



Reading Well for mental health

Find helpful books
at your local library



Recommended by health professionals
and people with mental health needs

Reading Well for mental health

Reading Well helps you to understand and manage your health and wellbeing using helpful reading available from public libraries. The scheme is endorsed by health professionals and people with mental health needs.

The books provide helpful information and support for managing common mental health conditions, or dealing with difficult feelings and experiences. Some books also include personal stories from people who are living with or caring for someone with mental health needs.

The books have been recommended by mental health professionals and people with experience of the conditions covered. They have been tried and tested and found helpful.

To find out more go to readingagency.org.uk/reading-well

How does it work?

As part of your treatment, you may have been recommended a book by a health professional. The books are also available for anyone to borrow from the local library.

Where do I find the books?

- Go to your local library where you can borrow the book for free
- If the book is not available, you can reserve it

Joining the library

It is easy and free to join your local library. Library book loans and borrower details are treated as confidential. Some libraries may ask for proof of your name and address.

How can books help?

There is evidence from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) that self-help books can help people to understand and manage common mental health conditions, including depression and anxiety.

Although books can sometimes work on their own, research has shown that self-help approaches often work best alongside support from a health professional. Some of the books have been recommended by health professionals for use as part of treatment. These can be found in the [Self-help books to support mental health](#) section of the booklist.

About the scheme

Reading Well has been developed by The Reading Agency in partnership with the Society of Chief Librarians. The programme is funded by Arts Council England, Wellcome and the Welsh Government.

What if the book doesn't help?

If you find the book you are reading is not helping, you should contact your GP or a health professional. You can also visit:

NHS England

- nhs.uk
- Helpline: 111

England NHS Talking Therapies

- england.nhs.uk/mental-health/adults/nhs-talking-therapies

Wales

- nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk

Community Advice & Listening Line (CALL)

- callhelpline.org.uk
- Helpline: 0800 132 737

Other Reading Well lists

You can find other Reading Well lists to support people with dementia and their carers, young people's mental health and people living with long term conditions at your local library.

Recommended reading

For an overview of all the books go to:
readingagency.org.uk/reading-well

Therapies and approaches

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

Introducing Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT): A Practical Guide
Elaine Ijion Foreman and Clair Pollard
Icon Books

Mindfulness

Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World
Mark Williams and Danny Penman
Piatkus

Common feelings and experiences

Anger

Overcoming Anger and Irritability, 2nd edition
William Davies
Robinson

Low self-esteem

Overcoming Low Self-Esteem, 2nd edition
Melanie Fennell
Robinson

Bereavement and loss

An Introduction to Coping with Grief, 2nd edition
Sue Morris
Robinson

Social anxiety and shyness

Overcoming Social Anxiety and Shyness, 2nd edition
Gillian Butler
Robinson

Grief Works: Stories of Life, Death and Surviving
Julia Samuel
Penguin Life

Sleep problems

The Sleep Book: How to Sleep Well Every Night
Guy Meadows
Orion

The Essential Guide to Life After Bereavement
Judy Carole Kauffmann and Mary Jordan
Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Stress

Stress Control: A Mind, Body, Life Approach to Boosting Your Well-Being
Jim White
Robinson

Personal stories

Wellbeing

A Mindfulness Guide for the Frazzled
Ruby Wax
Penguin Life

Reasons to Stay Alive
Matt Haig
Canongate

Bereavement and loss

A Manual for Heartache
Cathy Rentzenbrink
Picador

Depression

I Had a Black Dog
Matthew Johnstone
Robinson

The Recovery Letters
James Withey and Olivia Sagan (eds.)
Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Social anxiety

We're All Mad Here: The No-Nonsense Guide to Living with Social Anxiety
Claire Eastham
Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Support for carers

Living with a Black Dog
Matthew Johnstone, Ainsley Johnstone
Robinson

The Boy with the Topknot: A Memoir of Love, Secrets and Lies in Wolverhampton
Sathnam Sanghera
Penguin

