

HELP for
HEROES

RECOVERY COLLEGE:
SELF-HELP GUIDES
TO RECOVERY

PREPARE:
**GETTING
STARTED**



WELCOME TO OUR SELF-HELP GUIDES TO RECOVERY

You are taking the first step on a learning journey that will help you take control of your recovery and find the pathway to a healthy, purposeful and secure life.

In the next module, we'll spend some time thinking about what recovery looks like but first, read through these tips which will help you make the most out of your learning experience.

1. **SET UP A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT THAT WORKS FOR YOU**

Before you get started, find a space to work from that is quiet, tidy and comfortable – this will help you get the most out of your learning experience.

2. **AVOID OVERWHELM**

Try to allocate some time each day or week to work through these guides at your own pace.

Remember that starting anything new can feel daunting at first, so if you find yourself feeling agitated or struggling to concentrate, take a break to do one of the following:

- + GET SOME FRESH AIR**
- + TRY SOME BREATHING OR MINDFULNESS EXERCISES**
- + TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT WHATEVER YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH.**

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3. **MANAGE YOUR MINDSET**

Make sure you're in the best possible mindset to learn. If you are stressed, tired, angry or have lots going on around you, you're unlikely to get the most out of your learning experience.



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4. TAKE SMALL STEPS AND FOCUS ON EASY WINS

Big changes can feel challenging and unsustainable, which can lead to feelings of failure. Small changes are much easier to achieve, and by achieving them you'll feel encouraged to make more! Before you know it, all your small changes will add up and start to make a difference to the way you feel.

Here are some examples of big versus small changes you could make:

BIG CHANGE

"I will stop drinking caffeine."

"I will run 10K every day."

SMALL CHANGE

"I will make sure my first and last drink of the day is a glass of water."

"I will get outside for some fresh air for ten minutes every day."

5. **ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

It's important to **acknowledge your achievements**, no matter how big or small. Making the choice to proactively engage with these self-help guides is an achievement. Acknowledge your progress and feel positive about the choices you make.

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6. **BE KIND TO YOURSELF**

Recovery can be tough – it can take time, a lot of energy and be an emotional experience. Be kind to yourself throughout this process. Pick a couple of things you really enjoy and practice them regularly.

Remember too that we all have bad days – the important thing is how we manage them. If things do not go as planned, take a break, try to acknowledge that bad days are part of life and once you feel able to, move on in a positive direction.

- + LISTEN TO MUSIC**
- + HAVE A LONG BATH**
- + HAVE A DAY OFF**
- + DO SOME EXERCISE**
- + CALL A FRIEND FOR A CHAT.**

**RECOVERY CAN BE TOUGH
– IT CAN TAKE TIME, A LOT
OF ENERGY AND BE AN
EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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7. **LEAN ON PEOPLE AROUND YOU**

If you have a support network, use it. Talk to your family, friends and peers about the things you have learnt or the changes you have made. Sharing your positive experiences can boost your confidence, help you stay accountable to your goals and inspire people around you!

**SHARING
YOUR POSITIVE
EXPERIENCES
CAN BOOST YOUR
CONFIDENCE**

8. **TAKE TIME TO REFLECT**

Reflecting on your learning experience as you progress gives you time to consider anything you might adjust in your approach to learning in the future. Take time to think about the things you find easy or challenging, why this might be, and what this means for your recovery going forward.

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AND FINALLY...

Remember you can refer back to these tips at any time as you work through the guides. Remember too that we are here to guide you along the way. If you have any questions at all, take positive action by contacting a member of our Recovery team.

getsupport@helpforheroes.org.uk

“The Recovery College has benefitted me in many ways; it’s given me positivity and a sense of achievement.”

Mark Hepworth, veteran