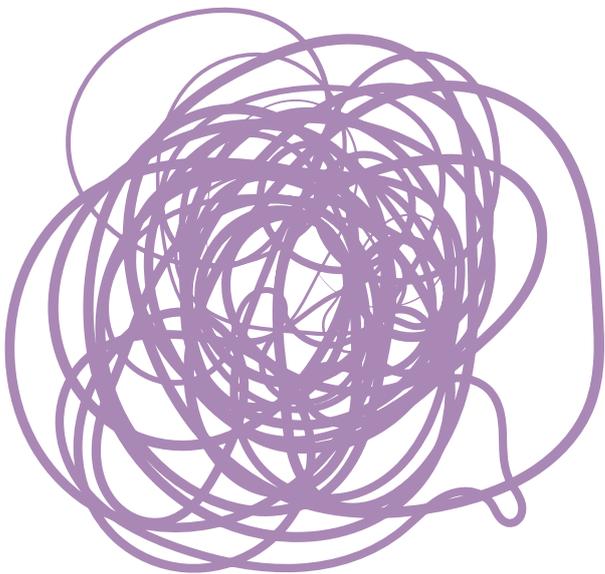




STRESS AWARENESS MONTH 2024

Resources Pack

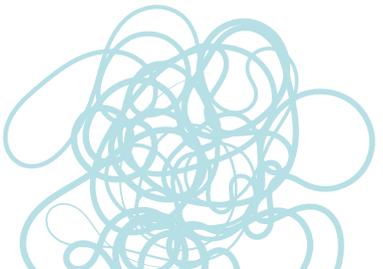




WHAT IS STRESS AWARENESS MONTH?

Stress is an unavoidable factor in day-to-day life and we can often find ourselves stuck in 'fight or flight' even if we can't see why; stress can come from our work or our personal life, affecting our mental and emotional states and even leading to physical issues if not managed.

April is Stress Awareness Month and this year's theme is #LittleByLittle which is the idea that small, consistent, positive actions each day can have a big impact on our stress levels and overall wellbeing! When we make change #LittleByLittle we make manageable adjustments to our daily routine that leave us feeling less stressed and prioritise our mental health.



WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

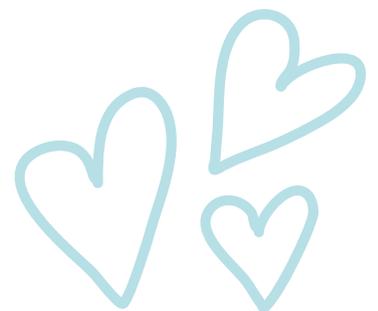
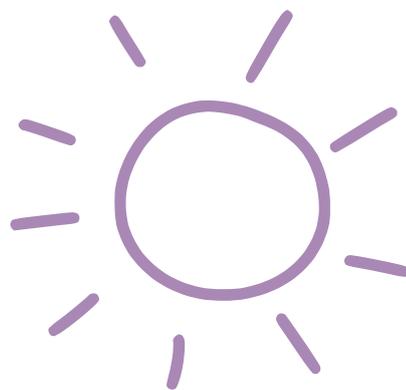
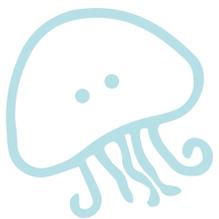
You can find an incredible range of resources from the Stress Management Society here, including their Little By Little Journal and their Stress Guide along with a whole host of other free resources as part of Stress Awareness Month. You can also take their Individual Stress Test to see how your stress levels are looking; even better, why not take the test at the start and the end of the month to see how the small actions you've made across the month are helping to reduce your stress levels!

If you're a CAW student or staff member struggling with stress, we have a range of wellbeing resources designed to help you, including counselling services, FIKA and Togetherall. You can find out more on our Wellbeing page.



STRESS AWARENESS MONTH 2024

30 Day Daily Wellness
Challenge



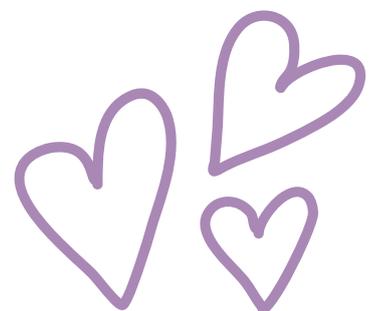
WHAT'S THE 30 DAY CHALLENGE?

