders: Support Scouts to acknowledge and express their emotions.



Age section

8-11 (Cub Scouts)



Total time

30 minutes



Preparation

- Gather plastic ping-pong balls* and coloured markers

*If you do not have ping-pong balls you can use sheets printed with circles

- You may also want flip chart paper, sticky notes, pens and/or highlighters

Activity



1. The Adult Leader gives each Cub Scout 3 ping-pong balls and some coloured markers. Then the Leader asks each Scout to draw on the balls an emoji which depicts:

- How they feel now
- How they felt yesterday
- And how they felt in the last weeks.

Encourage them to find different emojis. For inspiration, Scouts can think about the emojis they use in text messages.



2. The Adult Leader asks Cubs to show what they drew and explain the emoji on the ball.



3. At the end of the round, the Adult Leader explains there are six basic emotions. The Adult Leader shows the picture of six emotions: anger, disgust, sadness, happiness, fear and surprise. You can use pictures of people, drawings or emojis.



4. The Adult Leader pairs up the Cubs and asks one from each pair to mime one of the emotions to the other, who needs to guess the emotion. Then they switch.

To help the Cubs, keep the pictures of faces visible at all times.



5. The Adult Leader asks the Cubs if they can name any other emotions, besides the six already mentioned, and to draw them on paper. Remember: all emotions are allowed, without judgment.



6. The Adult Leader asks the pairs if someone would like to share what they drew. Here are guiding questions the Leader can ask:

- What made you feel that way? How was the feeling expressed in that situation? How did people around you feel at that moment?
- If the expression of the emotion caused a negative impact: What could you do differently next time you feel that way? How could you use the power of emotion in a constructive way?



7. The Adult Leader underlines: Anyone or everyone can feel different types of emotions and it is OK. There can be multiple different behaviours or reactions linked to one emotion.



We all experience many different emotions in our daily lives. There is no such thing as a negative emotion, only an adverse reaction to an emotion. For a fun extra activity, consider watching the animated movie "Inside Out"¹ by Pixar. The movie explains how fully expressing all our emotions is essential to our well-being. Recognising emotions helps us take action, make decisions, understand other people, or avoid danger.

RELAXATION & REFLECTION

Sometimes during our Scout activities, there is a lot happening around us – many new experiences, friends, challenges, and dreams. We might feel overwhelmed. It is important to stop from time-to-time and give ourselves, our brains, and our bodies a break. This gives us the chance to relax and reflect on what is happening around and inside us.

It is important to live in the moment: to focus on the here and now and accept our thoughts and emotions without judgment. It is a learning experience that helps us live a healthy lifestyle. As an Adult Leader, you should support and develop mindfulness among young people and demonstrate value for this often underestimated subject

Here are some resources and materials that might help you →

Websites: [Meditation Guided Relaxation Scripts](#)

Apps for Meditation: [Insight Timer](#), [Stop Breathe Think](#) (includes meditations “For Kids”, “For Climate Anxiety”, “For Youth of Color” and more), [Calm](#), [Smiling Mind](#) or [Headspace](#)

Apps for Better Sleep: [Sleep Cycle](#) and “Sleep Stories” on Headspace or “Sleepy Time for Kids” on Stop Breathe Think (mentioned above)

Books: “Chicken Soup for the Soul” by Jack Canfield, “The Prayer of the Frog” by Anthony de Mello, “The Breathing Book” by Christopher Willard and Olivia Weisser, and “Meditation is an Open Sky” by Whitney Stewart

Games: “Dixit” (card game created by Jean-Louis Roubira), “Wingspan” (video game designed by Elizabeth Hargrave), and “Mindful Games Activity Cards: 55 Fun Ways to Share Mindfulness with Kids and Teens” (card game designed by Susan Kaiser Greenland)

Videos: [What is Mindfulness and how do you do it?](#), [Cosmic Kids \(creative yoga adventures\)](#) (for Cubs) or Yoga with Adriene (for older Scouts) ([Rainbow Yoga](#) or [Yoga for the Classroom](#))



BEING SELF-CONFIDENT & SELF-AWARE

Self-confidence is believing in yourself, for example if you are self-confident and learning something new, you will believe you are able to learn the new skill even if it is very difficult. Working on your self-confidence works like physical exercise does for your body – it helps you stay healthy and strong.

