

WELLNESS WALKS JOURNAL

DiABETES UK
KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.



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WELCOME TO YOUR WELLNESS WALKS JOURNAL

Signing up for a Wellness Walk is a brilliant start to giving your health a boost. This journal can help you build wellbeing into your own life, in a way that suits you.

By thinking about wellbeing, and making a few small changes to how we live our lives, we can begin to feel healthier.

This journal will help you begin your wellbeing journey. It's full of tips, advice and space to reflect on what you're learning as you go.



WHY TAKE A WELLNESS WALK?

Whatever your reason for taking part in our Wellness Walks, it's a great step towards a healthier you. Walking is good for us because we burn calories, it's easy to fit into our day and it's low impact on our joints. Physical activity and spending time in nature can reduce stress, lift your mood and improve sleep. And taking our Wellness Walk challenge gets you together with a friendly community who are changing the world for people with diabetes.



YOU'RE WALKING FOR A WORLD WHERE DIABETES CAN DO NO HARM

Diabetes can seriously impact a person's wellbeing. Every day, we're here for people affected by diabetes. But we can't do it without your support.

The money you raise funds our work:

- our healthy eating and physical activity advice
- our local support groups
- our online forum and Helpline
- and our life-saving research.

By taking on a Wellness Walk you're helping us help thousands of people feel a little healthier, and get even more out of life every single day.

WHAT IS WELLBEING?

We can all feel overwhelmed at times. We're too busy and stressed, or feel lonely or isolated.

Wellbeing is about putting in a little bit of time in our busy schedules to focus on our mental and physical health and relationships. It's about pressing pause, and finding some balance.



IT TAKES SOME COMMITMENT, BUT HOW MUCH IS UP TO YOU

Wellness can involve:

- being more active and eating healthier
- time away from computers and phones
- spending time catching up with friends and loved ones
- trying new things
- learning to think more positively.

There are no definitive rules, no certain way you should feel and no time limit. But little changes can make a big difference. You'll find loads of practical examples and exercises in part two of this journal.

A LITTLE BIT OF HEALTH, EVERY DAY

Wellness is part of your everyday life. It's about your relationship with your body, your mind and your community. Wellness is for everyone, and if you're affected by diabetes, it can play an important part in helping you manage it.

To get the most from wellness, it needs to work for you and your life. There's no need to stress if you can't always fit everything in, or you don't always choose the healthy option. It's all about taking small steps to a healthier you.

IT'S ALL ABOUT TAKING SMALL STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU



YOUR PHYSICAL HEALTH

Our physical health is affected by what we eat and drink, how much we move, if we're ill, if we smoke, how stressed we feel, the kind of lifestyle we have, and also our mental health. When we're physically fit, we usually have more energy, feel more positive and can do more.

Good health is important, especially if you're affected by a serious condition like diabetes. You don't need to commit to a marathon and an hour's meditation every day. Deciding on some achievable goals, like signing up to a Wellness Walk, can make a big difference.

We have lots of advice, information and support on how to enjoy food, get active and manage physical health. From fresh, tasty recipes and food tips, to ideas that can help you move more and inspirational stories.

You can find out more at
www.diabetes.org.uk



YOUR MENTAL WELLBEING

Feeling mentally healthy means we feel positive, in control and able

to cope in most everyday situations. We might be experiencing mental health problems if a lot of the time we feel nervous, anxious, stressed or depressed, or unable to cope with day-to-day things like deadlines, meetings or going shopping. It's not uncommon to feel like this, and there's lots of ways to get help, like talking to loved ones, your GP, or mental health organisations, like Mind.

If you've got diabetes, then it's common for it to lead to anxiety and isolation, a lack of confidence or make you feel out of control. If you or a loved one with diabetes is feeling in need of support, we can help.

Our local support groups are a great way to share stories, and feel more connected to people who understand diabetes. You can talk to a trained counsellor on our Helpline about whatever's on your mind, and our friendly online forum is always open for everyone.

We're learning more and more about how our mental and physical health are interconnected, and so taking small steps to begin to get healthier can really help the whole you.

www.diabetes.org.uk/helpline

Call: **0345 123 2399**,

Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm

Email: **helpline@diabetes.org.uk**

If you're in Scotland:

Call: **0141 212 8710**,

Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm.

Email: **helpline.scotland@diabetes.org.uk**

YOUR COMMUNITY

Being part of a community, and not feeling isolated, is known to help with positive mental health. When we feel like we're connected to other people, it can be good for how we feel about ourselves and our emotional wellbeing.

