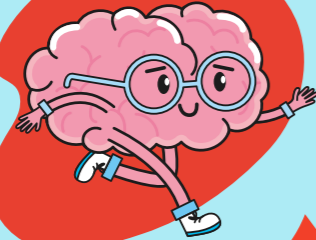


KING'S SPORT

# MOVE YOUR MIND



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR MENTAL HEALTH **101**

## GET SPONSORED TO STAY FIT OVER SUMMER

### We are recruiting volunteers!

As part of move your mind, King's Sport are running a pilot project to support positive mental health through a free tailored programme of physical activity.

The pilot will run from the **1st August – 7th September**

The programme will provide one of three options to support your journey – **these will all be FREE:**



**WEARABLE FITNESS TRACKERS**

We will build you a fitness programme through initial consultation with one of our qualified coaches. You will be required to feedback on your experience throughout the programme.



**ACCESS TO KING'S SPORT GYMS**



**LES MILLS ON-DEMAND FITNESS**

Please email [beactive@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:beactive@kcl.ac.uk) to register your interest.

# UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH

**“In many ways, mental health is just like physical health: everybody has it and we need to take care of it.**

Good mental health signifies being generally able to think, feel and react in the ways that you need and want to live your life. But if you go through a period of poor mental health you might find the ways you’re frequently thinking, feeling or reacting become difficult, or even impossible, to cope with.

Having a diagnosis does not necessarily mean that you are unwell right now. You could have a diagnosis of a mental health problem but, at the moment, be able to manage it and function well at work and at home. Equally, you might not have a particular diagnosis, but still be finding things very difficult. Everyone’s experience is different and can change at different times.”

*- Mind, the mental health charity.*

It is normal, especially in your time at university, to experience a fluctuation in mental health. Especially with stressful periods created by deadlines and exams - it is not uncommon that students will have times where they find it difficult to cope.

You might have good mental health and want to keep it this way in periods of stress, or you might be experiencing bad mental health and be looking for ways to cope and improve. Everyone can do something to take care of their mental health.

# ABOUT MOVE YOUR MIND

Many studies have shown that doing regular exercise can be very effective in lifting your mood and increasing your energy levels. Physical activity is often recommended to people dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, anger and other mental health problems.

It doesn’t have to be very strenuous or sporty to be effective - gentle exercise like going for a short walk, yoga or swimming helps too. The important thing is to pick something you enjoy doing.

This is why King’s Sport are carrying out the Move Your Mind campaign.

The Move Your Mind campaign is funded by BUCS Active and supported by Mind, the mental health charity, and aims to tackle mental health issues using sport and physical activity.

The campaign will run from the exam period through the summer term. During the exam period there will be a variety of free mindfulness, wellbeing and physical activity opportunities for the King’s community across King’s campuses in the Take Time Out tent.

During the summer term, the campaign will sponsor a group of King’s students to stay active over the summer. If interested in taking part, attend a Move Your Mind activity in May and register your interest.

Read on for more information on the benefits of exercise on mental health, King’s Sport programmes and services that you can take advantage of, and networks at King’s for mental health support and advice.

# THE BENEFITS OF EXERCISE ON MENTAL HEALTH



## REDUCE STRESS AND ANXIETY LEVELS

Taking steps to look after your physical health is important in managing stress and prevents some of its damaging effects on the body - so long as you don't overdo it.

Exercise can help you combat feelings of helplessness, making you feel as though you are in charge of the situations in which you live.

**“I find going for a walk great, even if I can't go far. I walk around the garden and eat my lunch outside.”**



## IMPROVING SLEEP

Studies suggest that exercise can significantly improve sleep.

One reason why physical activity might improve sleep is that exercise triggers and increase in body temperature, and the post-exercise drop in temperature can aid falling asleep.



## REDUCE SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

Many people find exercise a challenge but gentle activities like yoga, swimming or walking can be a big boost to your mood.

