

**As part of your Go Purple fundraising take time out with the pupils to do this activity to support the overall message of mental health and wellbeing.**

## What is Resilience?

Resilience is:

- Developing a range of different ways of thinking which include having a positive 'give it a go, can do attitude.'
- The ability to identify, regulate, control and express emotions.
- The ability to learn from failure and setbacks.
- Grit and determination to persevere for long term goals.

Of course external factors will affect a pupil's ability to be resilient, from home life, through to community settings and issues. However, by introducing some foundational principles within the school setting this secure environment will we hope plant the seed to tackle negative mindsets and foster an atmosphere to build resilience in a young person's life.

## What is mental health and what is mental illness?

### Mental Health

Like physical health we all have mental health. We have feelings, good and bad, emotions, upset or angry, and this is completely normal. Situations and circumstances can affect how we feel and what we think, worried about exams, bullying, problems at home, etc. Sometimes we need help to express these feelings or find ways to help us feel better, like going for a walk, mindfulness techniques, talking to friends about how we feel and taking the time to eat healthily as the recommended 5 a day has been shown to contribute to a healthy body and mind.

When these feelings become prolonged or intensify and are affecting everyday life with, problems sleeping, isolating in your bedroom, tearful and panicked etc., it's important to recognise that this is not normal and speaking to an adult you trust, like a teacher or a doctor would be the right thing to do.



## Mental Illness

**Mental illness is when you have an illness that has been diagnosed by a professional person, a doctor or a psychiatrist.**

Like many physical health problems, sometimes people recover; and sometime they don't. Just like lifelong physical illnesses, for example: epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, asthma and congenital heart disease, people learn to live with the illness with the help of medication, exercise, diet and support. Many people live normal lives, whilst a small percentage will need ongoing treatment.

However, both with physical health and mental health, exercise, good diet, relaxation, taking time to speak to your friends, living in the moment and learning new skills are really positive ways to improve your life, and help you to feel better.



## He said, she said, they said myth-busting quiz

**Ask the pupils if these statements from other teenagers are true or false?**

*He said: Mental health is not relevant to my friends and me.*

FALSE – We all have mental health, and mental health problems affect people of any age, race, religion or income. They are relatively common, affecting three people in the average school classroom.

*She said: Most people experience discrimination because of mental health problems? That can't be true!*

FALSE – It is true, 9 out of 10 people with mental health problems say they have experienced negative treatment from others. Similar to other types of discrimination, they describe feeling isolated, ashamed and demeaned.

*They said: There's nothing I can do if a friend has a mental health problem. They just have to get over it in their own time.*

TRUE and FALSE – Your friend might need space and time, but there are lots of small things you could do that can make a big difference. Like sending a text, meeting up, or just asking how they are.





## Talk about the Five Ways to Wellbeing and give examples

The Five Ways to Wellbeing are scientifically proven to support positive mental health and wellbeing:

Connect: talk to your friends, send a text, meet up, be friendly.

Be Active: go for a walk, a swim, make your exercise regular and part of your routine, exercise increases the happy hormones in your body.

Keep learning: outside school if you are really interested in something, why not find out more, look it up on line, read a book, join a club.

Help others: if there is an elderly person on your street, why not offer to cut their grass, or pick up some groceries, help your mum or dad with the household chores.

Taking notice: learn to look around you, at the passing seasons, this is about living in the moment and taking time to remember the positives.

Create a self-help wall in the class room, on one side ask the pupils to list all the negative emotions they feel.

On the other side ask the pupils to list the positive, and productive things they could do to help that feeling or emotion based on using the five ways of wellbeing.

## Want to know more?

If you need further help or support with your class please book our free mental health sessions Healthy Me via our schools mental health support service MensSana:  
<https://www.amh.org.uk/services/menssana/>

If you need any further information advice or support, contact the fundraising team at:  
[fundraising@amh.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@amh.org.uk)