By taking part in a Wellness Walk you're part of a powerful, positive and passionate community. You're joining others dedicated to supporting people with diabetes and raising money for a world where diabetes can do no harm. Evidence shows acts of kindness can be good for your mental health. By doing good, you'll start to feel good.

And through our local support groups and online forum, we're helping people affected by diabetes feel less isolated, more supported and grow in confidence. They're great ways to find people to talk to, learn ways to live better with diabetes and build new friendships.

www.diabetes.org.uk/my-local-group
www.diabetes.org.uk/forum



BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE WITH DIABETES

Physical activity and moving more can help with managing diabetes. From taking up netball or jogging, to taking the stairs or having a dance around your living room, it all makes a difference.

It's important to understand how your diabetes affects your ability to be physically active. Don't expect too much of yourself. Start small and build up. Set goals that work for you. And there's always lots of tips and advice on our website and forum.

www.diabetes.org.uk/exercise



SETTING YOUR OWN GOALS

Wellness is about a healthier body and a healthier mind. Using the tips in this journal and support from us, it's simple to set simple goals. For example:

GOAL

- I want to switch off a little each day.
- I want to start moving more.
- I want to meet new people and do something I love.

ACTION

I'm going to try a mindful puzzle for twenty minutes a day.

I'm going to research local yoga or dance sessions.

I'm going to join a walking club and see if I like it.

This is about the beginning of something new, so it's good to start small. When we reach our goals, we're more likely to continue wanting to challenge ourselves to do more.

PLANNING YOUR WELLNESS JOURNEY

One thing that can really help is making a plan of action that feels achievable. Something you look forward to and you're happy to do regularly is a good place to start. It's easy to push your wellness to one side, so try and build it into your routine as often as you think's realistic.

However much you plan to do, you need to make the time to do it. That could be five minutes deep breathing, a training Wellness Walk around the block, or an evening with a new social club. This might mean an adjustment to your routine, but remember how important it can be for a healthier you.

This Wellness Journal can help you plan what you do. Fill it in as often as you like. It could be every day, once a week, or whatever works for you. And when it's full, get a new notebook and keep going. Wellness is something that can help throughout your life.

However you start your wellness journey, even doing small things can really help you feel more healthy.

TAKE A BREATH

If you feel stressed or anxious, try a deep breathing exercise. Slowing your breathing can help you feel calm and more in control.

Try square breathing:

- inhale slowly as you count to four in your head
- hold the breath as you count to four
- exhale slowly and count to four
- hold the breath and count to four
- repeat for at least four rounds and try it whenever you feel stressed or anxious.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

Did taking a breath help you feel less stressed today?

A LITTLE YOU TIME

Put yourself first.

Say no to something today that you might normally do out of courtesy. It could be saying no to an after-work drink when you'd rather go for a swim.

Think about what you might try next in your wellness journey.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

How can you put yourself first more often?

YOU DESERVE IT

**Rewards are important to bring balance and show you love yourself.
And rewards don't have to be unhealthy.**

- Book in a massage or a spa treatment.
- Find a cafe and read for a couple of hours.
- Have an evening at the cinema.
- Take Saturday morning off.

Soon, the rewards will just be a part of your new routine, helping you live a more balanced life.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

What do you love about the person you are?

SHARE YOUR STORY

A big part of wellness is accepting and loving who we are. Be proud of the challenge you've set yourself and share your JustGiving page today. If you get a donation, text or message them an individual thank you.

Try writing down what's motivated you to take part in the Wellness Walk challenge, then share it:

- on your JustGiving page
- on social media
- in a WhatsApp group with friends and family.

Whatever feels comfortable for you.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

What's your story? Why are you taking part?

PRESS PAUSE

Mindfulness is when we focus on the here and now. It's taking the time to really concentrate on the sights, smells and sounds of our surroundings, things we usually don't notice. Take a walk round your local park. What colours, smells and sounds do you notice?

You can:

- get outside and walk every day, rain or shine
- find new parks and local spaces to explore nature
- see which local species of birds and animals you can spot
- just stop and pause for a minute in a wooded area on your walk.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

What did you think about when you pressed pause and gave yourself some space?

CHAT IT OUT

It might seem uncomfortable, but try talking to someone today about how you feel. It could be a close friend, family member or professional.

Giving something back is great for creating positive feelings.

Could there be somewhere in your local community that needs a volunteer?

