

TO BETTER WELLBEING

The Toolkit

Introduction:

This toolkit has been lovingly created for individuals, teams and managers to help us achieve our mission, which is to "make wellbeing easy, fun and accessible for all"

We wanted to create a toolkit that brings together all of the latest information and case studies on wellbeing and can be accessed in one simple and easy click.

The toolkit includes:

- ☐ 26 wellbeing topics from A-Z in an easy to read format.
- ☐ A featured wellbeing activity on every page that you can try by yourself or with your teams.
- ☐ Links to further learning including [Civil Service Learning \(CSL\) courses](#), [Ted Talks](#) and printable guides.
- ☐ Top tips and case studies written by our team and fellow civil servants.
- ☐ A fun fact based around wellbeing.

Why should we all get involved?

Research suggests that better wellbeing can help improve our overall health and happiness levels. Wellbeing is not a one size fits all approach so find what works for you and to commit spending some time each day on your wellbeing. Just 15 minutes of wellbeing can equate to just 1% of your total day.

*We believe in the power of sharing stories, ideas and best practise so **please share your views and experiences on our Twitter account @AZ2BW or email us at Az2bw@Hotmail.com***

Disclaimer

Last updated July 2019:

The information provided in this toolkit has been designed to provide helpful information to Civil Servants on wellbeing and wellbeing related activities. The information in this toolkit should not be taken to constitute professional or medical advice.

Any action you take upon the information in this toolkit is strictly at your own risk and we, the authors, will not be liable for any losses or damages in connection with the use of this toolkit and the information provided within it. Readers should take full responsibility for their safety and before practising any activities described in this toolkit, please ensure that you consider your level of experience, aptitude, training, and comfort level.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the information at the time of publish, the toolkit is provided as it is and we, the authors, assume no responsibility for errors and omissions in the content and disclaim any liability for the disruption caused by errors or omissions.

The information provided within this toolkit is meant to be generic. To find out more about the wellbeing related activities and signposting available in your department, we recommend that you refer to your departmental intranet, wellbeing champion network (or equivalent), employee assistance programme or contact your HR department.

Getting started...

This toolkit has been designed to offer fun and easy ways to improve your wellbeing; the toolkit can be used by:

- Civil and Public Servants
- Wellbeing and Engagement Champions
- Team Leaders and Line Managers
- HR personnel
- Internal Communications Teams
- Anyone with a personal or professional interest in wellbeing

Below are some suggestions of how you could use the toolkit;

- The activities in this toolkit can be used as part of team workshops or team building days, to encourage healthy conversation around wellbeing
- The activities can be used by individuals or teams to help improve their wellbeing by committing to taking an action every day / week or month
- For HR teams, consider making the toolkit available on your intranet and using the toolkit to supplement your wellbeing strategy and guidance
- For Internal Communications teams, consider using the messages and activities as part of key campaigns such as wellbeing week other awareness weeks
- For teams, consider doing some of the activities together and think about how you can incorporate wellbeing in to your team.

A-Z to Better Wellbeing Topics

A – Appreciation

B – Balance

C – Chairobics

D – Digital Wellbeing

E – Employee Engagement

F – Financial Wellbeing

G – Goals

H – Holidays

I – Initiative/Intelligence

J – Journaling

K – Keep Calm and Bake

L – Learn to Lunch

M – Musculoskeletal Health

N – Nutrition & Diet

O – Outdoor Recreation

P – Positive Thinking

Q – Quick Wins

R – Relaxation through Mindfulness

S – Stress

T – Teambuilding

U – Understanding (personality/team tests)

V – Volunteering

W – Walking

X – eXpand Your Horizons

Y – Yoga

Z – Zzzzzzz (Sleep)

A

Appreciation

“Make it a habit to tell people thank you. To express your appreciation, sincerely and without the expectation of anything in return. Truly appreciate those around you, and you'll soon find many others around you. Truly appreciate life, and you'll find that you have more of it.”

-Ralph Marston-

Useful Links and Resources:

Simply Thanks voucher scheme - a quick way to show appreciation for staff and colleagues for their good work and positive behaviours by awarding them £20 vouchers. Please check your business area's intranet site for guidance on the process you'll need to follow.

Recognition Bonus Scheme (RBS) - make full use of RBS to thank colleagues who, for example, are innovative; whose behaviours reflect the culture to which your department aspire; whose leadership is exemplary; and whose professionalism and application is outstanding. The associated reward is intended as a tangible expression of thanks. Check your intranet for guidance on RBS.

FACT: Companies with strategic recognition reported a mean employee **turnover rate 23% lower** than retention at companies without these programmes.

Featured Activities:

Hug in a mug

Feel as though someone needs some recognition for their hard work? Why don't you leave a mug on their desk full of goodies and a note of appreciation?



Appreciation Tree/Wall

Try putting in place an Appreciation Tree/Wall, where staff members can thank colleagues for work they have done. This will improve staff and team morale, as well as effectiveness, by allowing everyone to feel valued and integral to the team's success.

Once a week, you can read a thank you note in a team's meeting.



Try a different tactic here and there with thanking colleagues/staff to make it truly meaningful. Your colleagues/employees will appreciate it and so will your organisation's bottom line. Have you got your own Appreciation Wall? Tweet us @AZ2BW, we'd like to hear from you.

B

Balance

When one area of our lives takes over or is unattended to, it's common to feel like something is missing. Consider the core elements that make up your life – work, family, friends, health (mental and physical), and recreation. How well balanced are your time and efforts amongst them? Is there anywhere that needs to be scaled back or scaled up?

Featured Activity: Team Bucket List

Encourage your team to create a team bucket list, to identify personal and professional activities and goals they would like to do and achieve in the near future. This will help staff to focus on their personal lives outside of work, whilst also balancing their day jobs and career progression.

As you do this, be sure to let these five questions guide you:

1. Have you told anyone? Write it down. Tell a friend. Accountability and excitement will be the result.
2. Is it realistic? For the sake of satisfaction, your bucket-list should be filled with activities that can be accomplished.
3. Is it within your control? Think of factors that may pose as obstacles to achieving your goal.
4. Is it unique to you and your interests? Ensure you are really interested in this goal & not pursuing it out of influence of others.
5. What's the first step? Make a list of steps in a natural progression toward your goal, and introduce one change at a time.

Here's Chris Russell's Bucket List:

Swim with Whale Sharks
Play poker in Las Vegas
Hire a sports car and drive around Tuscany (inspired by Amazon's 'The Grand Tour')

And here is a photo of Chris visiting Florence at the top of Duomo Cathedral, previously on his bucket list. What's on your bucket list that you have ticked so far? Tweet US @AZ2BW.



Useful Links and Resources:

[Time management: top tips](#)

introduction to prioritizing and managing your time.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 5 mins | **Location:** CSL

[How to turn busy into balance](#)

This Ted talk explores why we become busy and what we can do to feel less overwhelmed.