Why should I build self-awareness?

During your everyday life, self-awareness allows you to be mindful of what you feel. This mindfulness will allow you to better control your emotions and reactions when you are alone but also when you are in a group. Being self-aware will make you able to get along with yourself and consequently with others.



WORKSHOP

I AM... AND MY SUPERPOWER IS...



Goals

Scouts: Build self-confidence and empowerment.

Adult Leaders: Support Scouts by sharing examples for their self-appreciation and self-confidence.



Age section

8-11 (Cub Scouts)
12-16 (Scouts)



Total time

45 minutes



Preparation

- Prepare big sheets of paper for every participant and print worksheets for this exercise
- Prepare a torch and pens/markers

Activity



1. The Adult Leader asks Scouts to draw the shadow of each of them on the paper in small groups of 3:
 - a. Attach big sheet of paper to a wall.
 - b. One Scout should sit in front of that paper.
 - c. Using the torch light, another Scout should generate a shadow of that Scout's head and upper body on the paper.
 - d. The third Scout uses a marker or pen to draw the shadow outline on the paper.



2. The Adult Leader asks the Scouts to write on their "shadows" positive affirmations. They can use the sheet at the end of the toolkit for inspiration. The affirmation should be something good the Scout believes about themselves.



3. The Adult Leader asks the Scouts to sit in pairs and discuss why they chose those statements.



4. Then, the Adult Leader asks all Scouts to walk around and add the statements to their friends' shadows.



5. Again, the Adult Leader asks the Scouts to sit in pairs and discuss what they feel after reading.



6. To conclude, the Adult Leader asks the Scouts to write their three superpowers based on all the adjectives that are on their sheet. i.e., My superpower is that I can make other people laugh.



7. The Adult Leader can find a place on the wall of the Scout Hall to have all the superheroes displayed and take a picture of each Scout with their sheet.



WORKSHOPS

IT'S OK TO NOT FEEL OK

Feeling different emotions is a part of life. However, when you feel low for a long time or when your feelings start to impact on daily life, it is important that we take actions to feel better. Not feeling OK is a difficult topic even for adults, which is why it is essential to learn and practice skills to manage things when we are feeling low. It is important that you know it is normal not to feel OK sometimes, and that you need to seek help if this feeling doesn't improve for weeks or months at a time.

You should tell a trusted adult about



it or contact a safety line in your country (find yours on Child Helpline International, listed below):

- If you feel unhappy for a very long time,
- If you were hurt or are afraid to be hurt in your environment,
- If you need some extra support,
- If you think someone you know is experiencing one of the above.

It is important to share your feelings with others as you are more likely to overcome them and feel better with support. If you are hurt or afraid, it is essential to tell someone, because it might help stop it and prevent others from getting hurt.



No...not really...

Are you
okay?

It's okay...
What can I
do for you?

NOTE TO THE ADULT LEADER OR FACILITATOR

Understanding some of the most common mental health challenges faced by young people will empower you to speak about them with confidence, ask good questions, and observe changes in Scouts' behaviours.

Depression¹ is an illness characterised by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that you normally enjoy, accompanied by an inability to carry out daily activities, for at least two weeks. In addition, people with depression normally have several of the following: loss of energy; change in appetite; sleeping more or less; anxiety; reduced concentration; indecisiveness; restlessness; feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or hopelessness; and/or thoughts of self-harm or suicide.

Depression is not a sign of weakness. Anyone can experience depression. It is treatable, with therapies such as counselling, lifestyle interventions and/or medication.

Self-harm² is when someone intentionally hurts or injures themselves. For some, self-harm can represent a way of coping with or expressing feelings and emotions that are overwhelming or overpowering.

