

The hassles of day-to-day life can often cause more pressure and stress than major events that happen to us at home or at work.

Use this 4-week plan to start coping better with day-to-day hassles by focusing on:

- Getting organised
- Developing a positive outlook
- Relaxing
- Talking through problems
- Looking after yourself

Action points for week 1

Get organised

At the start of the week go through all the things you need to get done that week. Use a diary or stick a list on the fridge or wardrobe door.

- List the things to be done each day – add to it as things crop up during the week. Devise a plan so that you can do everything without rushing.
- Highlight the essential jobs; prioritise the remaining ones. If you haven't got time to complete the less important tasks, reschedule them for later in the week or next week.
- Follow your list – don't put off the important tasks.

Action points for week 2

Be happy Be positive – smile

- Whenever you're in a situation you can't control (like a traffic jam), relax - remember there's nothing you can do. Spend your time constructively, sorting out how you can adjust your day to compensate for the delay.
- Whenever a difficult situation arises, say to yourself, 'This is going to be difficult, but I won't let it bother me' -then smile.
- Avoid uncertainty. Find out all the facts before you get flustered and anxious.

Learn to relax

- In moments when you get wound up, practice using an instant relaxation technique.
- Every day, without fail, give yourself 15 minutes and just relax quietly.

- Get a good night's sleep, every night if you can.

Action points for week 3

Learn to talk

- Pick someone you feel comfortable talking to.
- When you have a problem, talk it through. The old adage "a problem shared is a problem halved" is very true. When you talk...
- State your problem clearly and your feelings
- Ask if you are over-reacting
- Discuss solutions
- Make a decision on what you are going to do

Action points for week 4

Altering your lifestyle to cope better

- Cut down on caffeine and smoking
- Keep alcohol intake down to 1 or 2 units a day
- Take up exercise
- Take up a relaxing hobby or pastime
- Find time to relax and unwind before you go to bed