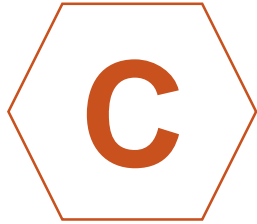
Cost: Free | **Duration:** 1 min | **Location:** YouTube

[Working Parents: Maintaining Work Life Balance](#)

A blog discussing how working parents can balance the demands of work and home life.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** Fit For Work

FACT: A YouGov report found that 21% of 25 to 34 year olds were unhappy with their work-life balance and that 26% of those felt pressure to work outside their regular working hours, preventing them having a suitable work-life balance.



Chairobics

We all have hectic and busy days. So making time in your schedule for exercise can seem like a pretty tall order. However, it's been well proven that a small amount of activity every day can do wonders for your health and work productivity. Chairbics is any system of exercise in which the exerciser remains seated or uses the chair for balance.

Useful links and resources:

Chairbics video:

A video to help you get just a little more active in your working day. It features a simple set of gentle exercises that you can do at your desk. The great thing is that it'll only take 6 minutes to complete. There's even a guided video to help you on your first try.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** At Leisure | **Location:** CSSC

Sitting exercises

Seated exercises that are gentle and easy to follow.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 10 mins | **Location:** NHS

Posture tips for laptop users

Ways you can make your laptop safer and more comfortable to use.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 10 mins | **Location:** NHS

Featured Activity: Do the Funky Chicken (1 min)

Loosen up your shoulders, chest and back by doing this "funky chicken" exercise. It takes only a minute and releases a lot of tension in your upper body. It can be done from either a sitting or standing position.

Place your fingertips on your shoulders, elbows pointing out to the sides. Then Pull your elbows back as far as you can. Push your elbows forward and try to touch them together. Repeat 10 times. See image on the right.



Now, keeping your fingertips on your shoulders, lift your elbows up and then push them down to your sides, as if you're trying to fly. Repeat 10 times. See image on the left.



Special thanks to Lizzie Jelfs, One of HMRC's wellbeing champion Doing the "Funky Chicken"

FACT: While these chairobics won't promise Olympic mile times or six-pack abs, they might just improve strength and burn a few extra calories to boot.

D

Digital Wellbeing

Our overall wellbeing is determined by the physical and emotional experience we have on a daily basis. As technology continues to be such a huge part of our lives, from the way we represent who we are to the interactions we have with others, it too has an impact on our wellbeing. This is often referred to as your 'digital wellbeing' or 'online wellness'. It is essentially about having an awareness of how being online can make us feel and looking after ourselves and others when online.

Useful links and resources:

The Charity for Civil Servants know that talking about mental health can be a difficult conversation. That's why they have focussed on creating interactive self-help tools that Civil Servants can access anytime, anywhere.

- [Help and Advice Webinars](#)
- [Be Mindful Online course](#)
- [Law Express](#)
- [Relate Counselling service](#)

If you can't find what you're looking for, you can use their chat bot, affectionately known as [DogBot](#), to guide you through our resources. DogBot can also deliver Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and mindfulness techniques.

Featured Activity: Detox from social media

- **Put your phone away:** Simply put your phone in another room for few hours, i.e. charge it in the kitchen.
- **Don't get on social media until noon:** If it is your day off, use your extra time to do good things for your wellbeing. Talk a walk, read a book or try a new hobby.
- **Or don't get on social media for the entire day!** Taking a break is always a good idea. Come back refreshed and renewed. If you find something fun to do take some photos to post later or Tweet Us @AZ2BW and share your Social Media Detox experience.

Some of the benefits of Detox from Social Media

- **Improve your overall mood.** If you've been feeling highly anxious, stressed out or depressed, this is a good time to take a social media detox.
- **Reconnect with the real world.** Simply go out in public or make new friends or take yourself to your favourite park or restaurant if you prefer to be alone.
- **You will conquer FOMO.** Fear of missing out (also known as FOMO) commonly affects all of us. The likelihood is that if a close friend or family member has important news, they'll contact you directly.

FACT: The average person has five social media accounts and spends around 1 hour and 40 minutes browsing these networks every day

E

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement, in the Civil Service, is defined as:

"A workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to their organisation's goals and values, motivated to contribute to organisational success and able at the same time to enhance their own sense of wellbeing."

Featured Activity: Get to know your team

Try these fun and easy questions at team meetings or away days: Where's your favourite place in the world? What was your first job? Who has influenced you most when it comes to how you approach your work? What's the best advice you were ever given? What are you passionate about? What's your go-to productivity trick? For more ideas check out these [70 Get-to-Know-You Questions](#)

Or try a Self Assessment

Everyone has a stake in workplace engagement. No matter your position in the organisation ask yourselves these 5 questions to see if you are playing your role in the process:

- ☐ Did I do my best to set clear goals today?
- ☐ Did I do my best to finding meaning in my work today?
- ☐ Did I do my best to be happy today?
- ☐ Did I do my best to build positive relationships today?
- ☐ Did I do my best to be fully engaged today?

If you answered YES to all 5, share good practices.

If you answered NO, check out some ideas we have listed in this page.



Fun ways to contribute to staff engagement:

Encourage Friendships: According to a study, people with a 'best friend' at work are up to 7 times more engaged than those who aren't.

Promote wellness: Top tip to implement this idea is to offer healthy food or encourage your team to have a day to share healthy food.

Respect your employees: At the core of employee engagement is respect. All employees really want is to feel like they matter and that they are treated like adults.

Useful Links and Resources:

[Employee Engagement](#) - This e-learning explains the benefits you can gain from building engagement within your team. You'll understand what engagement is and how to gauge it, as well as how to recognise the signs of disengagement.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 45 mins | **Location:** CSL

[Engaging people through story telling](#) - A 3 hour workshop will provide you with live opportunities to finesse your storytelling approach, with a particular focus on stories around transformation and change.

Cost: £229 or per group | **Duration:** 3 hours | **Location:** CSL engagement and wellbeing

Find out more about the link between in this [engaging for success](#) report.

FACT: UK productivity was 16% lower than the rest of G7 according to ONS (April 2018).

F

Financial Wellbeing

Financial wellbeing is about being able to make informed choices about your finances in the present and in the future. Various factors can have an effect on our financial wellbeing; from unplanned expenditures such as a relationship breakdown or ill health to planning ahead for retirement, looking after our financial wellbeing is important. Poor financial wellbeing can have an effect on workplace performance, and absenteeism. Employers can help by breaking down the stigma of talking about finances and signposting employees to free information to help them.

Featured Activities: Money saving tips from Team Chaffinch

Times are tight for a lot of us at the moment but these simple savings tips could help.

Use price comparison websites: These website let you compare hundreds of financial products and ensure you choose the best one for your circumstances.

Bring lunch to work: With a good cool bag, you could be having delicious filling and cost-effective lunches in no time. You can even use leftovers.

Growing your own fruit and vegetables, indoors or out: This is an easy and rewarding project that can save you money you might otherwise spend on expensive Supermarket produce.



Useful Links and Resources

Employee assistance programme (EAP) - Offers support on debt management, counselling support which can help if you find yourself in financial difficulty. Check your intranet site, you should find links to Occupational Health and to the website run by your Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provider.