This month, we've taken inspiration from the Stress Management Society One Day at a Time Wellness Challenge and come up with our own suggestions for small actions you can do each day this month to reduce your stress #LittleByLittle.

Follow along each day, or come up with your own challenges to reduce your stress; we'd love to see if you've taken part so make sure to tag us on social media or share your achievements with your peers and tutors!



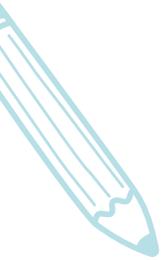
you've
Got
This!





Day 1 – Self-care

We're kicking off Stress Awareness Month with some self-care to get us into the right mindset and start lowering our stress straight away! Self-care looks different for every person and you can choose what works best for you but if you're stuck for ideas, why not make your favourite drink (we're partial to a good cup of tea) and apply a face mask to relax your body and destress your mind!



Day 2 – Post an affirmation

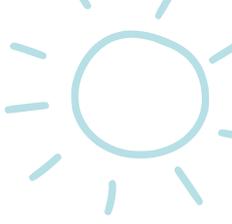
It's important to support and celebrate ourselves and invest in our self-belief; that's why today we want you to grab a Post-It note or a piece of paper and write down a personal affirmation to carry through the rest of the month. Here's some examples if you're not sure what to put:

- I am strong and resilient
- I am capable and confident
- I am enough just as I am
- I am doing my best and that is enough

Then put your affirmation in a place that you'll see, and read, every day so you can really embrace and internalise the positivity!

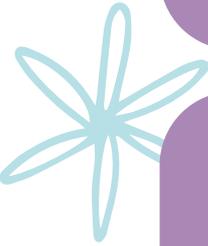


Proud ^{OF} myself



Day 3 – Take a minute to breathe

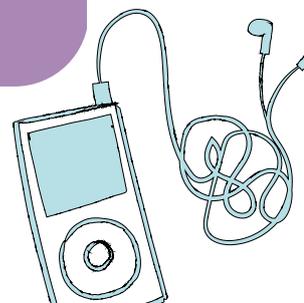
Sometimes, life can be so chaotic that we forget to take a moment to just breathe and do nothing else. This is your sign, and permission, to do just that! Take a minute to breathe and clear your mind; perhaps try some box-breathing techniques or find a calming video to centre yourself. We'll be reposting some videos we made last year for Stress Awareness Month that coach you through a minute of breathing over on our Instagram @cawinfo so if you need a guide, head over that way!



Day 4 – Listen to a happy song!

Music is an incredibly powerful tool for stress relief and the right song can release so much dopamine that your bad mood will be gone in a flash! Pick one of your favourite songs, something happy and inspiring, and take a few moments to have a listen and let yourself enjoy the music (bonus points if you have a little boogie!). If you're looking for some new music inspiration, why not try one of these?

- Shake It Off – Taylor Swift
- Shut Up and Dance – WALK THE MOON
- Permission To Dance – BTS



Day 5 – Plug in a podcast

Podcasts can be a great way to kick back and relax as they give us something to listen to which distracts our mind from all the things we're stressing about meaning we can come back to our to do list with a lighter, happier state of mind. If you've got a favourite podcast, now is the time to give it a listen. Don't have a favourite podcast or looking for something new? Why not try one of these:

- The Mind podcast – a series of podcasts by Mind about mental health
- Rethink Mental Illness – a series on mental illness with new topics each week
- Happy Place by Fearne Cotton – Fearne Cotton interviews different people on what happiness means to them
- Happier with Gretchen Rubin – practical, manageable advice about happiness and good habits
- 10 Best UK Happiness Podcasts – there's 10 to choose from in here, all about happiness!

Day 6 – Eat Well, Feel Great!

Food plays an important role in our lives and our wellbeing so it's important to eat well to destress and increase dopamine. We've put together a recipe for you to try yourself, full of colourful vegetables and healthy fuels to get you through the afternoon slump. The best part? It's completely customisable so you can swap out ingredients for your own favourite carbs and veggies!