Anxiety³ is your body's natural response to stress. It's a feeling of fear, nervousness or apprehension about what's to come. Sometimes, that's a life

event, like the first day of school, going to a job interview, or giving a speech. Other times, it can be a more general and ongoing feeling. If feelings of anxiety are extreme, last for longer than six months, and are interfering with daily life, it may be an anxiety disorder.

Eating disorders⁴ describe illnesses that are characterized by irregular eating habits and severe distress or concern about body weight or shape. Eating disturbances may include inadequate or excessive food intake which can ultimately damage an individual's physical and mental well-being. The most common forms of eating disorders include Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, and Binge Eating Disorder and affect all genders.

If you are concerned about a young person's mental health, be sure to advise their guardian. Anyone experiencing mental illness should seek professional medical advice.

¹Depression what should you know, WHO, 2017
<https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day/2017/handouts-depression/what-you-should-know/en/>

²<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/s/self-harm>, Mental Health Foundation 2019

³Medically reviewed by Timothy J. Legg, Ph.D., CRNP — Written by Kimberly Holland — Updated on September 3, 2020; <https://www.healthline.com/health/anxiety>

⁴<https://www.eatingdisorderhope.com/information/eating-disorder>; Eating Disorder Hope 2021

IN A SCOUTING ENVIRONMENT

Scouting does not only help to build a safe environment while talking about difficult topics, but it also supports our mental and physical health to strengthen natural immunity and resilience.

Remember to value activities that involve:

- Open questions and interest towards each other
- Culture of listening
- Equality and acceptance (building trust)
- Support from peers highlighting the strength of the Scout group
- Discussions about difficult topics, such as challenges or accidents, by not making taboos and talking through conflicts
- Regular discussions about emotions, reactions, and behaviours - building a habit for Scouts to share
- Joy and fun!
- Contact with nature to decrease stress

OBSERVE PHYSICAL SHAPE OF YOUR SCOUTS

As an Adult Leader, you are part of a Scout's life in a different from parents or friends. Pay attention to what is happening with your Scouts when you're with them, in case you notice changes in behaviour. If you do, do not ignore these changes. Check in with your Scouts and try to understand how they feel and what is causing this evolution.



PROPOSITION OF DISCUSSION



Goals

Scouts: To understand and have open discussions on the behaviours related to mental illness in a safe space.

Adult Leaders: Design a safe space to initiate discussion around mental illness.



Age section

12-16 (Scouts)

16-18+ (Venturers and Rovers)



Total time

45 minutes



Preparation

- Gather sticky pads and pens
- Draw a person on a big sheet of paper
- List of local support resources available for youth
- Set ground rules and boundaries, and be aware of behavioural changes to support your group



Read the above Note to Leaders before preparing this activity. Be sure to set ground rules as a group before beginning.

1. The Adult Leader asks Scouts the following questions:
 - "What is the emotion that we usually connect with blue or grey colors? Why?"
 - "Why do people feel sad? Why are you sometimes sad? Use one word" – the Scouts write their answers on a sticky note.

Some of the answers might include: pressure (judgment), loneliness, failure (demotivation, loss of self-confidence), fear (from people, situations, future/past), or even no known reason...



2. Next, the Adult Leader asks Scouts to rewrite the statements they wrote about sadness 5 times on a new sticky notes.



3. The Adult Leader asks the Scouts to stick the reasons for being sad on the person poster (see Preparation). Then, the Adult Leader asks the Scouts to describe what they see.



4. The Adult Leader asks: "What behaviours do you see when somebody is very sad? Write them around the person poster."

The Scouts might write the following: anxiety, solitude, lack of appetite, difficulties with sleep, reduced concentration, lack of energy and happiness, etc. It is essential to highlight that people can hide these behaviours and to consider what people could be going through without others realising.



5. The Adult Leader takes some time to explain:
 - People can be sad from various reasons but if it becomes overwhelming (show the number of post-its) and there is too much of it, they will start to behave differently (point the behaviours/symptoms).
 - If it happens for a very long time, it can be depression. Depression is a disease that can be treated. Just like with a flu, the body can manage some virus, but when there is too much of it, the person needs professional support.



