

External counselling/psychotherapy or other mental health supports

Galway Community Café

Peer-led, Free out-of-hours mental health support, either in-person or phone/video call, via Mr Waffle Café from 6.30-11.30pm, on Thurs-Sun evenings.
www.galwaycommunitycafe.ie/ or phone 087-1085134

Silvercloud

Free, HSE supported online CBT programmes for Anxiety or Depression; requires referral via Student Health Unit GP or your own GP

Turn2me

Safe, confidential online mental health support with both one-to-one counselling & support groups
www.turn2me.ie

Galway Rape Crisis Centre

Free professional & confidential counselling in a caring & safe environment;
phone 1800-355355 (Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm) / 091-564800 (Mon-Fri 9.30am-5pm)
or email helpline@grcc.ie

Pieta Galway

Psychotherapy/counselling for students with self-harm/suicidal thoughts;
www.pieta.ie/contact/pieta-galway/ or phone 0818-111126 or 091-502921

Jigsaw

Free mental health support/counselling for students aged up to 25yrs old;
www.jigsaw.ie/location/galway/ or email galway@jigsaw.ie or phone 091-549252

No. 4 Youth Service

Counselling for students aged up to 25yrs old; donation of €5 per session;
www.no4.ie/counselling.html or phone 091-568483

Let's Get Talking Galway

Not-for-profit, one-to-one counselling service on a 'non-set'/sliding scale fee basis; phone 091-765500 or email galway@letsgettalking.ie

Helplink

In-person or online counselling service; student discount of €30/session;
www.helplink.ie/counselling/galway-counselling-services/ or phone 0818-998880
or email helplinksupport@helplink.ie

Mind and Body Works

low-cost counselling/psychotherapy & CBT; 091-125750 or email: galway@mindandbodyworks.com

ProConsult

www.proconsult.ie/ or phone 091-589581 or email office@proconsult.ie

Eden Programme

Free education and support programme for anyone experiencing suicidal thoughts; visit <https://suicideorsurvive.ie/programmes/eden-programme/>

MANAGE YOUR STRESS

Information Booklet



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

STUDENT HEALTH UNIT



OLLSCOIL NA
GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY
OF GALWAY

Breathing technique

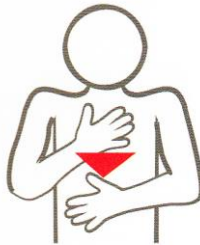
Breathing is essential to life and breathing patterns often reflect our state of mind or emotions. We breathe between 16,000 and 20,000 times a day, so it can be a powerful tool in gaining some control over how we react to situations.

The abdominal breathing technique described on the next page can be very useful and we need to get used to doing it so we can experience the physical and emotional benefits. Have a go and notice the difference in how you deal with potentially stressful situations. It will take about 10 weeks of daily practice before you will be able to feel a difference.

Abdominal breathing

Sit in a comfortable position, both feet firmly on the ground. Close your eyes, place your left hand on your abdomen and your right hand on your chest.

- Breathing normally, notice which hand moves as you breathe.
- Slowly count from one to four as you breathe in through your nose.
- Pause for two counts.
- Then open your mouth and mentally count from one to six as you breathe out through your mouth.



As you breathe in this way, try to shift most of the movement toward your lower hand. Allow your abdomen to push your hand out as you breathe in and pull your abdomen in, letting your hand fall or move as you breathe out. After several minutes of slow rhythmic breathing, let your hands move slowly to your sides as your abdomen continues to move freely in and out with each breath.

Slowly open your eyes and sit quietly.

This technique is excellent for emotional calming. Practice this every day to get the best effect.

Effects of stress

We can sometimes recognise the short-term effects of stress but may not be aware of how harmful the long term effects can be. Apart from the physical symptoms like a pain in the shoulder or tummy trouble, there are also emotional signs like frustration, anxiety, a lack of interest or being overly sensitive.

Our behaviour may change, and we can eat too much, drink too much, be irritable with other people or become withdrawn from society. All of these can be signs of stress.

Short-term effects

- Mind becomes alert -ready to act or react
- Feeling sick or having a 'butterfly' stomach
- Tension in neck and shoulders
- Faster breathing
- Higher blood pressure
- Constipation or diarrhoea
- Increased need to urinate
- Dry mouth
- Sweaty palms
- Dilated pupils
- Faster heart rate

Long-term effects

- Headaches
- Blurred vision
- Hyperventilation, palpitations
- Heart and artery disorders
- Sweating more than normal
- Disturbed sleep patterns
- Neck and back problems
- Rashes, allergies
- Dizziness
- Ulcers
- High blood pressure
- High blood sugar
- Nervous indigestion
- Difficulty swallowing
- Bowel disorders
- Sexual difficulties

Practical Stress Busters

Humour

Serious thinking and behaviour can cause stress, whereas laughter can uncork the pressure and release built-up tension. Laughing also helps us get a better view of the problem and tends to make us feel more light-hearted.