[NHS 20 tips to eat well for less](#)

Eat a healthy diet and save money

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 45 mins | **Location:** CSL

[Charity for Civil Servants](#), [Money Advice Service](#), [FinCap](#) and [Stepchange](#)

Provide free to access guides and information about financial wellbeing and support available as well as online tools.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** Varies | **Location:** Multiple

[MIND](#), [Rethink](#) and [NHS Moodzone](#)

Money and mental health can be linked, MIND along with other mental health charities can provide support.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** Varies | **Location:** Multiple

Don't forget that most employers have additional benefits that could help you manage your money better. These can include season tickets loans, advance of salary, rental deposit or cycle to work schemes, discounted services on food, fashion and days out and many more. These are usually identified within your employers EVP document.

FACT: Each year, financial stress costs the UK economy £121 billion and 18 million working hours in time off work.

G

Goals

A goal is an idea of the future or desired result that a person, team or organisation envisages, plans and commits to achieve. Goals can be team or employer specific, they can be career based, personal or activity/sporting based. Whatever your goal or goals, planning will be a key part of achieving them.

Featured Activity: 3 Fun Ways to Setting Goals

1. You've just won the lottery!

You've just won £50 million. Imagine that you've just checked your lottery ticket and you have won. Once over the initial shock, how will you change your life from today? You've got all the money you need to make things happen in your life, so write down how you would change your life.

2. Is it a bird, is it a plane, no it's....you!

Not motivated by money, what about having superpowers instead? You could do just about anything you wanted and nobody would be able to stop you. How will you spend your days? What would you do if no one knew you had superpowers, but there was nothing to stop you from doing anything you wanted. Write down those goals.

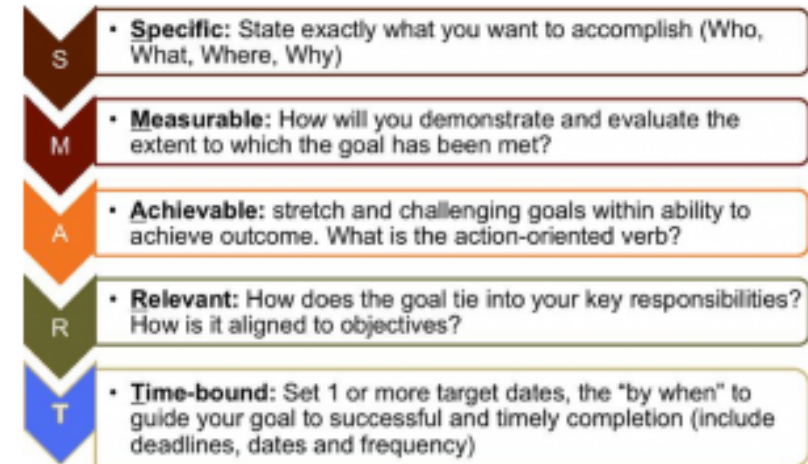
3. It's your retirement party already?

The years just flew by. Imagine your retirement party was this coming weekend – make a list of all the things you regret not doing so far in your life & rewrite them as a positive.

4. What are your wellbeing goals for the next 12 months?

Career Goals:

S.M.A.R.T is used to formulate your goal or objective you that its properly constructed.



Useful Links and Resources:

#Goals

Ted Talks playlist of counterintuitive advice that will help you set and achieve your goals for the short-term, long-term and those moments in between.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** Approx. 3 to 15 mins | **Location:** Ted Talks

How to accomplish a Goal

How to accomplish a Goal. Links to Wiki How website.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** Various | **Location:** CSL / Wiki How

FACT: One of the greatest ever goals in the Premier League was scored by Dennis Bergkamp against Newcastle United in 2002..... Watch it [here](#)

H

Holidays

Holidays and leave are a really important part of your wellbeing and work/life balance, not only giving you quality time away from work but also in terms of giving you things/places/experiences to look forward too.

Featured Activity: Create a Holiday board for your work

Start with a map, you could use a world one if you want too.

Build it up over time with little extracts from peoples holidays, date they went, location, a few pictures perhaps and a highlight or two from their holiday. In this example – The Eiffel Tower and a Trip to Disneyland Paris.



Cost Effective Ideas:

- Take a day trip to the local nature reserve.
- Visit your local museums.
- Look up a local walking trail and go for a walk in the great outdoors!
- Take a bus to a local town & wonder around.
- Visit a local market.
- Look online at price comparison sites before booking a holiday.

Benefits of time away from work:

- Decrease the risk of Heart disease and depression
- Improved productivity
- Feel healthier, more energetic and less tense
- Happier & more creative
- Makes for happier family relationships
- More satisfied with life
- Your good mood might be contagious
- Holidays are an entitlement – make sure you take what is yours!

Useful Links and Resources:

[TripAdvisor](#)

An essential part of any holiday planning activity.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** TripAdvisor

[Civil Service Sports Council](#)

Membership required, but lots of ideas / savings and free tickets to Historic Royal Palaces! (And more!)

Cost: £4.25p/m | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** CSSC

[FCO - Travel Advice](#)

It's always worth researching before you start to look at your next break.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** Gov.uk

FACT: In 2016 the UK annual holiday market was worth £30.1bn.

Half of that was spent on domestic holidays, and a further £8.8bn was by online holiday packages!

I

Initiative / Intelligence

Humans by their very nature are intelligent, the dictionary definition is the ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills. Initiative is the power of opportunity to act or take charge before others do. Both can help your wellbeing in the workplace and at home.

Featured Activities:

- 1. Learn to code** - Coding is not just for computer geeks. Coding creates new synapses in your brain by deconstructing and analyzing problems. It also teaches you how to learn.
“Everyone should learn how to program a computer ... because it teaches you how to think,” Steve Jobs once said.
- 2. Sketch – Not the Mona Lisa!** Don’t worry if you are terrible at drawing, sketching helps you learn how to free-hand by helping you notice important angles and shapes, patterns and shadowing. It makes your brain more alert and helps you absorb more detail.
- 3. Try an escape room** – These are an immersive experience. You are locked in a room and have to solve puzzles and clues to get out. These escape rooms teach you how to think on your feet.
- 4. Build something** – Not expecting you to build Rome! Take a hands-on class on carpentry or any DIY building class that you find interesting. Make sure you work with your hands in the class.

5. Play video games - Video games offer stimuli that can seldom be found in real life. Choose a strategy or role-playing game, which give you tasks with limited resources and the higher the level, the more difficult the task, so there is always room to grow.

6. Take a hike - Being in nature puts things into perspective, and can help you tap into your creativity.

7. Invent something - What would make your life easier? Maybe it’s a simple device you could use at home or it’s organizing your apartment in a way that you will get the most of the space.

This list is not exhaustive – any activity which you have to learn, think about, analyse with help you....

Useful Links and Resources:

[Emotional Intelligence](#) - This learning shows you how you can harness your emotional intelligence to increase your capability for leadership and relationship building.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 60 mins | **Location:** CSL

[Matrix Working](#) - This course covers how our organisational design is changing, how matrix working can be applied and how this may affect you.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 30 mins | **Location:** CSL

FACT: Whilst genetics play a large role in determining intelligence – other factors such as diet, education, job type, and even leisure activities can impact how intelligence changes as you age.