6. The Adult Leader asks the Scouts:
"What happens if you are sick,
i.e., flu and do not take care of it?
What might happen? Do you know
what might happen if you ignore
depression?"
Some explanations can be forms of
self-harm, leading even to suicide.



7. The Adult Leader underlines that:
- It can happen to anyone
 - It is not a sign of weakness
 - It is treatable with the help of
a professional (ex. counselor,
therapist, medical doctor)



8. The Adult Leader asks the Scouts
if they know what they would do
if they felt like this? Or what they
would do if they met someone who
is feeling depressed? Together, you
create a poster with steps around
what to do.



9. Summary: The Adult Leader asks
the Scouts: How do you feel after
this discussion? Do you have more
questions? What do you need now?



WORKSHOP 1

MANAGING MY STRESS BUCKET



Goals

Scouts: Learn a new way to care for their mental health and understand what could happen if they do not manage their stress levels well.

Adult Leaders: Support Scouts in understanding how they can manage their stress levels and understand self-care.



Age section

12-16 (Scouts)

16-18 (Venturers)



Total time

30 minutes



Preparation

- Two buckets: one full of water and one empty
- 1 cup

Activity



1. The Adult Leader asks Scouts to stand in a circle.



2. The Adult Leader asks each Scout to think of something that makes them feel stress. For example: losing a sock, being late for school, exams, a fight with a friend or family member, COVID-19, climate change, etc.



3. The Adult Leader then asks each Scout going around the circle to come forward to the bucket filled with water and take a scoop of water with the cup. Then they pour the water into the empty bucket and say to the group what makes them feel stressed.



4. As the empty bucket starts to fill up with water, the Leader will explain to the Scouts that the bucket symbolises a person and the water is the person's stress level. As more and more stress is poured into the bucket, the stress levels increase.



5. When every Scout has had their turn, the bucket may be almost full or overflowing. This spilling of water represents burnout, emotional outbursts or other mental illness. This shows the young people that when our stress levels are too high, we can become unwell, less resilient, and unable to cope.



6. Now the Adult Leader will ask the Scouts to think of things they do that make them feel good or relax. For example: read a book, hang out with family or friends, play a game, dance, sing, play sports/exercise, take a nap, talk to a trusted person or counsellor, etc.



7. The Adult Leader will then ask each Scout to come up one by one and fill the cup with water from the overflowing bucket and pour the water onto the ground (or into the other bucket). While they pour their water out, the Scout should tell the group what they do that makes them feel good or relaxed.



8. The Adult Leader explains to the group that we call these things self-care, and we should do at least one thing every day that helps us relax. If we are feeling very stressed, we need to consciously put in effort to do more of these things. Knowing what “fills our stress bucket” is a tool we can use to manage our stress levels and help us take care of our mental health.



9. If appropriate, the Adult Leader or a guest speaker could talk to the group about harmful stress release activities like drugs and alcohol, overeating, smoking, spending money, etc. These things, which can sometimes feel like they relieve stress, can have harmful and long-term effects on health and well-being. The Adult Leader can advise young people to choose their self-care activities wisely.

WORKSHOP 2

JOURNALING YOUR WAY TO HEALTH



Goals

Scouts: Learn and practice a skill to deal with emotions and develop resilience to cope in bad times. Enable Scouts to start to record their good and bad moments, and how they cope with them. Encourage them to reflect on their day-to-day experiences.

Adult Leaders: Support Scouts to start and continue the practice of journaling. and understand self-care.



Age section

12-16 (Scouts)
16-19 (Venturers)
19 -26 (Rovers)



Total time

30 minutes



Preparation

- Prepare one notebook and pen for each participant

Activity



1. Introduction by the Adult Leader: Growing up, it can sometimes feel hard to share what's happening with people around you. This is where a journal comes in. While writing a journal, you can go on a safe journey of self-expression and self-discovery with yourself. Writing in a journal is a healthy outlet in which you can express yourself, unedited and without fear of any repercussions or judgment. The teenage and early adult years are often challenging and confusing and a journal can help you work through this period. A journal can help you:

- Understand yourself — figure out what makes you, you!
- Understand your life experiences: explore your thoughts, feelings, and reactions to recent events
- Analyse situations and react
- Process your thoughts, feelings, and emotions
- Process and solve problems
- Set personal goals and make plans
- Produce something you will love to look back on when you are older or in difficult times to remind yourself how you coped and overcame challenges.