BBQ RICE BOWL

Ingredients

- 125g rice (Swap: cauli rice or grains)
- 100g sweet potato chunks
- 1/2 sweet red pepper (diced)
- 85g cooked chicken breast (1-2 mini fillets)
- 140g pickled slaw (available from supermarkets)
- BBQ sauce of choice
- Optional: Feta cheese

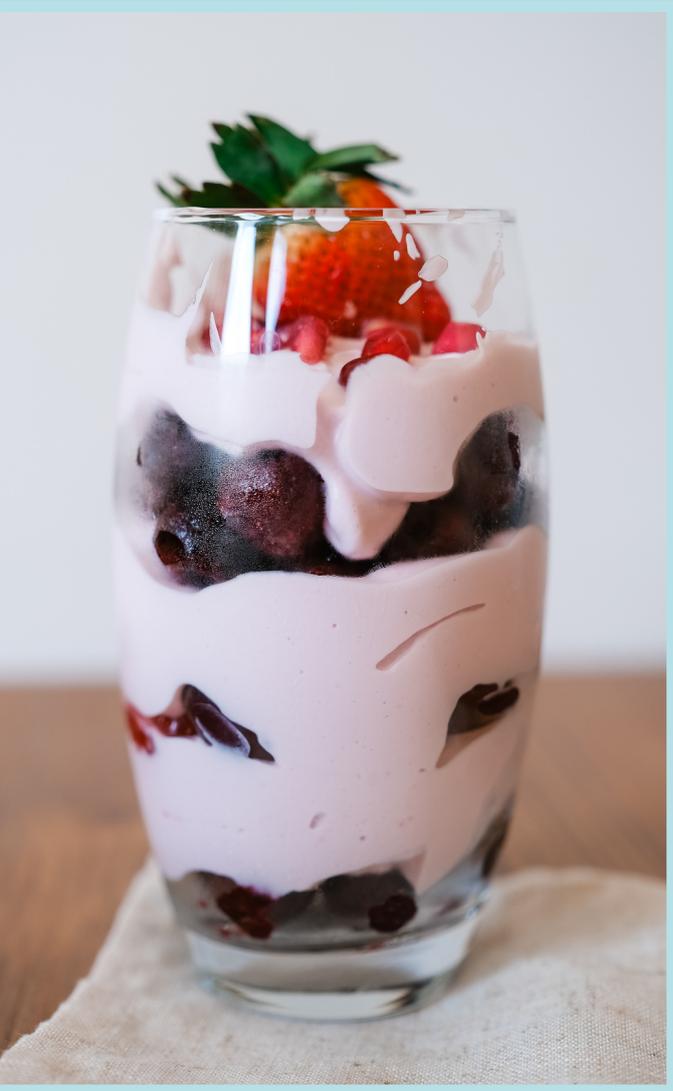


Method

1. Cook your sweet potato in the oven at 180 degrees (fan) for 30 - 35 minutes. Add in diced peppers after 15 minutes (or stir fry).
2. Cook your rice as instructed on the packet.
3. Shred the cooked chicken breast.
4. Assemble the bowl starting with the rice, then add the sweet potato, red peppers and shredded chicken before drizzling with BBQ sauce. Add the pickled slaw and feta (if using) on top and enjoy!

All of the ingredients can be swapped to suit your taste. You could use cauli rice instead of rice, change the chicken for tofu and so on.

FRUIT PARFAIT



Ingredients

200g yogurt of choice (we used Arla Protein Blueberry Yogurt)
3 or 4 different fruits of your choice (we used cherries, grapes, strawberries and pomegranate seeds) - approx 1 serving of each

Tip: To save your fruit going off, buy frozen fruit and simply let it defrost for a few minutes first before adding it into the parfait.

You could also make this a fun summer dessert by using frozen yogurt instead!

Method

1. Add your first layer of fruit to your glass
2. Add about 1/3 of the yogurt on top of the fruit
3. Repeat until all fruit and yogurt is used!

This is a quick and easy way to get some of your five a day!

LAYERED MOCKTAIL



Ingredients

2 x 300ml of your favourite fruit juices

Handful of ice

You will also need a spoon to create the layers!

Tip: You don't have to use fruit juice to make this, you could swap out a juice for soda water or coconut water! Just remember, when layering, the heaviest liquid will need to go on the bottom in order to create the layers!