J

Journaling

If you struggle with stress, depression, or anxiety, keeping a journal can help you gain control of your emotions and improve your mental health.



Useful Links and Resources:

[If you want to keep a journal but don't know how](#)

A blog by Darius Foroux, who gives advice on how to keep a journal.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** Medium.com

[How to keep a journal](#)

Robin Sharma gives you ideas about what to write in your journal as well as giving examples from his own.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 8 mins | **Location:** YouTube

[Want To Easily Boost Productivity By 23%? Keep a Journal](#)

Suggestions on how you can keep a productive work journal.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 12 mins | **Location:** YouTube

FACT: Setting time aside to write, whether morning or evening, is an act of discipline. And discipline begets discipline. Like a muscle, the more you exercise it, the stronger it becomes.

Why Keep a Journal?

- **It accelerates Your Ability To Manifest Your Goals:** As you read and re-write your goals daily, they'll become forged into your subconscious mind. Eventually, your dreams and vision will consume your inner world and quickly become your physical reality.
- **Journaling Clears Your Emotions:** When you are in an intensely emotional mood, journaling can help you more fully experience and understand those emotions.

Featured Activity: Create a Weekly Mood Journal

The Mood Journal is designed to help you trace and monitor your feelings -- and if you stick to it and use it correctly, you can begin to get around your own defences.

Make a log with six categories, perhaps using the Excel program on your computer (or a ruler and paper if you don't have access to a computer). In that log, make a calendar with room for:

1. The date and time (usually a date for every day of the month, divided into hourly categories).
2. Your mood change.
3. Externals (who was there, what was going on, where the mood change took place, and other unusual circumstances).
4. Internal thoughts (what your thoughts, fantasies, and memories were at the time).
5. What you think a well-adjusted person would feel in the same circumstances.
6. Mood/feeling agreement (assign a rating of 1-10, describing how well your mood corresponded to feelings you picture a well-adjusted person having under the circumstances).

K

Keep Calm & Bake!

It can be hard to switch off once you get home, need to keep your mind focused elsewhere? Keep calm and bake!

Featured Activity: Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients:

125g butter, softened
100g light brown soft sugar
125g caster sugar
1 egg, lightly beaten
1 tsp vanilla extract
225g self-raising flour
½ tsp salt
200g choc chips(white, milk or dark)



Instructions:

1. Start by preheating the oven to 180°C (or gas mark 4).
2. Cream butter then add the sugars, once creamed, combine in the egg and vanilla.
3. Sift in the flour and salt, then the chocolate chips.
4. Roll into walnut size balls.
5. Place on ungreased baking paper. If you want your cookies soft, cook them for 8 minutes, till the cookies are just setting - the cookies will be really doughy and delicious! Otherwise cook for 10 minutes until they are crunchy!
6. Take the cookies out of the oven and leave to harden for 10 minutes before transferring into your cookie jar.

Why baking for other people feels so GOOD!

▪ Baking as a form of self expression.

Baking allows people to express themselves creatively. It is also a form of communicating one's feelings when words aren't enough.

▪ Baking as a form of mindfulness.

Baking can help us to feel in command of our own thoughts and emotions because it forces us to slow down and focus on one task.

Don't fancy something sweet? Try crispy toad in the hole recipe with vegetarian sausages!

(Serves 2-4)

Ingredients:

- 6 vegetarian sausages (I use caldron sausages but Quorn is fine!)
- 75g Plain Flour
- 1 egg
- 75ml Soya Milk (Semi-skimmed milk is fine as well!)
- 55ml Water
- 40g Vegetable Oil , Salt, Pepper and Rosemary

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (or gas mark 4).
2. Add the oil to the baking dish and put in oven once preheated for 5 minutes.
3. Add your sausages and cook for 10 minutes.
4. Whilst your sausages are cooking, make your batter. Start by sifting flour into a bowl. Once this is done, make a well in the centre of your flour and add your egg.
5. Using an a whisk beat your egg. During this process, gradually incorporate the milk and water.
6. Mix in your salt, pepper and rosemary to taste. Once the sausages are ready – pour your batter in and put in the oven for 30 – 35 minutes until golden brown.

L

Learn to Lunch

In an ideal world the busy worker would use their break to get away from work and refresh their mind. By having a break you will be more productive and feel reinvigorated. Here's some top tips to help you learn to lunch.

Featured Activity: Kingfisher's Learn to Lunch (L2L)



The duration of your break is dependent on your department's specific policy - and it's your responsibility to know it! Just follow the 3 steps below:

1

FIND OUT

Consult the employee handbook, usually found on the department's intranet. Or ask your line manager.

2

MAKE TIME

Allocate time in your schedule for an uninterrupted break, no matter how busy, and stick to it!

3

LEARN TO LUNCH!

Now that you have some me time, find out just how fun and varied your break can be!

Kingfisher's L2L is a product of CS Local East South East London Junior Leaders Academy. Their mission is to help you take your full Civil Service Entitlement of a 30 Minute Lunch Break every day.

Join the Kingfishers in revolutionising the way Civil Servants take their lunch breaks and start the process of taking ownership of our Health and Wellbeing. Check out their [L2L toolkit](#) with range of ideas from Fit lunches to Exciting recipes and even their own version of Come Lunch with me!

Top 3 lunch break ideas:

Make phone calls: One of the most productive things you can do at lunch is to make phone calls. So go ahead, call your love ones, call an old friend, or return that phone call you've been dreading.

Run errands: If you need to pay bills, find a plumber, or get a quick hair cut, your lunch break is a great time to get that done. Plus, you free up some precious after work hours.

Rest: We all need a break at work sometimes, and lunch time is the perfect time to relax. Plus, taking some time to clear your mind can make you more productive after lunch.

Useful Links and Resources:

Rest Breaks at Work

An overview of workers rest entitlement and risks to health and safety.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** Gov.uk

All it takes is 10 Minutes

A mindfulness expert looks at the power of doing absolutely nothing for 10 minutes.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 9 minutes | **Location:** Ted Talks

Short talks to watch during your coffee break

Got just enough time for a coffee, but in need of a mental pick-me-up? These short, yet riveting talks may just do the trick.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** Approx. 3 to 6 mins | **Location:** Ted Talks

M

Musculoskeletal Health

One of the most important ways to maintain our wellbeing is to protect and support our body, including our spine. The musculoskeletal system encompasses all of the physical structures necessary for movement, including the bones, joints, muscles, ligaments and tendons. Regular exercise, in combination with a healthy lifestyle, is the best way to keep all parts of the musculoskeletal system strong and healthy.

Featured Activity: [NHS Strength and Flex Plan](#)

The 5-week plan consists of a series of equipment-free exercises designed for beginners to improve your strength and flexibility.

Strength and Flex features:

Equipment-free, Easy to follow, Full body workout, [How-to video clips](#) and ready to use anywhere, anytime

Starting with Strength and Flex Week 1, your goal is to work your way up to Week 5 in five weeks. To achieve this, you need to do each podcast at least three times in a week. By Week 5, you'll be doing back, arm and leg stretches along with press-ups and squats with ease. You'll be feeling stronger, more flexible and full of energy to go about your daily life.

