



PARENT MENTAL  
HEALTH DAY  
27th January

# PARENT MENTAL HEALTH DAY BALANCE PACK

27TH JANUARY 2022

stem4

supporting teenage mental health  
registered charity No. 1144506

# What is #PMHD?

stem4's Parent Mental Health Day (PMHD) encourages understanding and awareness of the importance of parents' mental health and its impact on the whole family system. With this year's theme being 'balance', the day aims to get parents and carers to take a moment to reflect on the balance they have in their lives and to take positive steps to make change.

## The #PMHD story

The past two years have been like no other, with huge impact on the nation's mental health. With ever-changing restrictions, uncertainties, multiple roles, health, educational, economic and social impact, it is easy for parents and carers to overlook their own mental health as they juggle daily tasks.

Parent Mental Health Day is here to shine a light on the unsung heroes who have parented under changed circumstances throughout the pandemic, but now need some focus on themselves. By getting parents, carers and employers engaged in discussions, PMHD aims to challenge the stigmas surrounding parents' mental health and start a discussion about how they are coping.

## #PMHD 2022: #TiptheBalance to Positive

As the pandemic continues for far longer than anticipated, with constant challenge and strain causing inevitable exhaustion, #PMHD 2022 will focus on practical ways parents and carers can regain equilibrium in their lives and #TiptheBalance towards positive mental health.

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 stem4, a charity that supports young people to build positive mental health, is proud to be the UK founder of Parent Mental Health Day in 2022.



## #TiptheBalance to positive: for yourself

Anxiety or feeling overwhelmed makes our body tense. Learning to relax is a helpful way to calm the brain and body's anxiety.

**1** Keep a 'brain dump' diary. When you start to overthink, just 'dump' all the many worried or negative thoughts you have in there. Close your diary and keep your thoughts there, not in your head.

**2** Go for a calming walk. Imagine you are leaving behind your worries at each step. Make sure you walk until you feel relaxed.

**3** Sit somewhere comfortable, close your eyes and very slowly think of relaxing as many muscles as you can. Start with your feet and work very slowly all the way to the top of your head.

**4** If you can't sleep, just rest your head comfortably against the pillow and feel each hair as it rests on the pillow. Now gently move down each part of your body, really slowly feeling how each part feels heavy and comfortable against the bed.

## #TiptheBalance to positive: for your family

If you are feeling tense or stressed, this is likely to affect your family dynamic. Why not take a moment to plan something you can do with other family members to create a positive, supportive environment?

**1** Make a plan to cook/bake something you enjoy together. Research recipes, check what ingredients you already have at home, and arrange a time to prepare the food together.

**2** Plan a relaxing night in with a movie and popcorn. Decide what you will watch beforehand and set aside time for it. Maybe get some snacks you don't usually have in the house. Then put all phones and distractions away and cosy up together to enjoy the film.

**3** Get together with a family member to sort books/clothes for a charity collection. Not only will you be spending time together, you'll also be decluttering your home, and also doing something for the greater good by donating things you no longer need.

**4** Make an effort to pay each family member a compliment at least once a day. By showing that you acknowledge their strengths and positives, you will help to foster a supportive environment and show that you care. Plan some of the things you might like to say and do in the five minutes you have left aside.

## #TiptheBalance to positive: at work (for employees)

Sometimes when we are worried, we change the things we do to try and help us feel better. Often this may be doing things less, which may help for a little bit but sometimes in the long-term can make it harder for us.

- 1 Set yourself a goal for something you want to achieve at work. Write yourself the steps you have to take to make this goal happen, starting from easier to harder—this is called an ‘exposure hierarchy’.
- 2 Create a personal strengths diary and try and put one of those strengths into practice every day. Do something you are good at and note down all the positives it makes you feel. If you are struggling, just think about projects you have worked on and see if you can find any positive feedback you received. You could keep all positive feedback in a separate folder that you can always refer to when you need a mood boost.
- 3 If you can, go outside on your lunch break. Even if it’s just for a quick 5/10 minute walk around the local park, getting some fresh air and a change of scenery will help you feel energised when you get back to work. While you’re outside, take the time to notice the architecture or buildings around you.
- 4 If you are working from home, make sure to take regular breaks throughout the day and maybe use this time to practise a musical piece (or learn a new instrument!). Even just a few minutes at a time will help you improve over time.
- 5 Take a five to fifteen minute break and catch up with a colleague or your team. You don’t necessarily just have to talk about work.

## #TiptheBalance to positive: at work (for employers)

Workplaces are not only where work is done, but are places where employees thrive. Working from home and hybrid working can sometimes challenge personal growth if connections are reduced.

- 1 Promote taking a 15 minute break in the day to encourage employees to do something they enjoy, as well as create an opportunity for others to find out what that something is.
- 2 Create a ‘recognition and praise’ board for managers and employees to contribute to about each other.
- 3 Create a work fitness challenge on the day. For example, walk 1,000 more steps than you usually do (you could also make an opportunity for this to happen, for example host a ‘walking meeting’). Provide prizes for winners or create a leader-board.
- 4 Ask employees to contribute ideas to an office ‘care pack’ which can be given out at the start of the following week.
- 5 Provide opportunities to have ten minute ‘energy’ chats with colleagues. An ‘energy chat’ should boost mood by finding out and focusing on something a person finds energising (an interest or passion, a book they love, the joys of parenthood...).

