

7 Volunteer

Make the most of your spare time and do something fun. Volunteering isn't just something good to write on your CV, it's a great way to make new friends, learn new skills and do something for others. Your students' association will be able to help you find a project suited to you. There's lots you can do, from being a course rep to campaigning for a good cause. **Talk to your students' association about how you can get involved.** If you want to volunteer in your local community you should contact your local volunteer centre. More information can be found at www.volunteerscotland.org.uk

Useful contacts:

- **Samaritans: 08457 90 90 90**
- **Breathing Space: 0800 83 85 87**
- **Your GP will also have access and provide referrals to local mental health specialists**

Find out more at:

www.nus.org.uk/thinkpositive
www.nus.org.uk/scotland

“Attitudes are contagious, are yours worth catching?”

Dennis Mannerling

8 Support network

It's important to know where to go for support. Whether you just want to talk to someone, or need help with a specific issue, there is always someone to offer support and advice. Friends and family are often your first contact. Learn to be honest with them about what is going on, and share your problems with each other. If you feel you need some extra support, there are plenty of organisations out there that can help you.

At the end of this leaflet you will find a card to cut out and keep with our website details on. This has more information on where to find support. Keep it in your wallet, as you never know when you might need it. Also, take time to familiarise yourself with the support services at your college/university and the support the students' association can provide.

9 Remember the good

It can be easy to let the bad things overshadow your day and forget the little things that make you smile, especially when times are tough. Try to get into the habit of ending your day on a positive. Before you go to bed, write down the good things that have happened to make you smile.

10 Get some sleep

Sleeping and student life don't always seem to go together, but you should aim for about eight hours every night. A lack of sleep not only causes tiredness but has been associated with mental health problems.



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NUS Scotland exists to promote, defend and extend the rights of students and develop and champion strong students' unions.

To find out more about mental health, how to ask for support and how to get involved in the campaign visit: www.nus.org.uk/thinkpositive



nationalunionofstudentscotland

Top ten tips for a well-balanced you

think+
positive about
student mental health



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Think Positive is the new campaign from the National Union of Students (NUS) Scotland.

The campaign exists to encourage students to see their mental health the way they see their physical health, and understand how important it is to look after their mental wellbeing.



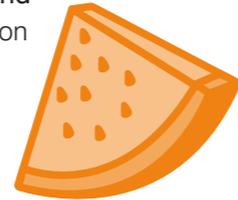
NUS Scotland exists to provide students studying in Scotland with a national voice. We work with students associations to better students' lives; an important part of which is mental health.

We want to work with YOU to create a mental health revolution. By being part of Think Positive you can help change attitudes and end mental health stigma.

Visit www.nus.org.uk/thinkpositive to find out about how to stay mentally healthy, how to ask for support and how to get involved in the campaign.

1 Have some Good Mood Food

Eating five pieces of fruit or veg a day to stay healthy is not just good for our bodies. Eating healthily **prevents you feeling sluggish and tired**, increases your concentration and can give you the much needed energy to stay awake for the last ten minutes of that Friday afternoon lecture.



2 Exercise

Ok, so sweating it out at the gym every day may not be everyone's idea of fun, but just walking more, or even having a dance around your halls, can actually **make you feel happier**. Joining a sports team or a walking group will also give you the chance to meet people and try new things. Exercise, even done moderately, releases endorphins in the brain, stimulating a better mood.

3 Socialise without alcohol

Socialising can also be beneficial to you, but this doesn't always have to involve alcohol. Although you may think a drink will help you forget your worries, it can actually do the opposite. Alcohol is not a stimulant it is a depressant drug. Like everything, **alcohol should be consumed in moderation** and not used as an escape from worries or mental health concerns. Visit www.drinkaware.co.uk for further information on alcohol and your recommended alcohol intake.



4 Spend time laughing

Having a laugh is always a good way to improve your mood. Spending time with friends and family can make you **feel good about yourself** and life in general. An easy way to do this is by **joining a society at your students' association** – whether you want to join a society related to your degree or a random interest, you're bound to find something you like!

5 Live well

Your mental health is influenced by your surroundings, so try to make your living space somewhere you want to be. Put photos on your wall, make your room comforting and make sure your halls or flat is good enough for you to be living in. Managing your money is really important too – debt and financial difficulties are very stressful. **Living well doesn't mean spending lots**. Being with friends and taking care of yourself can be done within a budget. For advice on finance or housing visit: www.adviceguide.org.uk

6 Take a break

Make sure you don't over do it. Being a student does mean revision, coursework and exams but try to take breaks in between to **keep a good balance between work and social time**. Take a walk and get some fresh air – being in green spaces can help lift your mood.

We all have mental health; feeling happy or feeling excited about something is part of your mental health, in the same way that feeling anxious or sad is.

Think Positive exists to help students see that mental health is worth talking about and worth looking after – not only when you think something is wrong, but always. All of us can feel down at times, and we all have different ways of dealing with it. Whether it is something new or something you have been dealing with for some time, you'd be surprised how many others feel the same, and how talking about it can really help.

Think Positive is the new campaign from NUS Scotland, working to create a healthy, happy student population.