If you have any health concerns before beginning the Strength and Flex programme, see your GP and discuss it with them before you start.

Useful Links and Resources:

[What activities strengthen muscles?](#)

Ways to strengthen muscle at home or in the gym.

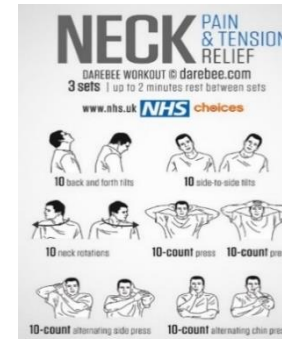
Cost: Free | **Duration:** Approx. 5 mins | **Location:** NHS

[How to sit correctly?](#)

If your work involves sitting a lot and using a computer, here are some tips to help you sit correctly.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** Approx. 5 mins | **Location:** NHS

Here are some exercises that NHS recommends:



Further ways to take care of your back from Team Chaffinch member Louella:

- Take regular breaks, if you feel you have been sitting for too long, set a timer or email alert and spend a few minutes stretching or doing some simple shoulder rolls
- If you can, go for a walk at lunchtime to keep the circulation going
- If you find meeting room chairs uncomfortable, try standing
- If you have been diagnosed with a back related condition you may be eligible for a workplace assessment. Contact your HR department to find out more.

N

Nutrition and Diet

Healthy eating plays a pivotal role on our physical, mental wellbeing and performance at work. A well balanced diet has great benefits, it reduces the risk of chronic health conditions such as heart disease, stroke and cancer, increases energy, improves mood and wellbeing and sleep quality. Not only can eating well make you look and feel better, it can also save you money on future health costs.

Featured Activities:

Want to make small and healthy changes to your diet? Try the following fun challenges at work with your colleagues:

- **Smoothie making challenge.** Bring some colleagues together at lunchtime with a handful of fruits and see who make the yummiest smoothie.
- **Hydration challenge.** On average women should be drinking about 1.6 litres and men about 2 litres of fluid every day to avoid dehydration. Are you meeting this target? Check it out, encourage your colleagues too. This will keep you healthy, prevent fatigue, headache and loss of concentration.
- **The “Eatwell” guide.** Maintain a healthy body weight through the consumption of a balanced diet. Try it out at work, encourage healthy eating by promoting the “Eatwell” guide in your workplaces.

Useful Links and Resources:

Nutrition and Wellbeing

Demystify the complex and conflicting messages we hear about nutrition, health and lifestyle today, with this free online course.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** Future Learn

Start the NHS weight loss plan

Download the NHS weight loss guide –a free 12-week diet and exercise plan

Cost: Free | **Duration:** At leisure | **Location:** N/A

How are you quiz

A free health quiz with personalised advice and tips for healthy living.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** Approx. 10 mins | **Location:** NHS



The **Eatwell Guide** is a policy tool used to define government recommendations on eating healthily and achieving a balanced diet. For more info click [here](#).

FACT: A study in the journal of consumer research found that diners who used larger forks ate less compared to those who used smaller forks.

O

Outdoor Recreation

Recreation is an activity of leisure. Recreational activities are often done for enjoyment, amusement, or pleasure and are considered to be "fun". Outdoor recreation is beneficial for your health. Being out and enjoying the natural world provides physical as well as mental health benefits.

Useful Links and Resources:

Outdoors for All: fair access to a good quality natural environment

Find out what Natural England is doing to improve enjoyment and benefit of the outdoors to a diverse range of visitors.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** Approx. 10 mins | **Location:** Gov.uk

CSSC Sports & Leisure

Promotes fulfilling lifestyles by providing sport and leisure opportunities to over 140,000 members.

Cost: £4.25pm | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** CSSC

Sport and Recreation Alliance

Work with Government, policy makers and the media to help grassroots sport and recreation grow and thrive.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** Sports + Recreation

FACT: One meta-analysis of 10 studies found that physical activity outdoors for as little as five minutes leads to measurable improvements in mood and self-esteem

How Team Chaffinch enjoy the outdoors:

Enjoying outdoor recreation, isn't an indulgence; it provides benefits for your mind, body and spirit. We are the authors of AZ2BW and this is how we enjoy the outdoors. Tweet us @AZ2BW we'd love to hear yours!



Other ideas for outdoor fun:

1. Have a picnic with friends or family in your garden or local park.
2. Tap into your senses. Take turns in being quiet and share what you feel around you!
3. This is a great activity to do with family. Play tourist in your own town!
4. Organise an inclusive team sports day.

P

Positive Thinking

Positive thinking... it can sound simple, but often, not easy. Our life is made of habits and even Buddha once said: "We are what we think". This is why it is important to choose to think positively and adopt an optimistic attitude.

Positive thinking can help your wellbeing by giving you more confidence and it can also help improve your mood.

Useful Links and Resources:

[Creating a mind-set for success](#)

This 4-hour session introduces not only the theory, but practical ways to create a mindset that is energised and excited by doing things better, more efficiently and with greater impact.

Cost: £1,350 (Group, £90pp) | **Duration:** 4 hours | **Location:** CSL

[The new era of positive psychology](#)

This Ted Talks video by Martin Seligman talks about positive psychology.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 24 mins | **Location:** Ted Talks

[The Power of Positive Thinking](#)

Helen Peterson looks at how we can meet hurdles head on and come out stronger than ever.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 6 mins | **Location:** YouTube

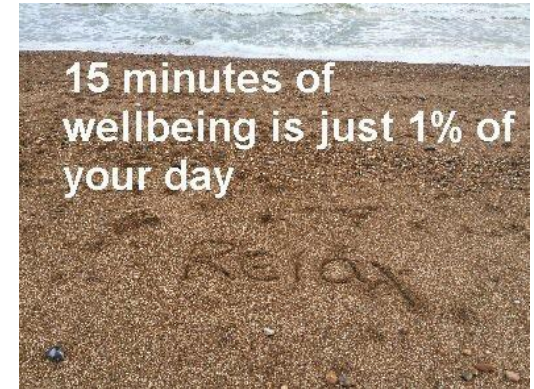
FACT: You're 50% more likely to remember something if you speak it out loud instead of simply reading it over and over.

Featured Activities: Positive Reflections

Sprinkle some positivity on your day with the below activities:

Focus on the good in your day...

- What went well?
- What made you smile?
- What are the highlights?
- What are you most proud of?
- What have you learnt?
- What or who made you smile?
- What wisdom will you carry into tomorrow?
- What are you thankful for?



3 good things...

Spend a few minutes reflecting on your achievements. Write down 3 things you have achieved;

- This week
- This month
- This year

You will be surprised at how many amazing things you have accomplished.

Team positivity

- Celebrate your teams' successes. Discuss what you have done well as a team. You could even create a team success tree to put on the wall
- Treat challenges as a learning process and ask yourself "what can we learn from this as a team"

Q

Quick Wins

One of the barriers we often face when trying to focus on our wellbeing is time. Trying to fit in activities around our work, family or studying can be difficult and that's where quick wins can be useful. A quick win is an improvement that is easy to implement and quick to deliver.