Method

1. Add your first fruit juice to the glass and add approximately 6 ice cubes
2. Using the back of a metal spoon against the side of the glass, slowly pour the second juice on top (tip: it often helps if you pour onto one of the ice cubes as this acts as another barrier to avoid mixing)
3. Enjoy!

This is a fun way to get some fruit but remember fruit juices can be high in sugars so drink in moderation!



Day 7 – Joke of the day!

We're going light-hearted today with a joke to make you smile... we know it's a bad joke but that's the beauty of it! Why not spread some fun today by telling your own joke to a friend or loved one?

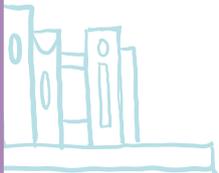
Why did the Shire horse give the Shetland a glass of water?

Because he was a little horse!



Day 8 – Read and destress!

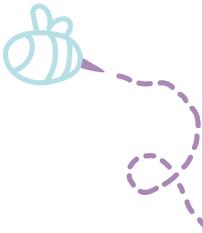
Reading is a great way to destress so today we're challenging you to grab that book you've been meaning to read for AGES and spend at least 30 minutes getting lost in another world! If you're stuck on what to read, why not ask a friend for their favourite book or the most recent book they've read and give it a try! Or, head over to Goodreads and find out what their Best Books of 2024 are so far!



Day 9 – Be positive!

Today, your challenge, if you choose to accept it, is to write down 1 thing that has gone well recently or 1 thing that has made you happy; it can be something small or big, as long as it's brought positivity into your life! Write it down and pop it next to your affirmation so you can be reminded of something good every time you look at it!





Day 10 – Animals!

It's no secret that spending time with animals is a great way to destress; for most of us, just the sight of an animal makes us smile. So, today, we want to embrace that! If you have a pet, take some time today to go and cuddle them, hang out with them or play with them. If you don't have a pet of your own, why not go on a walk in nature to spot some furry friends or meet up with a friend who has a pet for a double whammy of pet playtime and a catch up! You could even ask friends or family to send across funny pictures of their pets to boost your mood!



Day 11 – Get into nature!

Getting out in nature is one of the best ways to bring a sense of calm and serenity into your life (which also means destressing!). Take at least 15 minutes today to walk around in nature; it could be your local park, a woodland or even the beach or the mountains if you live close by! Wherever you end up having a wander, make sure to stay off your phone, take off the headphones and really listen to the world around you; you'll be feeling more chill in no time! Just in case you can't get out in nature today, we'll be posting some relaxing nature clips on our Instagram @cawinfo so head over there for your daily dose of nature!





Day 12 – Let's get creative!

Creative pursuits are a great way to relax your mind after a long day or stressful situation and incorporating some creativity into your daily routine is a quick and easy way to bring yourself that sense of calm and catharsis.

Perhaps you can try macrame or pick up some paints! Whatever creative outlet you choose, make sure you dedicate some time to it, with no distractions, today! If you're not sure where to start, we've got a poetry prompt for you to try and an example of a poem we wrote as part of our day:

Poetry Prompt: Write a poem about a place that makes you happy



Remember, a poem doesn't have to rhyme (although it can if you want), it doesn't have to stick to a set structure if you don't want it to and it can be as short or as long as you want!

Throw out whatever rules you learnt about poetry, this activity is purely a creative outlet and poetry can take whatever shape you want! That being said, if you'd like a structure to help you along your way, why not try three verses of four lines each. Another tip, if you're struggling it to make each verse a different sense; write about what you can see, what you can hear, what you can feel, what you can smell and what you can taste.





Day 12 – Example Poem

Yūgen: Tofino by Kathryn Cockrill

Pine-cruled shorelines
surround the Moon's lit stage,
moment's away from her magic-
stopped only by the waning sun.

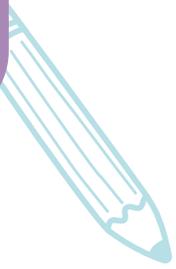


Chase the sunset as it dips,
trunks sliced in two by rays,
searing scarlet that casts
tendrils across my face.

The ocean's jewels decorate the sand,
adorning the nestled grains,
sapped of colour, yet
they burn like fire.