Treats

Whenever you are faced with a difficult challenge, plan to give yourself a treat afterwards. The possibilities are endless – a meal with a friend, a new item of clothing, a book, a relaxing bath or listening to music. Having something to look forward to will help you cope much better.

Comfort zones

Find your own comfort zone where you can find support, strength and inner peace. This can be a person (partner, friend or colleague), a place (beach or park) or routine ritual (a long bath or a particular walk).

Take some time to enjoy this comfort zone.

Worry box.

We waste so much valuable time worrying about things. An effective way to stop this needless fretting is to make a worry box. Set aside a particular time each day for worrying about things. Write down what you are thinking about, then, put it aside until your set worry period comes along. Very often, many things which harassed us yesterday will have sorted themselves out by the time our 'worry period' comes along.

Massage

Massage will ease out aches and pains and will help your body relax and unwind. There are a variety of techniques available, including aromatherapy and reflexology.

Get it out - let go.

We often try to hide what is troubling us, foolishly thinking that somehow, we are controlling it by doing so. The ability to let go is a powerful weapon in the fight against stress. You can talk to a friend, write, paint a picture, scream, cry or even shout it out. How you do it doesn't matter. The important thing is to clarify the problem, get it into perspective and cut it down to size.

Coping

People who cope best with stress seem to have these things in common.

- A sense of being in control of their lives.
- A network of friends or family to provide social support.
- Personality traits like flexibility and hopefulness.

So what can you do?

- **Work off stress** - physical activity helps to produce the body's own 'happy' hormones, or antidepressants, called endorphins. These give us that feel-good factor we experience after exercise.
- **Aim to be active for at least 30 minutes 5 days a week.** Walk briskly, cycle, jog, swim or enjoy any favourite activity for 30 minutes or more. Build up your 30 minutes of activity over two to three shorter sessions, if you prefer.
- **Talk to someone you really trust** - we often underestimate the value of talking to friends.
- **Learn to accept what you cannot change.**
- **Get enough sleep and rest to recharge your batteries.**
- **Take one thing at a time.**
- **Agree with somebody.** Life doesn't have to be a constant battleground.
- **Manage your time better** - develop a system that works for you, not against you. Learn to prioritise, make lists and praise yourself for getting through the various tasks.
- **Plan ahead and learn to say 'no'.**
- **Take up a hobby.** Work or family commitments do not have to take up all your time.
- **Eat a variety of foods.** Eat lots of fruit and vegetables every day and cut down on fat.
- **Learn to relax.** Try going to the cinema, listening to music or reading.
- **Talk to your doctor who may advise you to see a specialist.**



Mental Health Supports & Services for Students

24/7 Acute Risk/Self-Harm/Suicidal Crisis Emergency support contacts

FREE-Text either 'GALWAY' or 'HELLO' to 50808

FREE-Phone SAMARITANS on 116 123 OR
PIETA HOUSE on 1800-247247

Attend the Acute Adult Mental Health service via the A&E Dept in University Hospital Galway or your own local Hospital.

University based or related mental health supports

Student Counselling Service
counselling@universityofgalway.ie or phone 091-492484

Chaplaincy & Pastoral Care
phone 091-492168 or 091-495055 or 091-492164

Student Advisors
www.universityofgalway.ie/startinguniversity/keycontacts/

WRAP®
Free Wellness Recovery Action Planning programme
www.universityofgalway.ie/health_unit/wrap/

Togetherall
Free, 24/7 online anonymous mental health support community;
www.togetherall.com/en-ie/ using your university email account

Galway Recovery College
Provides education, skills and support to maintain and promote positive mental health; www.recoverycollegewest.ie/ or email galwayrecoverycollege@gmail.com or phone 087-3401667

Eating Disorder Supports

Student Counselling Service
Separate Eating Disorder & Body Image support groups available; email counselling@universityofgalway.ie or phone 091-492484

BodyWhys
National eating disorder charity, providing online information, advice and support;
www.bodywhys.ie/ or access either phone or email helplines via 01-2107906 or alex@bodywhys.ie

Zoe Davis – Registered Dietician
Special interest in mental health/eating disorder; one-to-one or online support;
www.zoedavis.ie/ or phone 087-3369123

Alcohol/Drugs Supports

HSE Drugs & Alcohol Helpline
phone 1800-459459 or email helpline@hse.ie

Western Region Drugs and Alcohol Task Force
phone 091-480044 or email info@wrdatf.ie

AA (support for sufferers)
www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie/ or Al-Anon (support for partners/family members/friends) www.al-anonuk.org.uk/

Useful Mental Health Support Apps

'Student Health Matters' – safe, reliable source for all health-related info for students

'Worry Tree' – self-help app for relief of anxiety and CBT thought diary

'distrACT' – designed to support people experiencing thoughts/acts of self-harm

'Calm' – self-care for managing everyday stress, anxiety or sleep disturbance

'Headspace' – meditation skills to reduce stress and improve sleep

HSE online Eating Disorders App – https://ncped.selfcareapp.mobi/

'ADHD in Adults' – produced by HSE's ADHD in Adults National Clinical Programme, in partnership with ADHD Ireland



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