



By



STUDENT TOOLKIT

Understanding Mental Health and Wellbeing

Supported by



The
Reflection
project



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Introduction

To celebrate Muslim Aid's 40th anniversary, we've partnered with Muslim Mind Collaborative to help with practical ways to support your mental health and wellbeing.


Understanding Mental Health and Wellbeing


Mental Health: Refers to our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act.

Wellbeing: Involves creating a supportive environment where young people feel safe, respected, and valued.



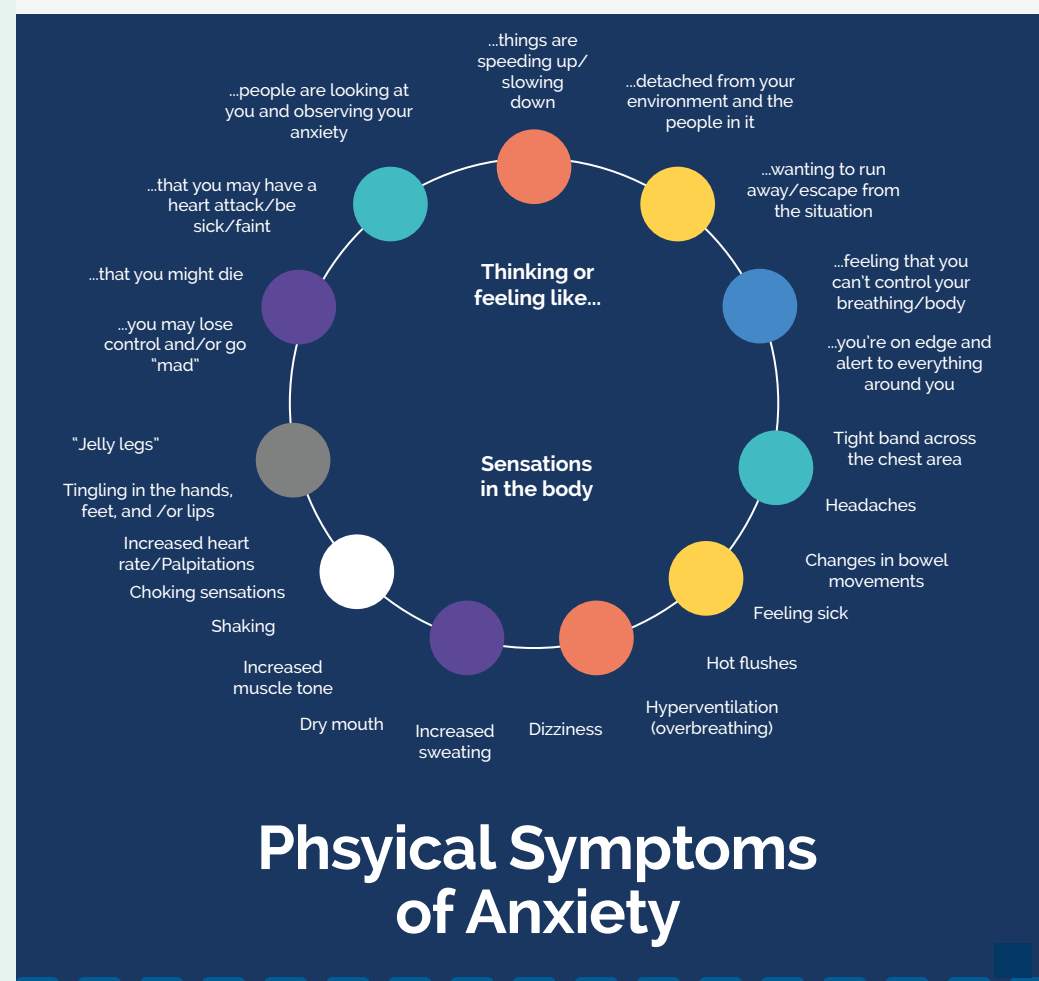
What is Stress and Anxiety?

 **Stress:** A response to an external trigger, such as a work deadline or a fight with a loved one. Stress is usually short-term and can be a positive motivator. Once the stressor is removed, stress levels usually go down.

 **Anxiety:** A persistent feeling of unease, even when there's no clear reason. This sense of fear or anxiety can stay with you and come up at any time, often without an obvious cause.

How does it feel? Symptoms of stress and anxiety can often overlap. Just remember stress is like a fire alarm going off when you've burned your toast – it makes sense because something's actually happening. But anxiety is like the alarm going off when there's no smoke or fire at all. It keeps ringing, even when everything seems fine.