Useful Links and Resources:

Tips for influencing others

A useful 2 page guide featuring useful tips.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** Approx. 5 mins | **Location:** CSL

Wheel of life activity

A useful 5 page guide on how to create your own wheel of life.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** Approx. 30 mins | **Location:** CSL

Reflective learning

A useful 6 page guide on Action Learning Sets (ALS).

Cost: Free | **Duration:** Approx. 20 mins | **Location:** CSL

Got a meeting? Take a walk

In this Ted Talk video Nilofer Merchant suggests a small idea that just might have a big impact on your life and health.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 4 mins | **Location:** Ted Talks

FACT: We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses.” – Abraham Lincoln

Featured Activity: quick wins you can try at work and at home

At Work:

- Declutter your workspace. A messy desk can be distracting, clear your desk regularly. File papers. Create your own pen holder out of recycled jam jars.
- Try the Pomodoro technique. This involves working for 25 minutes, then giving yourself a five-minute break which you could use for one of the wellbeing tasks from this toolkit.
- Prioritise using Power hours. For one hour (preferably in the morning) focus on a particular task. The theory is that you start with the most important task first so that you do not have to worry about it throughout the day. Having a dedicated hour often helps you focus and avoid distractions.
- Take a break. If you have been at your computer for too long, and your eyes feel dry and tired, take a short break, get some water, have a stretch or try the breathing activity on the next page...

At Home:

Relax and recharge in a way that feels right for you;

- Chill-out with a movie, book, magazine, podcast, TedTalk or box set
- Jazz up housework by listening to the radio or a podcast in the background
- Keep calm and bake by trying a new recipe or make a meal using a new ingredient



R

Relaxation through Mindfulness

Mind.... Your Own Business:

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what is going on around us.

We're a cross government team from the Civil Service Local Academy who are here to raise awareness of and promote the benefits of mindfulness to support the civil service's vision in making it a great place to work.

Mindfulness is known to reduce stress, anxiety depression, improve productivity and increase your self-esteem and confidence.

Start your mindfulness journey with our '[Mind Bites](#)' which provides you with simple ways to practice mindfulness using everyday activities.

Your mind is an instrument...learn to master it with mindfulness!

Follow us on Twitter [@CS_MYOB](#) - For Mind Bites

Useful Links and Resources:

[Be Mindful](#)

Try out a mindfulness course to get you started.

Cost: £30 | Duration: N/A | Location: Be Mindful Online

[Everyday Mindfulness](#)

Cost: Free | Duration: N/A | Location: Everyday Mindfulness

Featured activity: Use your five senses to relax!

You only need five mindful minutes to practice this simple exercise to help you calm your body and mind. You can practise this in a quiet room, when you are sat in the office, when you are outdoors or commuting.

Look around you and pay attention to five things that you can see. For example a shadow, crack in the wall or the lightning in a room.

Bring your awareness to four things that you can feel, like the texture of your clothes against your skin or the pressure of your feet on the floor.

Take a moment to listen and notice three things that you can hear. This can be a bird chirping or the sound of people or traffic in the background.

Pay attention to two things that you can smell. For example the smell of coffee, fresh air or the smell of food cooking.

Take a sip of a drink, eat a snack or take in the taste of fresh air in your mouth.





Stress

Stress is a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances. It can affect us at any time in any situation. Stress is not a sign of weakness but a physical response to certain triggers or situations.

NHS guide on how to tackle stress:

NHS guide on How to Tackle Stress

You could:

- try these [10 simple stress busters](#)
- use these easy [time-management techniques](#)
- try [mindfulness](#) – studies have found mindfulness can help reduce stress and improve your mood
- use [calming breathing exercises](#)
- download some [relaxation and mindfulness apps](#) on to your phone
- listen to an [anxiety control audio guide](#)

Useful Links and Resources:

[Wellbeing resilience and stress](#)

E-learning of techniques to help you reduce and deal with stress, and increase your wellbeing.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 1 hr | **Location:** CSL

[Mental Health awareness](#)

E-learning which increases your understanding of the issues faced by people living with mental ill health.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 1 Day | **Location:** CSL

Featured Activity: Aaaand... Relax

Try doing these 3 simple things where you are right now:

1. Think about your breathing. Try breathing in for 5 seconds through your nose then breathing out for 5 seconds through your mouth. Repeat this for as long as you want (but ideally at least a minute).
2. Think about your body, start by thinking about your feet, how they are placed on the floor – (adjust them if necessary to be more comfortable). Then work your way up your body thinking about your shins, thighs, stomach, chest, arms, neck and finally head. You may want to keep your eyes closed as you do this to help you concentrate.
3. Now stand up (if you aren't already) and take a quick walk around – this could be in your office or wherever you are at the moment. You'll get your blood flowing a bit and clear your head too!

Repeat these steps as often as you choose! You don't need to feel guilty about making time to do this, it's important all of us are able to perform at our best and we can't do that if we don't look after ourselves.

If you're feeling like things are just getting too much for you at the moment then you can phone **The Charity for Civil Servants** on **0800 056 2424**.



FACT: Research has shown that dark chocolate reduces stress hormones such as cortisol and other fight-flight hormones. Additionally, cocoa is rich in antioxidants called flavonoids.

T

Team Building

The term "team building" has become a buzzword in recent years, and has many connotations. In terms of organisational development, team-building exercises are important not for the immediate experience of the activities performed by the team, but also for the group skills, communication and bonding that result. It can also be adventurous and enjoyable if you do it with a little pizzazz.

Useful Links and Resources:

Team working

E-learning covering different types of team, different team structures and the stages of team development.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 30 mins | **Location:** CSL

Resolving Team Tension

Workshop introducing you to the tools and techniques for maintaining harmony and encouraging healthy intellectual tension.

Cost: £242pp or group booking | **Duration:** 3 hrs | **Location:** CSL

The [Team Building Directory](#) have loads of fun, free activities to get you inspired and help you to build confidence and closeness in your teams. Take a browse before downloading a PDF of your favourites.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** Innovative Team Building

[Build a tower, build a team](#); Tom Wujec presents some surprisingly deep research into a simple team building activity.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 7 mins | **Location:** Ted Talks

Featured Activity: People Bingo

Get to know your team better at meetings and away days with People bingo...

Equipment: Piece of paper for each participant with a grid (can be adjusted to group size). Each box should contain one statement. An example you can print out and use is provided below (although you can create your own list of statements and personalise as you wish)

- Using conversation, the Bingo players move around the area trying to be the first to get their Bingo card filled up with names (you can't use anyone twice!).
- After approximately 5 minutes each participant should have tried to get as many boxes signed as possible.
- Whoever gets all the boxes signed yells Bingo and wins a prize (or glory).

PEOPLE BINGO

Has brown eyes	Has run a marathon	Someone not on Facebook	Goes swimming once a week
Has read all The Harry Potter Books	Speaks at least 3 languages	Plays a musical instrument	Has 2 or more pets
Has been to more than 5 foreign countries	Does volunteer work	Has 3 or more siblings	Birthday is in June
Loves to ski	Likes to get up early	Drives a blue car	Loves camping

Download the People Bingo Template [here](#)

FACT: A certain amount of "creative abrasion" allows a team to identify alternative approaches.

