

**THE
READING
AGENCY**

**READING
WELL**



Library Staff Wellbeing Toolkit



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Department for
Digital, Culture
Media & Sport



**Libraries
Connected**

READING WELL

Workplace wellbeing toolkit for library staff

Need Urgent Help?

Why is workplace wellbeing important?

We know that libraries and library staff play a vital role in public mental health and wellbeing. But paying attention to and protecting your own mental health at work has never been more important.

Many of us have faced disruption to our workplaces during the COVID-19 pandemic and as our working environments continue to change, paying attention to and protecting our mental health must be a priority.

[Mind reports that](#) at least one in six workers experience common mental health problems, including anxiety and depression. Their research shows that work is the biggest cause of stress in people's lives, more so than debt or financial problems.

Using this toolkit

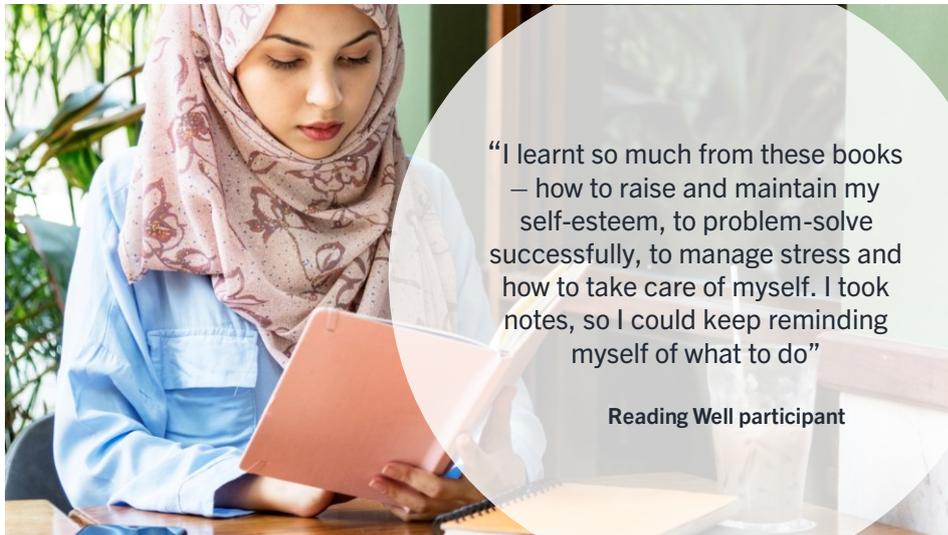
This toolkit has been created by [The Reading Agency](#) to support workplace wellbeing through the power of reading.

The toolkit recommends the titles from the [Reading Well for mental health](#) collections that are available for free download via [public library e-lending services](#) to support your mental health at work.

The toolkit also contains information about our [Read, Talk, Share campaign](#) and signposting to relevant resources to help foster and support a culture of wellbeing amongst colleagues.

***The Reading Agency** is a national charity that tackles life's big challenges through the proven power of reading. We work closely with partners to develop and deliver programmes for people of all ages and backgrounds; our vision is for a world where everyone is reading their way to a better life. We help 1.8 million people benefit from reading every year, through our programmes, our tireless campaigning, our excellent networks and our power to influence, challenge and make change happen. www.readingagency.org.uk*

Reading Well: books that can support mental health at work



“I learnt so much from these books – how to raise and maintain my self-esteem, to problem-solve successfully, to manage stress and how to take care of myself. I took notes, so I could keep reminding myself of what to do”

Reading Well participant

[Reading Well](#) supports you to understand and manage your health and wellbeing using helpful reading.

The books are chosen and recommended by health experts as well as people with lived experience of the topics covered.

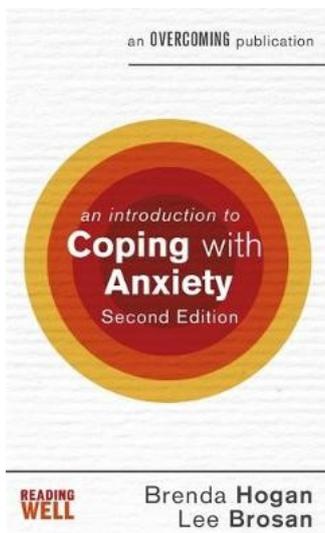
You can borrow books from the collections from your local library. Reading Well a shared programme with [Libraries Connected](#) as part of the [Universal Public Library Health Offer](#).

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) has funded a universal roll-out of the reading lists to support mental health to every library service across England.

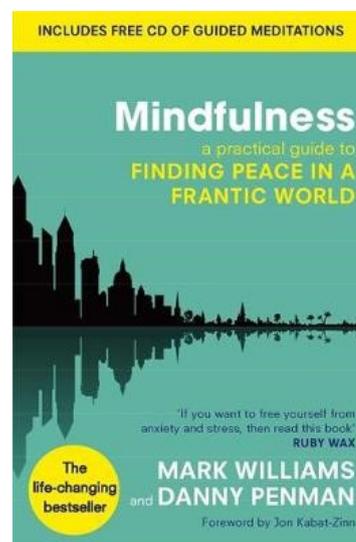
2.6 million Reading Well books have been borrowed from libraries and **91%** of people surveyed found their book helpful.

You can borrow an eBook or eAudiobook for free today, via [your library e-lending service](#). Anyone can read or recommend books from the collection to support mental health.