Shadows dance a Paso doble
as Night asserts control,
the last burning embers of sun
melting into the water to bleed away.

The world wears a silver cape at the magic
hour,
we feel it's pull, calling out,
painted with delicate brushstrokes
across an elusive landscape.





Day 13 – Connect

Connection is important when it comes to our wellbeing and sometimes we can get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of every day life that we forget about stopping for a moment and making a human connection with someone we love. That's why we're challenging you to reach out to a friend or loved one today and have a chat or arrange to meet. It can be five minutes or it can be an hour, but getting that connection and conversation will do wonders for your mental wellbeing!



Day 14 – Detox before bed

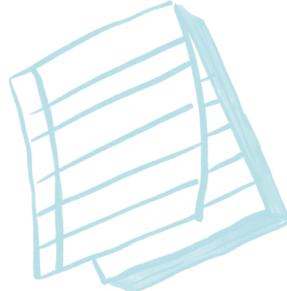
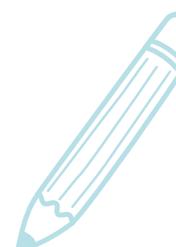
It's time to detox! We're talking a detox of the digital kind... before you get into bed tonight, set yourself the challenge of stopping use of anything digital at least half an hour before you sleep. That means no phones, no tablets, no TV, nothing that requires electrical charge whatsoever! Instead, try reading a book, writing, practising self-care with some face masks or skincare, whatever floats your boat (as long as that boat is a row boat with no electric engine!). You'll probably find yourself falling asleep much easier without the digital overload that can often happen from too much time connected to the digital world.





Day 15 – Journal

Journaling is a great way to write down your feelings and thoughts and develop self-awareness without anxiety or fear of judgement. You don't need to be an amazing crafter to journal, nor do you need a lot of equipment; just grab a blank notebook and a pen and get started! You can, of course, add in pictures, doodles, stickers, whatever takes your fancy really, but you don't have to in order to journal. All you really need is a way of writing down your feelings and some thoughts and feelings to write down! Getting everything down on paper can be incredibly therapeutic and cathartic and it can take problems that seem really big and overwhelming in your head and make them a lot more manageable! Give it a try today, even if it's just a paragraph on a piece of paper and who knows, maybe you'll find a new hobby!



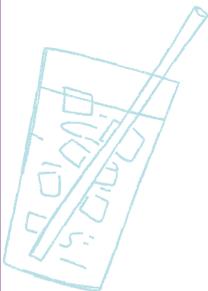


Day 16 – Hydration Station!

Keeping hydrated is so important for our mental health and wellbeing; there's nothing worse than feeling dehydrated when you're trying to concentrate or get a task done, especially as it can bring along headaches and brain fog. But it can be easy to forget to hydrate, especially when you're busy, and we often find ourselves worn down at the end of the day, wondering why we feel so terrible... So today we want you to prioritise your hydration!



It's recommended we drink 2 litres of water per day, but any increase on what you're already drinking will have a positive effect. In order to get ourselves in the habit, set a reminder every hour today to drink water and make sure you have a hydration station ready to go wherever you're spending your day; that could mean having a big water bottle filled and ready to go, or even a range of drinks such as water, tea and maybe a juice in your space so you have a choice every time the timer goes off!



Day 17 – A lunch for your eyes!



Taking a couple of extra minutes to put together a healthy and pretty lunch can sometimes make all the difference when it comes to boosting your mood at lunchtime. Why not try a bento box with lots of vibrant fruit and veggies and pinwheel wraps to add some fun to your lunch?



PINWHEEL WRAPS

Ingredients

- 1-2 mini tortilla wraps
- 2-4 cheese slices (e.g. Dairy Lea)
- 2-4 slices of wafer thin meat (we used chicken)
- Condiment of choice (we used mayonnaise)
- Handful of iceberg lettuce



Method

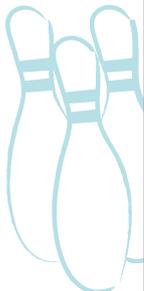
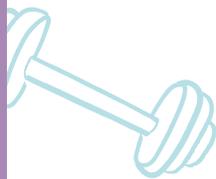
1. Spread your chosen condiment onto your wrap.
2. Layer on the cheese, cooked meat and lettuce (1-2 slices per wrap)
3. Carefully roll your wrap tightly, making sure the filling doesn't come out
4. Once rolled, cut the wrap into sections a few centimetres thick.
5. Arrange in your lunch box with other healthy snacks and enjoy!