So, how do you journal?

There's no right and wrong way in your journal — you can write what you like. Spelling and grammar don't matter either if you don't want them to. You are writing for yourself and nobody else. Here are a few tips on how you can get started with your journal and how to keep going:

- Use the first page to write a little about yourself such as your current age, your hobbies, and all your current favourites — friends, foods, colours, outfits, TV shows, etc.
- If you are feeling creative, decorate your journal to make it feel extra special. You could also include tickets, stickers, photographs, washi tape and drawings in your journal to make it more fun. You don't have to stick to just words, but if you prefer to express your thoughts as words that is cool too.



- Set up a daily reminder on your phone or computer if you think you might forget. If you don't feel like writing in your journal that day, you can ignore the reminder. Don't force yourself to write when you have nothing to say — that will just put you off using your journal.

Remember to look after your journal. If you are writing down your thoughts and feelings, you don't want it getting into the wrong hands, so take extra care if you are carrying it to school or Scout events with you. Don't tell others when you carry it with you and keep it in a safe place, such as hidden in a drawer or your pillowcase.

If you struggle to know what to write in your journal, look for inspiration online, try freewriting (writing whatever comes to your mind), or perhaps record one thing that happened today and what made it good or bad. You will be amazed in years to come to see all the adventures, good times and mishaps you made it through.



2. The Adult Leader then hands out the notebooks and arranges a comfortable and separate place for all participants to work. The participants can each choose the spot they prefer.



3. The Adult Leader asks each participant to open the notebook and write a journal entry on the first page, this can be in the form of a letter to themselves telling them about who they are now.

Some questions that may inspire their writing are:

- What makes you proud of yourself and why?
- What are you grateful for today?
- What are your plans or dreams for your future?
- What would you like to say to your future self?



4. After about 30 minutes, the Adult Leader brings the participants back together and they are invited to share about the experience of writing a letter to themselves (but not about the content they wrote, unless they want to).



5. In closing, the Adult Leader encourages the participants to continue with daily or weekly journaling and to use the journal as a friend that they can confide in and explore ideas with. The journal is also something they can use when they are not feeling great, to look back and recall some of the great times or look at how they handled hard times.



If the Leader works with the Scout group often, it is a good idea to include journaling time in overnight camp or activity programmes. This can enable and encourage Scouts to build on a healthy, consistent habit.

During reflections about personal growth, the Adult Leader can also encourage young people to look back on their original letter and journal to see how they have grown, if they have achieved their goals or whether their goals have changed over time.

Guys, maybe our
adult leader can
help us here...This is
too much emotions
for us to manage



TAKING CARE OF OTHERS

In our Scouting journey we inevitably influence and connect with others. We can help create a better world by doing our best to have a positive impact on people we encounter. It's important to ensure we have the tools and are ready to be role models in our community and beyond.

Whether young people or adults, there are ways we can support positive mental health among one another. Everyone in Scouting should understand that they have a duty to care for themselves others. Remember that it is not always about reacting or giving advice. Sometimes, all someone needs is to be listened to.



Listening IN SCOUTING ENVIRONMENTS

BUDDY SYSTEM

The buddy system is the act of pairing up Scouts to create a support system for both. During Scout camps or meetings, it is the role of the buddies to check on each other and support each. They can also be a listening ear to each other as needed, and more. This practice is encouraged to create a safer Scouting environment where young people can feel mentored, supported and encouraged.

Besides their buddy, Scouts should be encouraged to seek other people that can listen when they need it, such as: another trusted friend, a trusted Adult Leader, a family member (ex. brother, sister, father, mother...), or a teacher.

LISTENING EARS

You can also specifically train Scouts to be Listening Ears in your group. Among the Leaders' team, select a person that all the Scouts could comfortably turn to if they feel sad, angry, lonely or experience distress. Make it clear to Scouts who this person is and how to reach them.