# Boost your mental health with MINDYOUR5



Looking after your mental health is as important as looking after your physical health and yet, whilst we know what we should do to be physically fit, we don't often know what we should do to develop our mental fitness.

Just as five fruit and veg a day maximises your physical health, try five mental well-being activities to maximise your mental health.

The categories that make up MINDYOUR5 are equally important and a regular balance of these will contribute significantly to your mental well-being.

To keep positive mental health and #TiptheBalance to positive, practise the five categories in the MINDYOUR5 model developed by Dr. Krause. This can be done by making sure you:

- Do your 'five a day' everyday (one task from each category and cover all five).
- Develop a balanced focus on each category long term.

MINDYOUR5 can be done on your own, at work or at home. Why not make #PMHD a MINDYOUR5 day?

 	<p><b>for Healthy Practice</b> – this focuses on the fact that looking after your physical health is vital for good mental health. Healthy practice includes the importance of good diet and sleep.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On #PMHD: Choose to sleep an extra hour; make a special, healthy meal from scratch.</li></ul>
 	<p><b>for Activity</b> – this is not only about the importance of regular activity including sport, but also includes other types of activity such as art, music or drama, as well as the ability to regulate activity through relaxing, having breaks, yoga, martial arts and learning to be mindful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On #PMHD: Do some yoga stretches; go for a short run with a colleague; do some family painting together.</li></ul>
 	<p><b>for Positive Thinking</b> – this highlights the importance of how your interpretation of a situation will determine its outcome. If your perspective is negative, the outcome of your thinking will be negative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On #PMHD: Change worried thought for a more factual thought; catch a worst-case scenario thought and think of a positive outcome that could happen instead.</li></ul>
 	<p><b>for Positive Emotions</b> – this states the relevance of emotional understanding, regulation and expression.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On #PMHD: You could create time to have a laugh with friends or peers; share something you are worried about with someone; watch your favourite movie and remember the warm memories it brings up for you; do something kind.</li></ul>
 	<p><b>for Your Connections</b> – this category explores the importance of connectivity — forming relationships with family and friends, connecting with others positively and ways to boost social confidence and care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On #PMHD: Plan some shared activities; tell someone how important they are to you.</li></ul>

Learn more on how to MindYour5 at [www.mindyour5.co.uk](http://www.mindyour5.co.uk)

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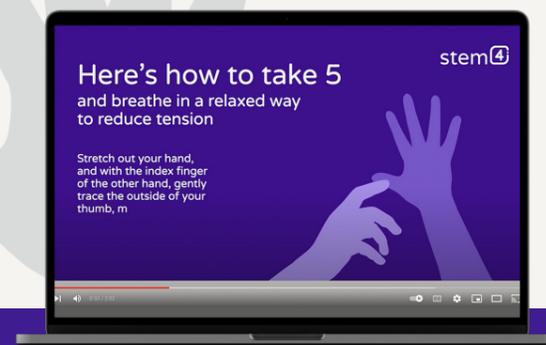
## TAKE5 to calm

No matter where you are or what you're doing, stem4's Take5 Breathing Exercise is a simple, easy way of calming yourself. Take a moment out of your day, sit somewhere comfortable, relax as best you can and do the following exercise.

1 Stretch out your hand and trace your thumb with a finger from the other hand.

2 Breathe in as you move upwards and breathe out as you move downwards on the inner side of your thumb.

3 Repeat for each finger.



Watch the video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gAjCrw22xHo>

  @stem4org

#PMHD

#ParentMentalHealthDay

#TiptheBalance

Why not share one of your own activities? If you've found a great way to #TiptheBalance, share it with us on Twitter or Instagram and we might repost it! If you do try any of our activities, be sure to tag us too.

Head to [www.parentmentalhealthday.co.uk](http://www.parentmentalhealthday.co.uk) for more information on the pandemic impact on family mental health, as well as tips on how to work towards an equilibrium.

## stem4 Webinar for Parents and Carers

### #TiptheBalance to Positive: Looking after Parent and Carer Mental Health

- Thursday 27th January 2021 – 7pm via Zoom
- Register for free:  
<https://bit.ly/stem4webinarsPMHD>
- For more information, please email [education@stem4.org.uk](mailto:education@stem4.org.uk)



Sign up to the webinar here: <https://bit.ly/stem4webinarsPMHD>

## Further resources



### Try our Combined Minds app

Combined Minds is a FREE app developed for teenage mental health charity stem4 by Dr. Nihara Krause, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, to help families and friends support young people with their mental health.

Combined Minds helps families and friends to find ways to provide the right environment to help the individuals they support affect their own change. As important influencers in the lives of young people, this provides positive impact on their mental health.

Download today



Please note that none of the stem4 apps substitute for seeing a mental health professional / GP. Please see a suitably qualified professional for assessment and advice on treatment.

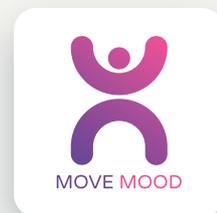
### stem4's digital portfolio



Calm Harm is a free app to help teenagers manage or resist the urge to self-harm.



Clear Fear is a free app to help young people manage the symptoms of anxiety.



Move Mood is a free app to help teenagers manage symptoms of depression.

## Get in touch



For more information about stem4 and what we do, check out our website [stem4.org.uk](https://stem4.org.uk) or email us at [enquiries@stem4.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@stem4.org.uk)