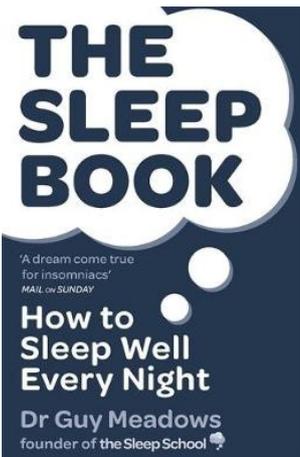
Below are a few of the books from the collection that may be useful to support workplace wellbeing:



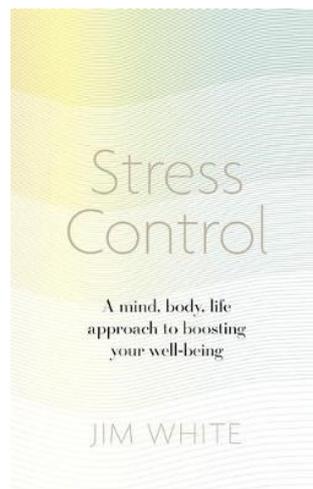
Learn strategies to reduce feelings of anxiety, while finding out how anxiety develops and the physical symptoms to look out for.



A set of simple yet powerful practices that you can incorporate into daily life to break the cycle of anxiety, stress, unhappiness and exhaustion



Using a blend of mindfulness and new acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) techniques, this book shares a unique five-week plan to cure your problems whether it's a few restless nights or a lifetime of insomnia.



Boost your wellbeing and feel in control of your future by following straightforward steps to get a sense of control and learn skills for long-term stress management.

Find more books from the [Reading Well collection to support mental health.](#)

Reading-well.org.uk

Read, Talk, Share

[Read, Talk, Share](#) is a campaign funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS), to combat loneliness and promote wellbeing through the proven power of reading during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery.

Read, Talk, Share expands The Reading Agency's [Reading Well](#) and [Reading Friends](#) programmes. The two initiatives demonstrate the power of reading to support and connect isolated individuals, and the benefits of bibliotherapy to mental health.

Download the [Read Talk Share toolkit](#) and [animation](#) to find out more about how you can get involved with the campaign in your workplace.



Useful resources for workplace wellbeing

Workplace Wellbeing Toolkit



A one-page strategic [guide](#) to creating a mentally healthy organisation from the [Mental Health at Work](#) website.

You can share this guide with colleagues and display in communal staff areas.

Mental Health at Work

‘Lockdown’ and ‘Transitioning back to work after lockdown’ toolkits.

Mental Health at Work have also created toolkit resources, with ideas and tips to help colleagues look out for each other whether they’re [still working from home](#) or [beginning the process of returning to their place of work](#).

Wellness Actions Plans

The mental health charity [Mind](#) have created a set of free [Guides to Wellness Action Plans](#) to support teams and individuals. Wellness Actions Plans are an easy, practical way of helping you to support your own mental health at work and, if you are a manager, helping you to support the mental health of your team members.

COVID-19 Safer Libraries Guide

Libraries Connected, in partnership with architects IF_DO and CILIP, have created a free-to-use, [downloadable guide](#) on how to organise library buildings to keep staff and the public safe while still ensuring that spaces remain welcoming environments for everyone to use.

Further signposting:

- [Mind](#) have collaborated with the [Society of Occupational Medicine](#), [Acas](#) (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) and [Business in the Community](#) to create a [downloadable toolkit](#) for [Returning to the workplace after the COVID-19 lockdown](#).
- Mind have also created a [list](#) detailing helpful organisations, public services, government guidance and other types of support available during the coronavirus pandemic.
- [Mental Health at Work](#) have created a [Lockdown: Looking out for ourselves and each other](#) toolkit.
- [Public Health England](#) have issued [Guidance for the public on the mental health and wellbeing aspects of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) and [Guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#).
- [NHS One You](#) offers a quick 5 question quiz to get your personalised plan of simple ideas to help improve your mental health and wellbeing.

- The NHS website's [Mental Health page](#) offers information, support and resources for your mental health.
- [Download Mind's top tips for coping during coronavirus](#) as an Easy Read PDF.
- The [NHS Volunteer Responders](#) can also provide a free telephone 'check in and chat' if you are feeling isolated. Call 0808 196 3646 to register for this service.
- [Mental Health at Work](#) offers a section of resources including [toolkits](#) tailored to key areas of workplace mental health.
- [Mindful Employer](#) is a UK-wide, NHS initiative. It is aimed at increasing awareness of mental health at work and providing support for businesses when recruiting and retaining staff.
- [Parents and carers can access self-care advice](#) on the Anna Freud Centre website.
- The Mental Health Foundation have provided advice for parents with [children returning to school after lockdown](#).

Help Lines

- [Campaign Against Living Miserably](#) (CALM) supports men experiencing distressing thoughts and feelings: 0800 58 58 58 5pm–midnight, 365 days a year.
- [The Silver Line](#) supports individuals over the age of 55 by providing information, support and friendship: 0800 4 70 80 90 open 24 hours a day, every day of the year.
- [Switchboard](#) supports anyone identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender: 0300 330 0630 Open 10:00-22:00 every day.
- The [Helplines Partnership](#) provides a directory of all the helplines available in the UK, which you can search to find the best telephone support service for you.
- [Mind Infoline](#) provides information on local mental health support services that can support you: [0300 123 3393](#).

Need urgent support?

If you are having thoughts of suicide, are harming yourself or have thought about self-harm, it's important to tell someone.

These thoughts and feelings can be complex, frightening and confusing, but you do not have to struggle alone.

If you cannot wait to see a doctor and feel unable to cope or keep yourself safe, the Every Mind Matters website shows you how to get [urgent support](#) right away. Or see further [NHS advice on dealing with a mental health crisis or emergency](#).

It's important to know that support is available, even if services seem busy at the moment because of coronavirus.