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How we can look after our mental health during a time of financial stress

TOGETHERALL IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE RESCUE BENEVOLENT FUND

During a cost-of-living crisis, day-to-day activities can feel overwhelming and your mental health may be worse than usual. The Togetherall clinical team share some things you can do to ensure you're keeping well and getting the right support.

THE CURRENT STATE WITH THE COST OF LIVING

Inflation, energy bills, rising household costs — the cost-of-living crisis is affecting everyone in some capacity across the UK.

This is having a knock-on effect on our mental health, especially for people who may be struggling to afford to meet their most basic needs. According to the Money and Mental Health Policy Institute, over 1.5 million people in the UK are currently experiencing both problem debt and mental health problems.

Those who are supporting people's mental health are also seeing a rise in people affected by financial woes. According to the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), two thirds (66%) of

therapists say cost-of-living concerns are causing a decline in people's mental health.

Money worries, especially long-term debt, or life-changing events such as a job loss, can often cause or exacerbate anxiety, depression, and stress. From here, it's easy to get caught in a 'vicious cycle' when a perilous position of financial stress can increase mental health issues, in turn making it harder to manage finances. Almost 40% of people with a mental illness say their financial situation worsens their mental health problems.

THE KNOCK-ON EFFECT TO YOUR WELLBEING

There are secondary issues that can arise when dealing with financial stress:

Sleep: One of the first things to suffer when encountering money problems is your sleep. Racing thoughts and anxiety about the future can impact your ability to both fall asleep and get a good night's rest.

Physical health: Financial worries can also affect your physical health. Prolonged stress, including financial stress, can produce physical pain and reduced pain tolerance, including headaches, abdominal pain, and loss of appetite.

Self-esteem: Feeling like you're unable to manage your money effectively can impact how you feel about yourself, for example, feelings of failure and unworthiness.

Drinking: As a way of coping or to 'escape' from the stress of money troubles, it can be tempting to turn to alcohol. As a depressant, alcohol can only worsen the issue and can also lead to impulsive spending.

THINGS YOU CAN DO WHEN YOU'RE WORRYING ABOUT MONEY:

SEEK HELP WHERE YOU CAN

Togetherall isn't a financial support service, but we are here to support the mental health of our community, no matter what they're experiencing. Our anonymous network of peers is here to offer words of comfort and advice, with qualified practitioners on-hand to ensure you're safe whilst seeking support.

Togetherall's extensive library of courses and resources can also help you to manage your emotions surrounding financial strain if you don't want to speak to others about your experiences.

We also have a free library of support articles that are accessible whether you're registered with us or not, focusing on a range of topics, including sleep, managing stress, or setting goals.

If you need financial advice, speak to your bank, your landlord, or one of the services below if you are struggling to get by financially.

PRIORITISE YOUR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Be kind to yourself and make self-care a priority. Even if it involves taking five minutes

to take a walk and temporarily remove yourself from the situation, doing something that is going to positively impact your mental health can help break the cycle of negativity caused by financial worries.

Identify where you still have control. Debt and uncertainty can make us feel out of control, so maintaining a healthy routine can help give us a better perspective. We understand that anxious thoughts or depression associated with financial stress can make maintaining a routine difficult, so start small in building healthy habits and avoid triggers to both unhealthy coping mechanisms and impulsive spending.

FOR FURTHER SUPPORT

There are more resources available for financial help below.

MONEYHELPER

MoneyHelper brings together the support and services of three government-backed financial guidance providers: the Money Advice Service, the Pensions Advisory Service and Pension Wise to provide useful tools and impartial advice about your finances. You can find out more at moneyhelper.org.uk.

DEBTLINE

National Debtline is a charity providing free, independent, and expert debt advice to people across the UK. You can access National Debtline by phone, webchat, or get advice through the website. Find more information, including their cost-of-living hub at nationaldebtline.org.

CITIZENS ADVICE

We can all face problems that seem complicated or intimidating. Citizens Advice believe no one should have to face these problems without good quality, independent advice. Find more information and get help at citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money.

MIND

Mental health charity Mind has a library of free resources to help people who are struggling with their mental health. They have also created a specific resource for helping to manage your money and your mental health, which you can find at mind.org.uk.

GO TO [TOGETHERALL.COM/JOINNOW/RESCUEBENEVOLENTFUND](https://togetherall.com/joinnow/rescuebenevolentfund) OR SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER ANONYMOUSLY BY CHOOSING AN NON-IDENTIFIABLE USERNAME



FIND US ONLINE AT [RESCUEBENEVOLENT.FUND](https://rescuebenevolentfund.org) & VIA THE QR CODE OPPOSITE, OR ON FACEBOOK @RESCUEBENEVOLENTFUND



PARTNERING TO DELIVER PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING SUPPORT TO MOUNTAIN AND CAVE RESCUE TEAM MEMBERS



AS A MOUNTAIN OR CAVE RESCUE TEAM MEMBER YOU CAN ACCESS TOGETHERALL FREE OF CHARGE

Togetherall is a digital mental health and wellbeing support service, available online, 24/7. Our community is completely anonymous so you can express yourself freely and openly. Professionally-trained Wall Guides monitor the community to ensure the safety and anonymity of all members.

Togetherall offers a range of activities that allow you to work through what's troubling you. Share your thoughts and join a Talkabout with fellow members to share and discuss what's on your mind, gain support and advice. You can do this with the whole community or form your own groups or one-to-one chats. Alternatively, make a 'brick' to express yourself and your feelings creatively through drawing or by uploading your own images.

In addition to Togetherall's online community, you will have access to a wealth of useful resources. Join our self-guided support courses covering topics such as anxiety, sleep and depression to assertiveness training and problem solving. Take self-assessments to help you understand more about yourself.

Find a library of information within resources which can help you understand more about yourself, how you are feeling, set goals and track your progress.

We are dedicated to bringing people together, encouraging everybody to look after their mental health, and we are welcoming to all.