**“I cycle, which helps, and I take long walks in the country.”**



## INCREASE MOOD AND ENERGY LEVELS

Physical activity encourages the release of endorphins - the chemicals in your brain that trigger a positive feeling in the body - typically accompanied by a positive and energising outlook on life.



## DEALING WITH ANGER

Being active can help let out any tension you're feeling. Even gentle exercise like going for a walk can make a difference.



## INCREASE CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ESTEEM

Exercise can improve self-esteem by giving you a more positive view of yourself through increased mood and positive body image.

It helps to improve your personal growth by giving you new challenges and aims making you feel as though you have an aim in life.

# TRY SOMETHING NEW AND FIND ACTIVITIES YOU LOVE.

**Trying something new, like starting a new hobby and learning something new, can help boost your mood and break unhelpful patterns of thinking and behaviour.**

The important thing to remember about sport and physical activity is that it can be a positive part of your life, something to look forward to. You just need to find something you love - that way you're more likely to stick with it!

## FREE YOGA, FITNESS AND ACTIVITY SESSIONS IN THE EXAM PERIOD

Keep your eyes peeled during the exam period for yoga, wellbeing, HIIT fitness sessions and much more across King's campuses in the Take Time Out Tent.

All sessions are free in order to encourage members of the King's community to try something new!

## OVER 35 BEACTIVE SESSIONS EVERY WEEK

King's Sport also provide a lot of opportunities throughout the academic year to try a new activity, with the BeActive programme. It hosts over 35 sessions of activity every week, from Karate Fitness to Yoga, Touch Rugby to Swing Train.

**"Being active helps me de-stress and feel more confident about myself."**

## A LITTLE HELP FROM KING'S SPORT

### FREE YOGA AND MINDFULNESS CLASSES AS WELL AS OFF-PEAK ACCESS AT KING'S SPORT GYMS

During the exam period, King's Sport is opening their gyms to all King's students and staff every day from 7am - 12pm and 2 - 4pm and all weekend.

The gyms will also be hosting free yoga and mindfulness classes at various times. Check the back of the brochure for the timetable.

# GETTING STARTED:

**1. Don't wait until you feel motivated to get moving.** Instead of thinking you'll exercise when you feel better. Reverse that thinking. Tell yourself, you'll feel better when you exercise.

**2. Start small!** Small steps towards physical activity are especially important for people with mental health problems. High expectations can spark feelings of guilt, frustration and self-blame. Even an extra flight of stairs or a 20 minute walk can help.

**3. Commit to consistency**  
It's not how hard or long you exercise, for symptom relief - experts say what matters most is how consistently you do it. Aim for the same time of day - keeping a regular schedule saves mental energy of deciding where and when to be active.

**4. Make it social.** Involving people whose company you enjoy in your exercise routine will boost your motivation and commitment. It can be a class, a team or your neighbour.

**5. Keep track.** Just by logging your activity or rating how you felt before and after moving can help you build proof against negative thoughts and allows you to trust yourself to be able to do it again.

**6. Treat yourself.** After achieving an activity related goal, share your accomplishment with a friend or treat yourself to a small gift.

**7. Give yourself a break.** You might miss a gym class and you might cancel on your running partner. Don't dwell on it too much! Instead of saying what you *should* have done, be self affirming and say what you *will* do tomorrow.

**8. Be patient.** Studies suggest that when starting something new, it takes six to 8 weeks to be established. Don't give up if you don't see physical or mental results immediately.

## A LITTLE HELP FROM KING'S SPORT



### TURN YOUR ACTIVITY INTO FREE COFFEES AND MERCH WITH KING'S MOVE

A great way to treat yourself and keep track of your activity - King's Move is the King's Sport rewards platform when you can connect a health app on your phone or a wearable fitness tracker and it automatically converts your activity to points!

It can count activities from walking to skiing, so you can start as small as you like.

You can use these points to redeem coffees or yoghurt at King's Food outlets or save up for other goodies.