WORKSHOP 1

EVERYONE IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT



Goals

Scouts: Encourage empathy and care for others.

Adult Leaders: Create an environment in which Scouts feel responsible and caring for each other.



Age section

12-16 (Scouts)



Total time

45 minutes



Preparation

- Prepare one blanket for every five people in the group
- Prepare projector or computer to show a video
- Prepare pens and paperes (in case some would like to put answers on paper)

Activity



1. The Adult Leader asks the group if they know the story of the three Japanese monkeys representing the proverbial principle "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil". The Leader shows them how they look:

- Mizaru, who sees no evil, is covering his eyes,
- Kikazaru, who hears no evil, is covering his ears, and
- Iwazaru, who speaks no evil, is covering his mouth.



2. The Adult Leader divides the participants into small groups of five. Three people in the small groups represent one of the monkeys and, from now on, they either don't see (use a scarf), don't hear (use headphones with music) or don't speak. The rest of the group works without any restricting rules.



3. The Leader explains the task for each group: the whole group needs to stand on the blanket. The goal is to flip over the blanket while standing on it, as fast as possible, without using hands and without touching the ground around it. The Leader could add an imaginative story about being on an island where there is water all around the blanket.



4. After finishing the activity, the Adult Leader sits down in a circle with the whole group and asks following questions:
 - "How did you feel during this activity?" (to check on emotions, possibly from all participants and how they differed among groups)
 - "Who was leading in the groups? Why?" (to see how "monkeys" were involved and if any of the restrictions prevented them from leading)
 - "Who had fun? Who enjoyed this activity less?" (to see if "monkeys" had the same amount of fun)
 - "Do you know why?"
 - "How important was the goal?"



5. The Adult Leader gives a summary of the activity: Sometimes our differences can bring additional struggles. We should consider all members of our group and different challenges or limitations they may face. While different tasks challenge us in different ways depending on our skills, experiences and abilities, we are equals. We should look out for each other, be empathetic and help one another.



6. The Adult Leader then plays a video to illustrate this point:

[Erste Christmas Ad 2018: What would Christmas be without love?](#)



7. The Adult Leader asks the group to share their thoughts: "What did you learn from this story?"

We should remember to include everyone in what we are doing, even if

it requires changing some plans. Everyone is important and needs a bit of attention. It is important to search for solutions and not give up too quickly. Sometimes, we are too shy to ask for attention and help.



8. The Adult Leader can then ask Scouts to share experiences from when they included or helped a friend this way.

WORKSHOP 2

MY "MAGICAL" BOX



Goals

Scouts: Develop skills to appreciate others, to see other people's strengths and grow self-confidence.

Adult Leaders: Support young people in developing interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence.



Age section

All age sections



Total time

30 minutes

Execution: Variable
, can last days



Preparation

- Small (mailbox size) cardboard boxes OR paper to build small boxes using the origami method OR any other container that can be used to collect small papers
- Supplies to decorate boxes (optional)
- Stand with small pieces of paper and pens

Activity



1. The Adult Leader gives each participant a small box (or materials to make one) and asks them to write their name on it so that it is clearly visible to others.



2. The Adult Leader puts all the boxes in one place. Scouts can decorate their boxes if they want, and Leaders can add some additional decorations to create a nice atmosphere, perhaps connected with the unit's symbolic framework.



3. The Adult Leader asks participants to drop messages to each other in these boxes every day throughout. The messages should:
 - Appreciate something about the recipient (ex. a strength, talent or action),
 - Say thank you, or
 - Share something nice.