Self-help books to support mental health

These books have been recommended to support psychological therapy

Wellbeing

Living Life to the Full
Chris Williams
Five Areas Limited

The CBT Handbook
Pamela Myles and Roz Shafran
Robinson

Mind Over Mood, 2nd edition
Dennis Greenberger and Christine A. Padesky
Guilford Press

Obsessions and compulsions

Break Free from OCD: Overcoming Obsessive Compulsive Disorder with CBT
Fiona Challacombe, Victoria Bream Oldfield and Paul M Salkovskis
Vermilion

Depression

An Introduction to Coping with Depression, 2nd edition
Lee Brosan and Brenda Hogan
Robinson

Manage Your Mood
David Veale and Rob Willson
Robinson

Overcoming Depression, 3rd edition
Paul Gilbert
Robinson

Anxiety and panic

An Introduction to Coping with Anxiety, 2nd edition
Brenda Hogan and Lee Brosan
Robinson

Overcoming Anxiety, 2nd edition
Helen Kennerley
Robinson

Overcoming Health Anxiety
Rob Willson and David Veale
Robinson

Overcoming Worry and Generalised Anxiety Disorder, 2nd edition
Kevin Meares and Mark Freeston
Robinson

Overcoming Panic, 2nd edition
Vijaya Manicavasagar and Derrick Silove
Robinson

The Sheldon Short Guide to Phobias and Panic
Kevin Gournay
Sheldon Press

Other common conditions

Binge eating and bulimia nervosa

Getting Better Bite by Bite: A Survival Kit for Sufferers of Bulimia Nervosa and Binge Eating Disorders
Ulrike Schmidt, Janet Treasure and June Alexander
Routledge

Overcoming Binge Eating, 2nd edition
Christopher G. Fairburn
Guilford Press

Body image and body dysmorphic disorder

Body Image Problems & Body Dysmorphic Disorder: The Definitive Treatment and Recovery Approach
Chloe Catchpole, Lauren Callaghan and Annemarie O'Connor
Trigger Press

Mood swings

Overcoming Mood Swings
Jan Scott
Robinson

Depression and relationships



Defeating Depression: How to Use the People in Your Life to Open the Door to Recovery
Roslyn Law
Robinson

Postnatal depression

The Compassionate Mind Approach to Postnatal Depression: Using Compassion Focused Therapy to Enhance Mood, Confidence and Bonding
Michelle Cree
Robinson

Where to get help

The Samaritans

 [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)
 Helpline 116 123
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Mind

 [mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk)
 Helpline: 0300 123 3393

Mental Health Foundation

 [mentalhealth.org.uk](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

The Royal College of Psychiatrists

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

Being a carer

Carers Trust:

 [carers.org](https://www.carers.org)

Carers UK:

 [carersuk.org](https://www.carersuk.org)
 Helpline: 0808 808 7777

Support for selected conditions and experiences


Anxiety UK

Supporting people affected by anxiety

 [anxietyuk.org.uk](https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)
 Helpline: 03444 775 774

Beat

Supporting people affected by eating disorders

 [beateatingdisorders.org.uk](https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk)
 Helpline: 0808 801 0677

Cruse Bereavement Care

Supporting bereaved people

 [cruse.org.uk](https://www.cruse.org.uk)
 Helpline: 0808 808 1677

OCD Action

Supporting people living with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

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

PANDAS Foundation

Supporting people affected by pre and postnatal depression

 [pandasfoundation.org.uk](https://www.pandasfoundation.org.uk)

Reading Well for mental health is supported by

Anxiety UK, British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies, British Psychological Society, Carers UK, Health Education England, Mental Health First Aid England, Mental Health Foundation, Mind, National Association of Primary Care, NHS England (IAPT), OCD Action, Public Health England, Royal College of General Practitioners, Royal College of Nurses, Royal College of Psychiatrists, Royal Society of Public Health, Self Management UK.

Find out more about individual books or tell us what you think about the book you have read at [readingagency.org.uk/reading-well](https://www.readingagency.org.uk/reading-well)