U

Understanding

Understanding that everyone is different can be one of the first steps to working together more effectively as a team.

Different people approach things in different ways and an understanding of that can help you to tailor your own behaviour to maximise results, and vice versa.

Useful Links and Resources:

Emotional intelligence

This topic demonstrates how you can harness your emotional intelligence to increase your capability for leadership and relationship building.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 1 hr | **Location:** CSL

Conducting high-quality conversations (online)

This online topic takes you through real-life conversations and introduces you to techniques to deal with different situations.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 75 mins | **Location:** CSL

Skills you need

A wealth of information to help you improve your empathy or understanding of other people.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** Skills You Need

The Harvard Business Review have published this interesting [article](#) about recognising your own emotions in order to deal with them more effectively. It's not just about understanding others – you are the most important person you need to understand!

Featured Activity: Team Personality Test

Would you say you were more of a Lion or an Owl?

Take the team personality test to see what types of people make up your team.



Everyone is different and this is not a labelling exercise, Instead, it helps you to see what roles people naturally lean towards. This can help you to plan work but also get the best out of your team by understanding more about how they think and feel.

If your team has an abundance of one particular type of person, you may want to think about setting out situations where people switch roles to something else they're comfortable doing - all so that you have a more well-rounded team.

Step 1: Complete the [Team Personality Test](#)

Step 2: Use the results to find out which personality type you most relate to in our [Personality Profile](#)

FACT: Emotional Intelligence is the measure of an individual's abilities to recognise and manage their emotions, and the emotions of other people, both individually and in groups.

V

Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to do something for others and research suggests that volunteering benefits people of all ages by increasing feelings of self-esteem, respect, motivation and wellbeing.

For volunteering opportunities in your department, check your intranet or find out whether your department has a volunteering lead.

Useful Links and Resources:

Get inspired by the '[Do It](#)' database of volunteering opportunities, a really great place to start thinking about volunteering for you or for your team.

Take a look at the CS Local [blog page](#) focused on volunteering.

You can find Information about volunteering on [GOV.UK](#)

Make a difference in your workplace by volunteering to take on an additional voluntary role, such as; becoming a first aider, wellbeing or engagement champion, fire marshal, coach or mentor.

You can also read some Civil Service [blogs](#) about volunteering for some inspiration.

Finally, check out [One Team Gov](#), a global community, working together to radically reform the public sector through practical action.

What, Where & Why VOLUNTEER?

**Alexandra from MOD
shares her experience**

Restless Earth is a workshop run by the British Cartographic Society (BCS). This workshop is delivered by volunteers from a variety of backgrounds, to students aged 14-16. Restless Earth supports their learning of Tectonics, focusing on the Japanese tsunami in 2011.

The students are tasked with a decision making exercise to efficiently supply aid to the country and present their results on two maps.



© Cartography, British Cartographic Society, 2018

I have led the workshop three times in very different schools; St Paul's Girls School, Dartford Grammar School and the Swedish School in Richmond. I have found the experience very rewarding; it has built on my presentation skills and ability to think quickly and collaborate closely with the staff in the school to ensure the day runs as smoothly as possible. Prior knowledge of the tsunami is not required for supporting volunteers, the workshop is easy to understand and become immersed in to support the students. As you develop confidence and experience you can request to lead workshops.

It's a fantastic opportunity to support the learning of students, as well as learn something new. Engaging students can be a challenging, but valuable skill to acquire and apply to a variety of workplace contexts. To learn more about this volunteering opportunity visit their [website](#).

W

Walking

Featured Article: The Insolvency Service Walking Group

Lisa Seeley, Health and Safety Manager for the Insolvency Service shares how they are improving wellbeing in their organisation by creating a walking group.

We all know that sitting at our desks for 8 hours a day is not good for our bodies. Humans were not built to sit around and it is good for us to have regular short breaks. This can include; standing up or moving around, to prevent our muscles stiffening or by taking action when we feel the need to have a good stretch. While moaning about feeling really stiff one day to a colleague I spontaneously invited her to accompany me on a walk around St James's Park one lunch time. We put our trainers on and had a good brisk walk around the park, which was glorious (even in the cold winter time). On our return with the blood pumping around our bodies we were feeling so good that we decided that we would make it a regular thing. Other colleagues started noticing us putting on our trainers and we picked up on their interest so we invited more and more people.

The walking group was set up in 2018 and our route often changes (so we don't become bored) but we always include St. James's Park. We find that walking is fantastic for our mental health and we feel fully refreshed when we get back to the office - ready to take on the rest of the day.



Best songs to walk to:

(different lengths and tempos, classic and current songs to get you moving and make your **walks** more fun!)

- "Walking on Sunshine" Katrina and The Waves
- "Walk on by" Dionne Warwick
- "Walk on the Wild Side" Lou Reed
- "These boots are made for Walking" Nancy Sinatra
- "Walk of Life" Dire Straits
- "Walk All Over You" – AC/DC
- "Walk this way" Aerosmith
- "I'm Gonna Be" The Proclaimers (I would walk 500 miles...)
- "Sweet escape" Gwen Stefani
- "Moves like Jagger" Christina Aguilera and Maroon 5
- "I'm like a bird" Nelly Furtado
- "Happy" Pharrell Williams

What is your favourite songs to listen to when you're walking? ***Tweet us @AZ2BW***

Useful Links & Resources:

[The Walking Challenge](#)

A challenge to increasing your step count, getting fitter and feeling good which is run by the Charity for Civil Servants.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** Charity for Civil Servants

[Get active with disability](#)

A guide to getting active if you have an impairment or a long-term health condition.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** NHS

X

eXpand Your Horizons

One of the most important lessons we have learnt from creating this toolkit is that wellbeing is not a one size fits all approach. Expand your horizons by finding fun and easy activities that work for you and by trying a variety of activities that you can turn to when you need to boost your wellbeing.

Featured Activity: Kindness and Connections

According to NHS Moodzone, research suggests that acts of giving and kindness, small and large, are associated with positive mental wellbeing. Giving our time to others in a constructive way helps us strengthen our relationships and build new ones.

How you can give more and build connections?

- ✓ Say thank you to someone for something they have done for you.
- ✓ Rather than sending an email or text to someone, pick up the phone.
- ✓ Phone a relative or friend who needs support or company.
- ✓ Speak to someone new today.
- ✓ Have lunch with a colleague.
- ✓ Ask a colleague how they are and really listen to the answer.
- ✓ Sign up to a mentoring project, in which you give time and support to someone who'll benefit from it.
- ✓ Volunteer: consider signing up to be a fire marshal or wellbeing champion.
- ✓ Join a network group within the Civil Service.
- ✓ Look for ways to collaborate.