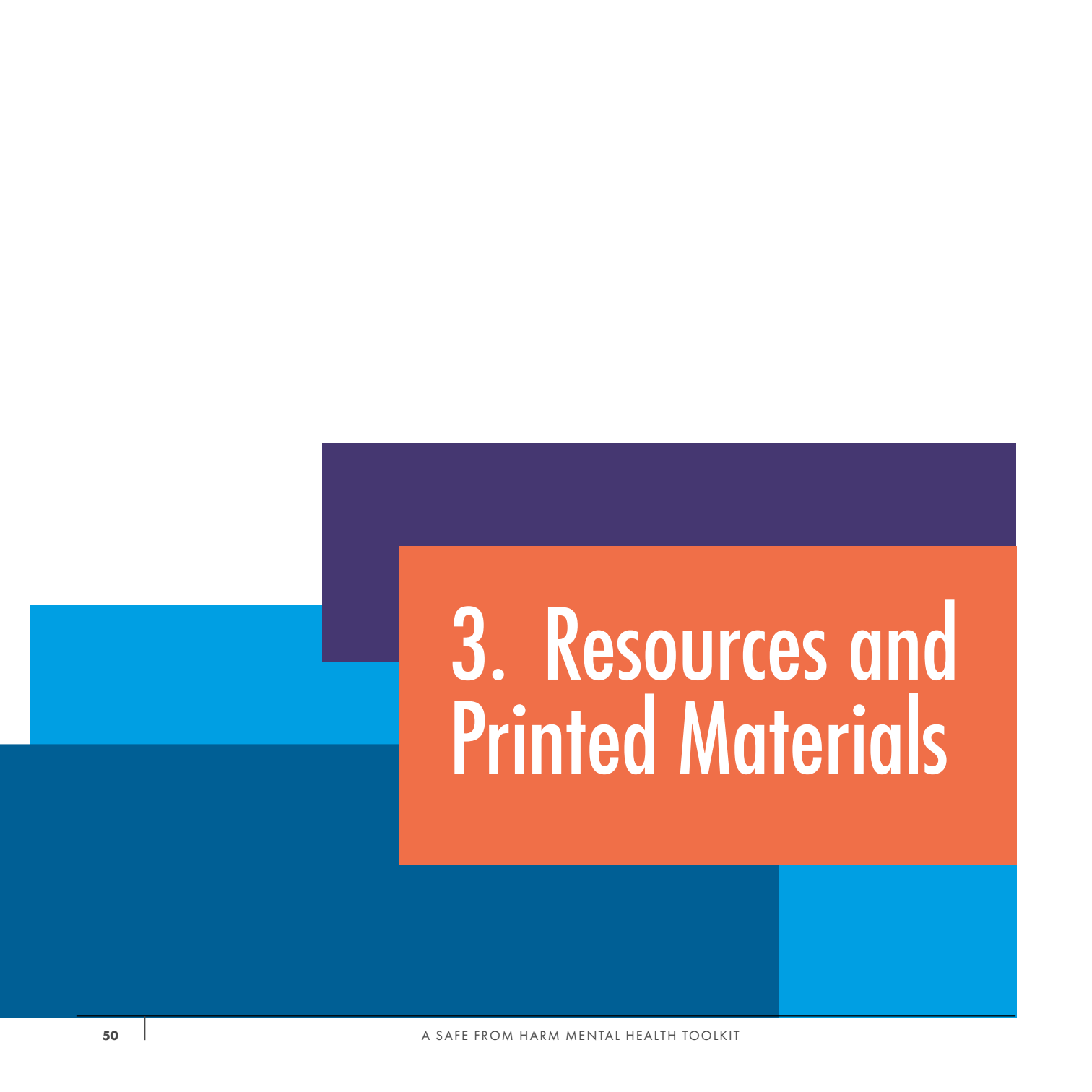
4. By the end of the week or of the workshop, participants can open their own boxes to check their messages.



5. After few days/weeks, the Adult Leader should ask participants about their thoughts and feelings about the exercise.



NOTE: If inappropriate messages get in boxes, such as bullying, make sure to address it immediately and talk about bullying with your group. If it continues to happen, you may considering ending the exercise and bringing in activities from our Anti-Bullying Toolkit (see below).



3. Resources and Printed Materials

WORKSHEET: FIVE WAYS TO WELL-BEING

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS IN EACH SECTION



Connect

Spend time with family and friends. Enjoy doing things together and talking to each other.

What will you do to connect with others?