All of the ingredients can be swapped to suit your taste. You could use ham instead of chicken or swap for a plant-based alternative instead. Pair the wraps with some fresh fruit and vegetables for your lunch!



Day 18 – Get active

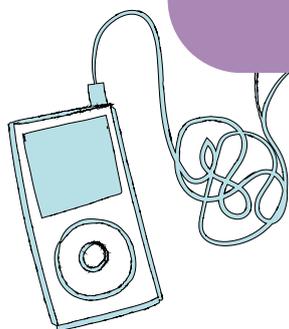
Moving your body is a great way to boost your mood and shake off the stress that's built up over the day; it doesn't have to be a big gym session to get those endorphins flowing. If you don't know what to try, why not have a go at one of these?

- Go for a brisk walk while listening to some upbeat music
 - Follow a dance workout on YouTube (for some fun, upbeat dance workouts, have a look at [The Fitness Marshall](#))
 - Learn a new activity – why not try your hand at something brand new? It could be anything from badminton to line dancing to yoga!
- 
- 



Day 19 – Dance break!

Following on from embracing moving our bodies, today we want you to take a dance break. When you're feeling the stress building (or even before!) walk away from your computer or task, put on your favourite song or playlist and spend a few minutes dancing like no one's watching; this is us giving you Permission To Dance!

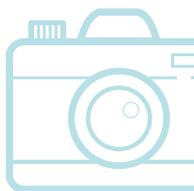




Day 20 – Prioritise your hobbies!

We all have hobbies we enjoy doing but that often fall to the wayside when life gets busy and it can feel tough to get back into them, even if we know they'll bring us joy. Instead of setting unachievable goals of doing your hobby every day (when there may not be time), we want you to prioritise a favourite hobby for today, for at least half an hour, without the expectation that you have to continue doing said hobby every day. Pick up that knitting, grab the book off your To Be Read pile, go and play your favourite sport, bake something yummy or even find a new hobby to destress... the possibilities are endless! If you're craving a new hobby, here are some ideas to get you started:

- Sign up for a local dance class
- Take up gardening (April is the perfect month to start planting veggies ready to harvest later in the year)
- Learn photography – even some phone cameras have professional settings now, so you don't necessarily need a camera to start taking photos!
- Find your inner warrior – why not try archery or axe throwing?
- Breadmaking – learn to make bread from scratch and your house will smell like a bakery, which is another mood booster!

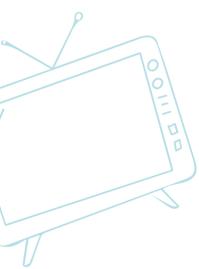




Day 21 – Time for a screen break!

Too many screens can be overwhelming and overstimulating and we might not even realise it while we're stuck in a 'doom scroll' on TikTok or reading through comments on Instagram.

So today, your challenge is to take a break... that's it! Throughout the day, find ten minutes to walk away from all screens, including your phone; you could stretch, go for a walk, grab a snack or just have ten minutes chilling out on the sofa, just as long as there's no screens in sight!

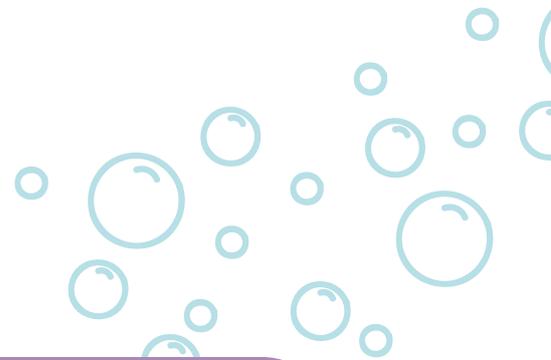
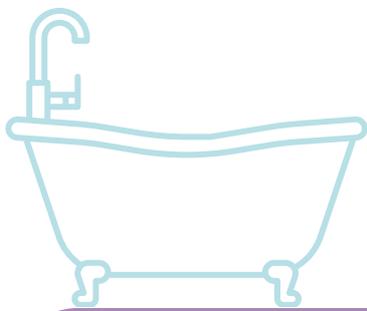


Day 22 – Spread positivity!