Psychological Symptoms of Anxiety



Resource provided by: [inspired minds inspiredminds.org.uk](https://inspiredminds.org.uk)

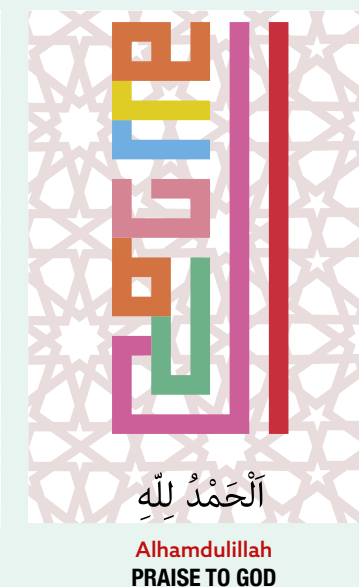
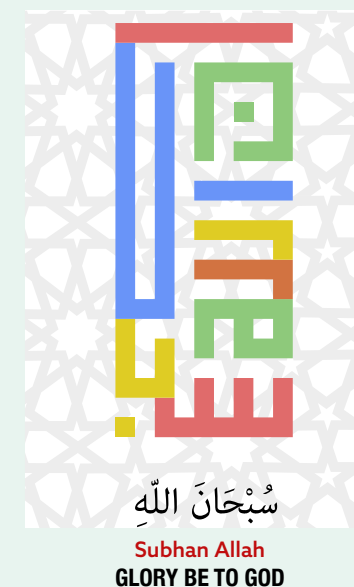
What can I do? Faith and Culturally Sensitive Tips

Different things work for different people at different times, so you can try whatever you feel comfortable with.

1 Prayer and Spiritual Practices:

Salah (Daily Prayers): Performing the five daily prayers can help instil a sense of peace and routine.

Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah): Reciting phrases like "SubhanAllah," "Alhamdulillah," and "Allahu Akbar" can provide comfort and reduce anxiety. Dhikr using a tasbeeh can be additionally helpful as it provides a sensory focus which can help disrupt anxious thoughts.



Dua (Supplications)

Dua's made from your heart to Allah in your language can soothe your stress and anxiety. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would make this dua when he was anxious.

Du'a of the Prophet ﷺ

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْخَزَنِ وَالْعَجْزِ وَالْكَسَلِ وَالْبُخْلِ وَالْجُبْنِ وَغَلَبَةِ الدَّيْنِ وَقَهْرِ الرِّجَالِ

Allaahumma 'inee 'aoothu bika minal-hammi walhazan, wal'ajzi walkasal, walbukhli waljubn, wa dhala'id-dayni wa ghalabatir-rijaal

Oh Allah ﷻ, I seek refuge in You from anxiety and sorrow, inability and laziness, miserliness and cowardice, the burden of debts and being overpowered by men.

Hamm (anxiety)
and Hazn (sorrow)

'Ajz (inability) and
Kasl (laziness)

Bukhl (miserliness)
and Jubn (cowardice)

Resource provided by: inspiredminds.org.uk

Qur'an Recitation: Reading or listening to your favourite verses of the Qur'an can be soothing and helps in seeking spiritual comfort. Visualising the words as you recite or listen can provide an additional sensory focus to help interrupt anxious thoughts.

2 Healthy Lifestyle

Balanced Diet: Try to eat a range of nutritious foods and stay hydrated.

Exercise: Regular physical activity boosts mental and physical health so try to fit movement into your day.

Sleep: Try to get enough rest. Try to maintain a good sleep cycle, including a dark, quiet environment, no screens for an hour before sleep, phone out of reach and a regular sleep schedule.



3 Mindfulness and Relaxation

Breathing Exercises: Practice deep breathing techniques to manage stress. These can be combined with dhikr and sensory techniques. There are some examples of deep breathing techniques below:

Deep calm



- Breathe in for **4** seconds
- Hold your breath for **7** seconds
- Breathe out for **8** seconds
- Repeat **4** times

Slow breaths



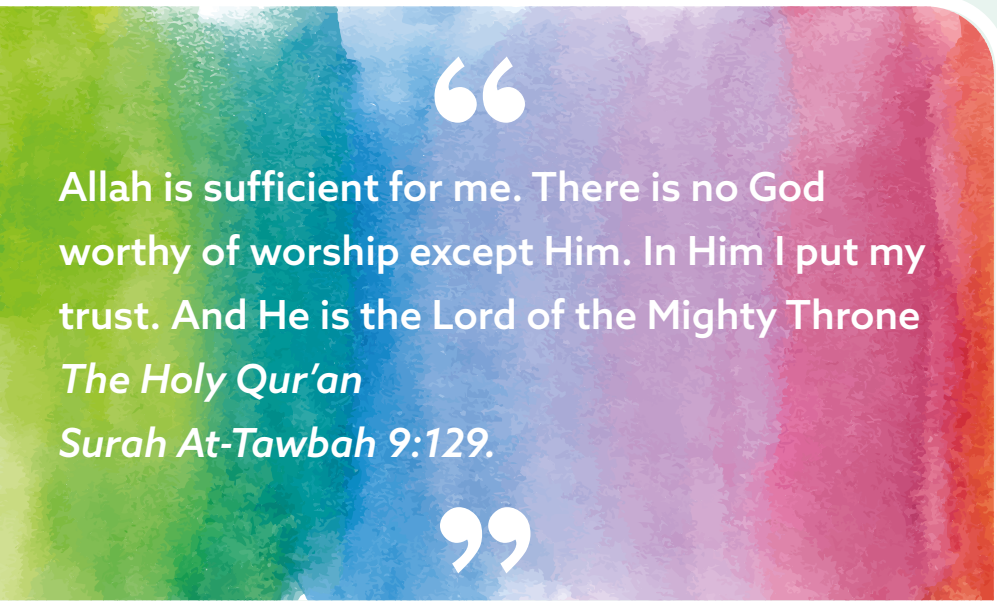
- Breathe in slowly as you count **4 2 3 4**
- Breathe out slowly as you count **4 3 2 1**
- Repeat **4** times

