

# Calm *Distress*

Learning to contain and calm  
psychological distress



Welcome to Calm Distress. This is a five-part course for anyone experiencing anxiety and low mood. It is focused on developing coping strategies to contain and calm emotional distress. We can all experience stress and it's important to recognise that **it is OK to not be OK**. However, when our stress becomes distressing and overwhelming, we can benefit from learning new coping strategies or changing how we usually cope, using more helpful alternatives. We want to help you accept the stress and calm your distress.

## **Aims**

Calm Distress has three aims:

- Help you to learn more about your emotions
- Develop additional helpful coping skills
- Improve your wellbeing

## **How to get the most out of Calm Distress**

All the information you need is in the workbooks. However, they have been designed in conjunction with the online videos so we would encourage you to watch these along with reading the workbooks: this will help you remember the information more. Throughout the workbooks there will be opportunity to set your own goals and intentions. Space is provided for you to make any notes (just look out for the pen & paper icon) and we have added worksheets that you may want to use. By using the worksheets, they may help you to remember any goals or plans and hopefully motivate you to begin making the changes in your life that are needed to improve your mood and wellbeing.



## **Living in difficult times**

Did you know that factors such as working towards our potential, managing life stressors effectively, feeling a sense of purpose, and contributing to our communities are all considered important for our mental wellbeing? This being the case, it is no surprise that lots of us are struggling with our mood when the world we live in can be so challenging. Not having certainty in our lives can be an uncomfortable feeling to tolerate, too. We hope that Calm Distress can help you look after yourself, be kind to yourself, and keep on gently moving in the direction that you want to go.

## Outline

We recommend that you work through “Calm before the Storm” before progressing through the other workbooks and videos. It is most helpful to finish with “Stay Calm”. The remaining 3 sessions may be completed in any order depending on your needs.

- **Calm before the Storm**  
We recommend you begin here. This session focuses on getting to know your emotions, and the differences between stress and distress.
- **Calm Body**  
This session aims to promote the importance of taking care of our physical health for optimal health and functioning.
- **Calm Thoughts**  
This session focuses on the link between thoughts and feelings, identifying unhelpful thinking styles, and introducing helpful coping strategies.
- **Calm Behaviours**  
This session is aimed at understanding our responses to stress, and developing more effective coping strategies.
- **Stay Calm**  
This session will make most sense once you have completed the other four. The focus here is all about how to remember your new-found knowledge and maintain your new skills.

## Other resources

Please visit the Lanarkshire Mind Matters website ([www.lanarkshiremindmatters.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.lanarkshiremindmatters.scot.nhs.uk)) for other helpful resources to support you with your mental health.

If you are thinking of harming yourself and require urgent help please contact NHS 24 on 111, or call 999 if it is an emergency. Please remember you are not alone. Help is there.

Before starting Calm Distress, we recommend that you use the below section to consider what your goals and intentions may be. It's time to focus on you, and together we can help Calm your Distress.



### **Calm *my* Distress**

- 1) What do I want Calm Distress to help me with?  
(*For example:* Learn how to manage my anxiety, how to cope during difficult times)
  
- 2) What changes do I need/want to make?  
(*For example:* I want to be more calm when going to the supermarket; I want to reduce my time watching TV as I know this impacts on my mood)
  
- 3) What would help me in achieving my goals?  
(*For example:* Asking friends and family to encourage me to use Calm Distress, buying a diary to help with structure/routine, speaking to my GP about my medication)
  
- 4) Time and day that I plan on focusing on my wellbeing (and reading/ watching Calm Distress)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							

## Notes



Please use this page to note down any thoughts or information that you would like to remember