Useful Links and Resources:

[Make an Easy Origami Butterfly in just 3 minutes](#)

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 3 minutes | **Location:** YouTube

Dancing is a fun way to get fit, so give it a whirl with this [belly dancing video for beginners.](#)

Cost: Free | **Duration:** 45 minutes | **Location:** NHS

Learning new skills can be useful, but research shows it can also improve our [mental wellbeing.](#)

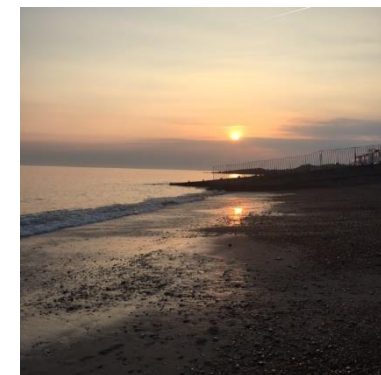
Cost: Free | **Duration:** 5 minutes | **Location:** NHS

Expanding Your Horizons:

According to NHS Moodzone, trying new things, such as sitting in a different seat in meetings or going somewhere new for lunch, can also help you notice the world in a new way. There are lots of different ways to bring learning into your life.

In addition to the activities in this toolkit, here are some other ideas;

- Photography
- Reading
- Traveling
- Going to the theatre
- Music concerts
- Arts and crafts such as knitting and sewing
- Writing such as poetry and journaling
- Sports
- Dance
- Gardening



Y

Yoga

Featured Colleague:

Gail Peck, co-author of this toolkit shared her love for yoga. Gail first tried Bikram yoga class in 2010 and since then she's hooked. She have tried over 10 different yoga classes but still don't feel like a yoga person. "I haven't earned the title", Gail said. What she knows is she enjoyed them and would like to share her 2 favourite yoga classes and why:



Hot Pod Yoga (HPY):

At Hotpod, they provide hot Vinyasa Yoga classes in their very own inflatable, heated studios – an intensive and balanced physical workout, restoring calm. Why I love HPY? It's relaxing, with dimmed lighting and aromatic fragrances. Plus you'd burn at least 500 calories!



Aerial Yoga:

I wanted to take my yoga practice up a notch so I tried it and it turned my world upside down, literally. Aerial yoga is traditional yoga turned upside down by using suspended hammocks. Why I love it? It is fun and it is interesting. The best part of class — Savasana. There is something about being engulfed in the silk like a cocoon, completely surrounded by the fabric and muted lights.

Known Benefits of Yoga:

- Increased flexibility
- Builds muscle strength
- Better your bone health
- Improves blood circulation
- Perfects your posture
- Could help improve breathing
- Helps to cultivate mindfulness
- Improve eating habits
- Can decrease stress
- Relieves anxiety
- Boost immunity
- Could promote sleep quality
- Could improve quality of life

Why not try NHS 3 minute seated yoga as shown below



Useful Links and Resources:

[NHS Guide to yoga](#) - All you need to know to get started with yoga, including the health benefits, yoga styles for beginners and finding a yoga class.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** NHS

The main UK yoga associations are:

[British Wheel of Yoga \(BWY\)](#), the Sport England-recognised governing body for yoga

[Independent Yoga Network](#), organisation for Yoga Teachers and Teacher Training Schools

[Iyengar Yoga Association UK](#), provides a network of information about Iyengar yoga and yoga events in the United Kingdom.

Z

Zzzzzz (Sleep)

Sleep is important for your health, wellbeing and happiness. When you sleep better, you feel better.

Sleep is as important to our health as eating, drinking and breathing. It allows our bodies to repair themselves and our brains to consolidate our memories and process information.

Turn Your Bedroom into a Sleep Sanctuary:

- ❖ Fill your room with pleasing non distracting visuals.
- ❖ Infuse your room with a relaxing scent
- ❖ Bring the tranquil and restorative light of candles into your room.
- ❖ Ensure comfort by getting beddings that feels great and lovely pillows to snuggle.
- ❖ Get a plant
- ❖ Most importantly, keep your room clean!



FACT: On average a person sleeps for 8 hours in a day, that means that an average person will sleep for 229,961 hours in our lifetime or 1/3 of our life.

Featured Activity: Keep a sleep diary for a week

A sleep diary is a daily log that can be used to record your sleep-wake pattern. It can help make you more aware of the parameters affecting your sleep. With a sleep diary you can look back and see what helps you sleep better and what doesn't. You can make positive changes and do more of what helps, and less of.

Sample of a sleep diary below:

Activities	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Bedtime							
Wake time							
Duration of sleep							
Number of times awake at night							
How do you feel when you wake up?							

You can create your own and tailor it to your needs. Other activities to monitor are:

- Physical activities during the day
- Emotions/Stress
- Bedtime routine

While keeping a sleep diary, the importance of sleep will become more evident and you will gain a better understanding of how the things you do throughout the day affect your sleep. Alternatively consult your doctor.

Useful Links and Resources:

[Livewell, Sleep](#)

A range of topic about sleep and tips from the NHS website.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** NHS

[10 tips to beat insomnia](#)

Simple lifestyle changes for a more restful night from the NHS website.

Cost: Free | **Duration:** N/A | **Location:** NHS

Team Chaffinch

Team Chaffinch are a group of Civil servants based in London and the East and South East of England, from across government departments, who met through the Civil Service Local Junior Leadership Academy 2017. They created the A-Z to Better Wellbeing toolkit to help make wellbeing fun, easy and accessible for civil servants and to help create 'A Brilliant Civil Service' that supports a great place to work.

In 2018, Team Chaffinch won the Civil Service Awards 2018 Health and Wellbeing Category; and they were one of the 26 winners in The Charity for Civil Servants Community Awards 2018.

Recently, they are runner up to [Apolitical Workplace Award 2019 Mental Health Category](#), where they competed against 8 other countries' government initiatives.

Special thanks goes to:

Former Team Chaffinches,
Our Partners,

To the many colleagues that have contributed to the making of this toolkit by providing contents and inspiration.

And finally, a big thank you to everyone who championed us, supported us and followed our journey.

Thank you to you all.



Meet Team Chaffinch



It is important to work on our wellbeing; physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Then we can look after others. I believe that self-care is giving the world the best of you, instead of what's left of you.

Gail Peck, HMRC



Wellbeing is feeling physical and mental prosperity. Waking up in the morning & always moving forward and never looking back.

Iona Doherty, HMRC



Wellbeing to me is about feeling healthy, happy, strong, balanced, well and doing more of what makes me happy. Its also about making time for self care by eating well, keeping hydrated, smiling more, worrying less and making time to move more throughout the day.

Louella Ibekwe, The Insolvency Service



The art of Wellbeing, in my view, is an integral part of the fabric of Civil Service life. It connects with every part of our lives, including our time at work. What keeps me enthused about Wellbeing is the fact that just small 'hacks' can make a huge difference to a personal, social and work life balance.

Ian Pratt, HMCTS



The key to wellness is to accept responsibility over your own happiness and balance, take action today and see results tomorrow.

"My Secret to happiness... is to have a bad memory!"

Koysar Hamid, Home Office

Rate this toolkit...

Let us know what you think about the A-Z to Better Wellbeing Toolkit by taking this [short survey](#)

All responses are anonymous and will be used to improve the work we do in the future

Thank you





Our Partners



Civil Service
Local



Home Office



HM Revenue
& Customs

The Charity for
Civil Servants

for you
by you

 ENGAGE
FOR SUCCESS