This challenge might be about your personal wellness but that doesn't mean we can't spread the positivity and help someone else at the same time! Spend some time today giving your friends or loved ones genuine, heartfelt compliments out of the blue and make sure they know how much they mean to you! Think about something they've done to make you smile recently, a treasured memory you have or just something you love about them as a person and tell them! Here's some ideas to get you started:



- You always make me smile and I wanted to thank you for being a positive influence in my life
 - I love the way you always look on the bright side
 - Thank you for always being there for me, even when I've been having a tough time
- 
- 



Day 23 – Bath Bliss!

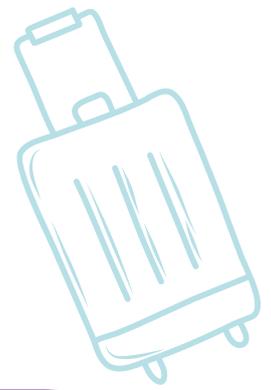
Ready for some more self-care? Today's challenge is to make time for an 'everything' bath or shower, complete with bubble bath, bath bombs, bath salts or shower bombs (if you're not a bath person). Whether you make time at the start or end of your day (or have a lunchtime bath session), you'll feel so much better after a well-deserved soak!

Day 24 – Detox your social media

Are there accounts you follow on any of the social media platforms that are no longer having a positive influence on your life? Do you find yourself unconsciously avoiding a platform because someone you follow on there is bringing you down? It's time to detox!

If they no longer bring you joy: unfollow. Instead, replace them with some positive accounts that boost your mood! Some examples could include @goodnewsdog @good.boy.ollie @goodgoodgoodco @positivenewsuk





Day 25 – Make those plans!

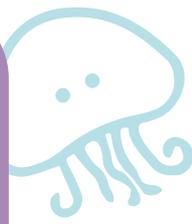
Is there something you've always wanted to do but have put it off because you don't have the time? Make those plans today! Maybe you want to walk some alpacas or pet Highland cows, or you want to learn a new skill but always put it off; book it now (even if it's way in the future) and start getting excited!



Day 26 – Reset your space

What in your work space or home space makes you happy and what doesn't? Now is the time to do a reset and make your space work for you! Maybe add a potted plant or a desk buddy or put up some pictures with treasured memories to bring you more joy throughout the day (also, get rid of that clutter that's been bothering you... you know which clutter we mean...) You'll feel so much better if the space around you brings you positive vibes!





Day 27 – At one with the animals!

We're excited for this one! Most of us love animals and they often have a way of calming us down, even if we don't realise it but not everyone has the space or time for a pet. So, instead, why not tune into some wildlife live feeds to watch some adorable creatures go about their day while you go about yours?

Here's a list of some different wildlife live feeds:



·The Wildlife Trust – The Wildlife Trust has live feeds from all across the UK, including puffins and dolphins!

·WildlifeKate – here you can find a whole range of live feeds across the UK and some further afield of everything from birds to frogs to squirrels!

·Monterey Bay Aquarium Live Cams (there's some really cute otters and some relaxing moon jellies in the list)

·Scottish Wildlife Trust – their Falls of Clyde cameras have a huge range of wildlife to watch!



Day 28 – REST!

Do nothing. That's it, that's the challenge. Spend the day doing nothing but relaxing. How that looks for you is up to you as long as you're doing whatever makes you feel good and letting your body have the reset it needs!

LOVE
yourself



Day 29 – Show yourself love!

Today we're going to write down our favourite things about ourselves; big or small, it doesn't have to be much but we want you to really think about what you love about yourself. Perhaps you love your determination, or you love that you bring joy to others or you love how you've overcome a challenge. Whatever it is, write it down, add it next to our affirmation from Day 2 and our 1 thing that's made us happy from Day 9 and let the mood boost begin!



Day 30 – Reflect!

You've done it! 30 days of daily wellness challenges in the bag and we're hoping you're feeling a little less stressed. Today, we want you to reflect on the past month and decide which wellness activities you want to incorporate into your everyday life; who knows, maybe you've already begun including them without realising! Congratulations for completing the challenge as part of Stress Awareness Month!