Square breathing



- Breathe in as you count **1 2 3 4**
- Hold your breath as you count. **1 2 3 4**
- Breathe out as you count **1 2 3 4**
- Hold your breath as you count. **1 2 3 4**
- Keep your counting even and repeat **3** times

Journaling: Write about your thoughts and feelings to help manage stress. They could include inspirational quotes and verses of the Qur'an which you find helpful. For example:



Nature Time: Spend time outdoors in natural settings to relax and refresh the mind. While outside, notice the temperature of the air on your skin and the colours and sounds around you, as sensory focus can help interrupt stressful thoughts.

4 Social Support:

People You Trust: Encourage open communication with people you may trust like friends, family and teachers.

Community Activities: Engage in community events or volunteer activities to stay connected.

Youth Groups: Join Islamic youth groups or activities to find support and companionship.



5 Seeking Help:

Counsellors and Teachers: You can speak to school counsellors or trusted teachers if you need help.

Mental Health Resources: Utilise resources available in your community that are specifically designed to support mental health.

6 Creative Outlets for Mental Health and Well-being:

Having creative outlets can help us to maintain our mental health and well-being, as they provide a way to express emotions, reduce stress, and foster a sense of accomplishment. Engaging in activities like drawing, colouring, and mindfulness exercises can help you manage your emotions and improve focus.



By incorporating any of these tips, you can support your mental health and wellbeing in a way that you may feel is more in line with your faith, culture and identity.

Download: In this toolkit, we've included:

- [Mindful Mandalas worksheet](#) by Farrah Azam @farrah.azam inspired by Islamic art and patterns to help you explore your mood and creativity through colour.
- [Creating a vision board](#) is not just about setting goals; it's also about fostering a positive mindset and supporting your overall well-being.



- [Enter Muslim Aid's creative competition and win a prize!](#) Show us your vision of a positive future. You can participate by creating artwork or writing a short story or poem.

Available at: mentalhealth.muslimaid.org/resource

If you need more support...

While everyone experiences stress to some extent, stress can be overwhelming when it is particularly intense or long-lasting, and negatively impact our physical or mental wellbeing. You are not alone and can reach out for further support:



Muslim Youth Helpline: A free, non-judgemental confidential helpline for Muslim youth providing emotional support by phone, live chat, WhatsApp or email. Visit myh.org.uk.



Young Minds: Support and advice created with young Muslims that can really help if Islamophobia is affecting your mental health. Visit youngminds.org.uk.



The Reflection Project provides safe, professional mental health support to Muslim-heritage young people and families, guiding you through the healing process. Their expert therapists create a safe space for you to express your faith identity freely while navigating life's challenges. Visit thereflectionproject.org.



Inspired Minds: A Muslim mental health charity offering professional, non-judgmental, confidential support. They provide articles, webinars, and more. Visit inspiredminds.org.uk.



Mind: Excellent information to support young people age 11-18, to learn about mental health. Visit mind.org.uk/for-young-people/

ABOUT US



An international charity where our vision is to make an impactful contribution to a world that is just and harmonious, as ordained by God, where everyone can achieve their potential with dignity.
www.muslimaid.org



This unique faith-sensitive School Programme helps students, parents, guardians and staff manage stress and anxiety. Delivered by the Muslim Mind Collaborative and Muslim Aid, it is supported by the partners listed here.
<https://mentalhealth.muslimaid.org/workshops>



A community-focused initiative supporting the mental well-being of British Muslims. They provide culturally and faith-sensitive services, working to reduce inequalities in health, education, employment, and housing.
<https://muslimmindcollaborative.co.uk/>



Guided by the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the Association of Muslim Schools strive with sincerity to represent, inspire, motivate, support and build capacity in institutions, so that they become centres of excellence.
<https://ams-uk.org/>



Our vision is for every Muslim youth in the UK to feel heard and healed through timely access to faith-sensitive therapy. That's why all our therapy services are free.
<https://thereflectionproject.org/>