We're always looking for people to help out, whatever your interests, experience or availability.

www.diabetes.org.uk/volunteer

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

How did it feel to chat to someone?

MAKE A MEAL OF IT

Plan in time to cook a meal from scratch.

Cooking can have physical and mental health benefits, so pick a healthy meal recipe today – there's lots on our Enjoy Food guide – and give it a try. Enjoy the cooking preparation as much as the dish itself.

www.diabetes.org.uk/enjoy-food

Try eating an extra portion of fruit or veg.

Introduce something new.
Have you ever eaten a passion fruit?
Today's the day.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

Which part of cooking do you love most? Why?

EARLY TO BED, EARLY TO RISE

Sleep is essential to good health.

It's when our bodies repair themselves and our brains process the day. Try to get to bed early tonight. When you're in bed, focus on your breathing and how the different parts of your body feel.

If you get to bed early, why not try getting up early as well? You could go for a 30 minute walk and listen to a new podcast or just a playlist of your favourite songs.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

How do you feel after a good night's sleep?

SCREEN BREAKS

Our phones are amazing but they can demand a lot of time and attention. Some research studies point to an association between smartphones usage, stress and anxiety.

Try to have a few hours without your phone.

Could you leave it at home when you go out and downstairs when you go to bed?

- enjoy a book instead
- play some games or watch a film
- try to avoid the temptation to keep checking it.

If you had to write a book, what would it be about?

Come up with some book titles, draw a front cover or write up what the story could be.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

What did you do instead of looking at your screen?

TINY MOMENTS OF TRIUMPH

Positive reflection is an important part of being happy with ourselves, and can help build our confidence and resilience. Write down three positive choices you made today, however small they felt. For example:

- I swapped my lunchtime crisps for carrot sticks.
- I got off the bus a stop early.
- I answered a question on the Diabetes UK forum.

Random acts of kindness can boost a positive mood. Leave an unexpected tip, compliment someone you don't know or just give someone a friendly smile.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

Write down three positive choices you made today.

HOBBY TIME

Spending time doing things we like is essential to finding balance in life.
Think of a hobby you want to try and book the time in to do it today.

What was your favourite hobby growing up?

What's your favourite hobby been recently?

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

What do you love to do? How does it make you feel to do your favourite hobby?

ASK FOR HELP

Being part of a community is learning it's good to sometimes rely on others. Ask for help today if you need it. Whether it's at work, home or with a professional. Don't ever be afraid to ask for help.

Offering help can be as positive as receiving it.

How could you support a loved one or colleague with a challenge they may be facing?

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

Describe how you felt after asking for help.

GET OUT AND ABOUT

See if you can make time for a training walk. Plan a new route near where you live that takes in a park or some natural space.

As you walk along...

- focus on what you can see and hear
- the sound of the birds or your footsteps
- the colour of the leaves
- the way the clouds move across the sky.

When you concentrate on being in the moment or in the present, it can help reduce stress by putting worries in perspective.

Drawing can be very therapeutic, so why not grab yourself a pad and pencil and spend five minutes sketching in the park? Don't worry if you don't think you're a da Vinci, it's the process and focus that's really good for you.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

What did you notice on your walk that made you smile?

LUNCHTIME LEISURE

If we don't find time to reflect, it can make us feel stressed, anxious or cause a low mood.

Find a day when you can...

- take an hour for lunch
- leave your phone and go for a walk
- find somewhere to read a book
- get together with a friend or colleague for a chat.

Find a time when you'd usually scroll through your social media channels and spend that time doodling instead. Let your mind wander and see what your hand comes up with.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

Think about before and after you took some time to reflect and relax. What was the difference?

GOOD EATING

Practice another healthy recipe, but this time cook it for someone. Enjoy a meal at the dinner table, and try swapping the TV for some music. And if you can turn off phones, that's even better.

Write down your master recipe, the classic you know you're the best at.

If you don't have one, what do you want it to be?

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

What did you talk about over dinner?

STAY POSITIVE

Positive thinking can lead to more positive thinking.

It's a virtuous circle

- Only post positive things about other people on social media for a week.
- Make sure you congratulate people who've shared achievements and ignore or challenge negative comments.

Being part of a positive and fun event can do wonders for your mood, and we're always looking for supporters to cheer on our fundraising runners up and down the UK. Try going along to an event near you and lending your voice to get the runners round the course.

Remember to shout loudest for people in a Diabetes UK shirt.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

Do you feel more positive when you're positive to others?

