Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid training is the mindful equivalent of physical first aid training. It's a practical and hugely beneficial two-day course. Here's a taste of what it entails:

Our Mental Health First Aider is:

FIRST AID FACTS
To date, MHFA England has trained over 1,200 instructors and delivered courses to over 172,000 people. MHFA courses are internationally recognised in 23 countries.

Course provided by MHFA England

Graphic created by happiful | Counselling Directory – Connecting you with professional support

PART ONE
UNDERSTAND

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH

We all have mental health, just as we all have physical health. Our mental health includes how we feel, think and behave; how we cope with life; and how we feel about ourselves.

DEPRESSION

Depression occurs in around 10% of the population. Symptoms include: persistent sadness or low mood; loss of enjoyment in previously enjoyed activities; loss of confidence; and difficulty concentrating.

SUICIDAL CRISIS

20% of people have had suicidal thoughts at some time. If you are worried that someone is at risk of acting on suicidal thoughts, call for assistance – through their GP, 999, or Samaritans on 116 123.

ANXIETY

Anxiety can interfere with work and social lives. Physical symptoms include a racing heart, chest pains, and shaking. Psychological symptoms include irritability, worry, and racing thoughts.

PERSONALITY DISORDERS

Personality disorders are patterns of behaviour which cause long-term challenges. Symptoms include being overwhelmed by negativity, impulsive behaviours, and emotional distress.

PART TWO
HOW TO HELP

1 SPOT THE EARLY SIGNS

Noticing changes in behaviour, whether emotional or physical, can help identify whether you or someone you know may be experiencing a mental health issue.



2 BE A GOOD LISTENER

Choose an informal, neutral setting. Ask the person how they are. Keep your posture and tone relaxed. Listen non-judgementally.





3 RESPOND IN A CRISIS

Mental Health First Aid gives you the skills and confidence to assist in a crisis – to assess and de-escalate a situation, reassure a person in distress, know where to call for help, and how to keep yourself safe.



4 STOP THINGS FROM GETTING WORSE

Just like a physical injury or illness, a mental health issue can get worse without the appropriate treatment or support.

5 HELP SOMEONE RECOVER FASTER

Help is vital. The sooner a person gets support, the sooner they can recover or learn to manage their symptoms healthily and return to a normal life.



6 GUIDE SOMEONE TOWARDS SUPPORT



Mental Health First Aid courses give you an understanding of the range of support sources and self-help resources that are out there for different issues.



7 REDUCE THE STIGMA OF MENTAL HEALTH

Nearly nine out of ten people with mental health issues have been affected by stigma. There are growing concerns that the experience of stigma leads to people with mental health issues receiving second-class physical healthcare.



8 HELP DISPEL THE STIGMA

Mental Health First Aid training helps to dispel the misconceptions people often have about those who may be experiencing mental ill-health, as well as educating people on how to look after their own mental health.



WANT TO KNOW MORE?
Visit mhfaengland.org to learn how to train as a Mental Health First Aider.

EATING DISORDERS

The term eating disorder covers a wide range of problems with food, including starving (anorexia), binging and purging (bulimia), and binge eating. The reasons and causes are varied and complex.

SELF-HARM

People self-harm to cope with emotional distress or to communicate that they are distressed. Self-harming behaviours are often associated with mental health issues such as depression and anxiety.

PSYCHOSIS

A person with psychosis experiences a range of symptoms that affect their thinking. Their perception of reality becomes distorted. Early intervention and treatment is vital.

SCHIZOPHRENIA

Schizophrenia is a psychotic illness. Symptoms include delusions (false beliefs), hallucinations, thinking difficulties, loss of drive, blunt or inappropriate emotions, and social withdrawal.

BIPOLAR DISORDER

Bipolar disorder affects a person's mood with episodes of depression and mania, often with periods of 'normal' moods in between. Symptoms include hyperactivity, and rapid thinking/speech.