



Volunteer *Centre*
Dorset

Volunteer Support Guide



Hello, I would like some support



You can sometimes encounter distressing situations in your roles, especially if you are involved in front-facing roles where you are supporting members of the community.

In this guide, are lots of resources, hints, and tips to help you maintain your own wellbeing.



Resources for you



Active Dorset

[Active Dorset](#) has a great activity finder which you can browse and view physical activities and events near you, many of which are free.



Access Wellbeing - Poole Hub

[Access Wellbeing - Poole Hub](#), is staffed by trained wellbeing coordinators who can provide help and advice across a wide range of areas. They have the time to listen, then can help people to access support on topics including grief and loss, mental health and emotional wellbeing and support for carers.



British Red Cross

[British Red Cross](#) have a range of activities to help you better manage your feelings of stress and learn how you can relieve them.



Chill Dorset CIC

[Chill Dorset CIC](#) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to providing sea swimming courses as a form of therapy for people with anxiety and depression. Their structured, supportive and gentle courses allow an introduction to the wonderful therapeutic benefits of spending time in the sea.



Dorset Mind

Spending time in green space or bringing nature into your everyday life can benefit both your mental and physical wellbeing. Visit [Dorset Mind](#) for lots of ideas to try in nature.

Resources for you



Elevate Foundation

For young people, [Elevate Foundation](#) offers various activities and courses that focus on wellbeing and helping young people grow in confidence, while providing practical ways to manage the challenges they may face. There are also some great self-care tips applicable to people of all ages.



Every Mind Matters

Visit [Every Mind Matters](#) where you can find tips, advice, and support to help boost your mental wellbeing. If you're worried that someone may be feeling suicidal it can be really hard to know what to say to them, and how to help.

Download easy to read pocket guides '[Worried about someone](#)' and '[Safety Planning](#)' to find advice and guidance.



Hub of Hope

[The Hub of Hope](#) is the UK's leading mental health support database. It is provided by national mental health charity, Chasing the Stigma, and brings local, national, peer, community, charity, private and NHS mental health support and services together in one place.



LiveWell Dorset

[LiveWell Dorset's](#) mission is to help people living in Dorset lead healthier, happier lives. They provide coaching, support, and advice free of charge to help you improve your health.



Mental Health UK

[Mental Health UK](#) delivers both national and local services that enable and empower people to understand and manage their mental health in a person-centred and empathetic way.

Resources for you



Parks in Mind

[Parks in Mind](#) provides fun nature conservation and other outdoor activities to help improve your health and wellbeing.



Shout

[Shout](#) is a free, confidential, 24/7 text support service for anyone in the UK who is struggling to cope.



Steps to Wellbeing

[Steps2Wellbeing](#) is a free, NHS Talking Therapies for anxiety and depression service for adults over 18 years old in Dorset and Southampton City.



The Stress Management Society

[The Stress Management Society](#) is dedicated to helping individuals and companies recognise and reduce stress. We provide free resources, packed with useful tips and tools to support your wellbeing and mental health.



Reading Well

[Reading Well](#) supports you to understand and manage your health and wellbeing using helpful reading.

Reading Well books are all recommended by health experts, as well as people with lived experience of the conditions and topics covered and their relatives and carers.



Staying Resilient



Resilience is the mental reservoir of strength that people can call on in times of need to carry them through difficulties.

- You may want to watch [this TED talk](#) (16 mins) about the three secrets of resilient people.
- There are lots of helpful tips in this book, [The little book of resilience](#).



Could you:



- Set up a volunteer wellbeing corner where you volunteer?
- Work with your volunteer coordinator to set up a peer support group?
- Access additional training to give you increased confidence to deal with challenging or emotional situations?

Hints and tips to deal with managing challenging or distressing situations



Stay Calm: It's crucial to remain composed and maintain a calm demeanour. This can help to prevent the situation from escalating and allows you to think more clearly.

Assess the Situation: Take a moment to assess the situation and determine the level of distress or danger involved. This assessment will help you decide on the appropriate course of action.

Follow Protocols: Many organisations have protocols in place for dealing with distressing situations. Follow these protocols carefully, as they are designed to ensure the safety of both you and the individuals involved.

Seek Support: Don't hesitate to reach out for support from supervisors, colleagues, or other volunteers. They can provide assistance, guidance, or simply a listening ear.

Practice Self-Care: Dealing with distressing situations can take a toll on your mental and emotional well-being. Practice self-care techniques such as deep breathing, mindfulness, or taking breaks when needed.

Reflect and Debrief: After the situation has been resolved, take some time to reflect on what happened and how you handled it. Debriefing with colleagues or supervisors can be helpful in processing the experience and learning from it.

Seek Additional Training or Support: If you find yourself frequently encountering distressing situations in your role, consider seeking additional training or support to help you better cope with these challenges.

Know Your Limits: It's important to recognise when a situation is beyond your capabilities to handle and to know when to seek assistance from professionals or emergency services.