TEST A HABIT

If you smoke

Try and delay your first cigarette as long as possible.

If you drink alcohol

Try and go three days without a drink.

If someone asks you to join them for a cigarette or drink, say you'll give it a miss this time.

If you're a fan of cakes and biscuits

Try treating yourself with a healthier alternative like fruit or yoghurt.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

How does it feel to finally change a habit?

WALK AND TALK FIRST

Rather than going for a drink with a friend, go for a walk around where you'd usually meet. See how it prompts different conversations. You can still go for a drink afterwards, but you'll have had less and done some exercise.

On a night out, alternate alcoholic drinks with water.

How do you feel the next day?

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

How do you feel today after walking and talking first?

HOW DOES IT FEEL?

Update your JustGiving page, remind them of your Wellness Walk.

- Tell people how you're doing and how your wellness journey is going.
- Offer to speak to anyone interested in exploring their own journey.

Why not write a summary of how you feel now when you look at the start of this journey.

Jot, journal, doodle or answer the question below.

Write a summary of how you feel now, looking back at the start of your wellness journey.

A LIFELONG JOURNEY

You've completed your journal but have started a lifelong journey for your health and wellbeing. You've got the basics now, having learned how to reflect on what you've done and how you feel.

Part of loving yourself is making the time to ensure you feel well, so keep on making time for your wellness journey and journaling, keep trying new things and keep fighting for a world where diabetes can do no harm.

We can't wait to see you at your Wellness Walk.

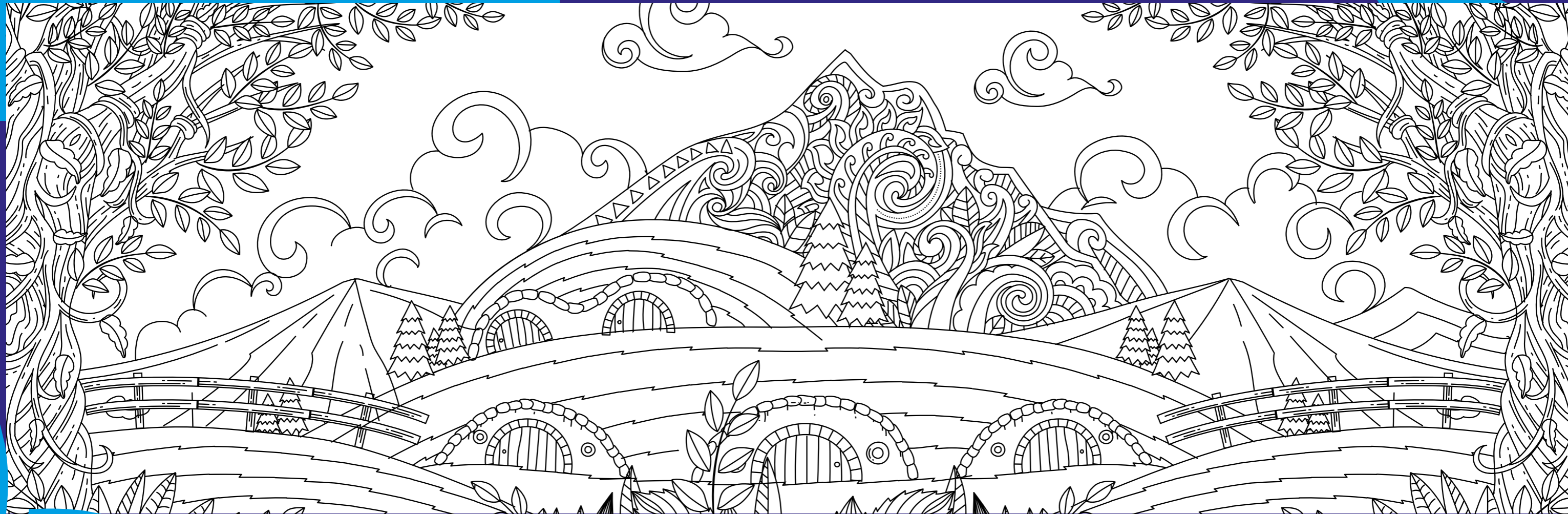


LIVE A COLOURFUL LIFE

One of the simplest mindfulness exercises is colouring in.

It helps you focus on a simple task to clear your mind, filling an outline into a rich and colourful picture. Try it and if you like it, pick up a colouring book and keep it with you for whenever you need a time out.





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