-
-

Give

Do something for a friend or family, as well as making them feel good. It can make you feel good too! Be kind, smile and say "thank you".

What will you do to connect with others?

-

Take Notice

Take a break to see how you feel. Look around you. Go for a walk, meditate or listen to some music.

How will you observe what is around you?

-
-

Be Active

Exercising keeps you physically healthy and makes you feel good.

What physical activities will you enjoy?

-
-

Keep Learning

Try something new. Check out a new hobby or learn about something just because it interests you (not because of school)

What new things will you learn?

-
-

WORKSHEET: I AM... AND MY SUPERPOWER IS...

1. I am important.
2. I am smart.
3. I am a good friend.
4. I am kind and loving.
5. I am grateful for my body.
6. I am loved.
7. I am brave.
8. I am a good listener.
9. I am helpful.
10. I am happy.
11. I try my hardest.
12. I'm proud of myself.
13. I care about others.
14. I can do hard things.
15. I believe in me.
16. I love to learn from challenges.
17. I enjoy new adventures.
18. I am safe.
19. Today is a great day.
20. I am free to be myself.
21. I am truthful.
22. I like to share what I have.
23. I have many talents.
24. I get better every single day.
25. I can do anything.
26. I have lots of friends who love me.
27. Every problem has an answer.

28. I can do it.
29. I am intelligent.
30. I am kind.
31. I have faith in myself.
32. I trust myself.
33. I am protected.
34. I am exactly where I need to be.
35. I am peaceful.
36. I am confident.
37. I am courageous.
38. I am whole.
39. Problems are challenges to better me.
40. I am in charge of my life.
41. All is well.
42. My family and friends love me for who I am.
43. I have many good friends.
44. I am creative.
45. I am awesome.
46. I have good friends.
47. I am a good friend.
48. I am thoughtful and kind.
49. I am strong, inside and out.
50. Miracles happen to me.
51. I am patient.
52. I am perfect just the way I am.

53. I make good decisions.
54. I am important.
55. I can do anything.
56. I am peaceful.
57. I approve of myself.
58. My heart guides me.
59. I see the good in myself.
60. I am a winner.
61. I am worthwhile.
62. I am beautiful.
63. I am a bright student.
64. I play an important role in the world.
65. I like myself.
66. I am optimistic.
67. I respect other people.
68. I learn from my mistakes.
69. I love my family and friends.
70. Everything works out just fine.
71. I am ok with who I am.
72. I have many gifts and talents.
73. Learning is fun and exciting.
74. I am happy.
75. I can do anything.
76. It's ok to start again.
77. I am good at...





4. Resources To Go Further

RESOURCES TO GO FURTHER

SAFE FROM HARM RESOURCES

[Safe from Harm webpage](#)

This webpage will allow you to better understand how to create a safe environment for Scouts.

[World Safe from Harm Policy](#)

The World Safe from Harm Policy sets minimum levels in implementation of procedures and actions Scouts will take, to create a safe environment for everyone, at all times.

SAFE SCOUTS - THE SAFE FROM HARM FRAMEWORK FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAMME

Me and My Peers

[Anti-Bullying Toolkit](#)

This toolkit helps Adult Leaders teach young people to identify, prevent and react to various bullying situations.

[Child Helpline International](#)

If you need any extra support, check this website to find a child helpline available in your country.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) RESOURCES

[Mental Health](#)

This web page, developed by the World Health Organisation, provides information on mental health for those looking for more details.

[Depression](#)

This web page, developed by the World Health Organisation, has handouts available with information on the characteristics of depression and how depression can be prevented and treated.

[Psychological First Aid: Guide for Field Workers](#)

RESOURCES TO GO FURTHER

This guide by the WHO covers psychological first aid, which involves learning humane, supportive and practical ways to help others when they suffer serious mental health crises or distressing events. It gives a framework for supporting people in ways that respect their dignity, culture, and abilities.

[The Worst Things to Say to Someone Who is Depressed](#)

This article highlights some tips and tricks on what to do and what not to do when you encounter someone suffering from depression.





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Creating a Better World

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