



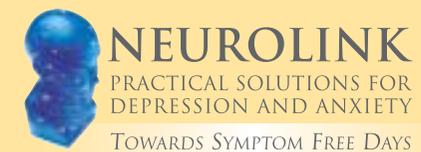
Funded by an educational grant from Wyeth Pharmaceuticals



MY JOURNEY TO CONFIDENCE

A guide to coping with depression and anxiety

By Mike Scanlan and Helen Minocki



This book belongs to:

This guide was developed in association with the Neurolink Advisory Board and with assistance from the Engaging Service Users Network. Neurolink is a well-established, independent group of experts from a number of backgrounds, involved in caring for people with depression and anxiety. Its aim is to provide practical solutions for service users and healthcare professionals in treating depression and anxiety.

For more information about Neurolink, its initiatives and materials, contact:

The Neurolink Secretariat
c/o IntraMed
Level 4
Middlesex House
34 Cleveland Street
London W1T 4JE.

Telephone: 08457 023 070

Website: www.neurolink.org

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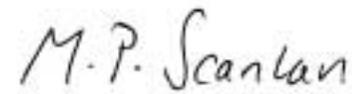
FOREWORD

Healthcare professionals already recognise that people need to learn skills aimed at maintaining mental health.

'My journey to confidence' aims to give people who have experienced symptoms of depression and anxiety a structured approach that may improve their chances of staying well.

The idea behind using a structured approach is to highlight 'early warning signs'. This was inspired by the work of Plaistow and Birchwood (1996), who produced 'Back in the Saddle'. 'My journey to confidence' has been driven largely by a combination of the involvement of service users, research and specialist advice. Ideally, you should work through the guide with the help of your doctor or healthcare professional, or someone who is familiar with depression and anxiety.

We hope that 'My journey to confidence' will help you by improving your chances of staying well.



Mike Scanlan



Helen Minocki

'My journey to confidence' was written by Mike Scanlan and Helen Minocki.

Mike Scanlan is a Senior Lecturer at University College, Northampton, and has a special interest in primary care mental health. Helen Minocki is a Senior Occupational Therapist with the Milton Keynes Primary Care Trust.

INTRODUCTION

Depression and anxiety are described by some people in the medical profession as 'mild disorders'. For those who have experienced the distress and emotional pain associated with these conditions, this description probably feels far from accurate.

Although many people with depression and anxiety manage to regain their mental health, a large number will find that their symptoms return.¹ You may have heard your doctor describe this as 'relapse'. Recognising early warning signs can help you to catch your condition early, and this reduces your chances of relapse.

Fortunately, with structured help, you can stay well for longer and improve your chances of long-term mental stability.¹

This guide could be useful if you:

- have suffered from the symptoms of depression and anxiety
- worry about these symptoms returning, and
- would like to work on developing a personal strategy to help you stay well.

Its purpose is to increase your confidence in staying well, at whatever stage you may be. It includes practical methods which you can work through on your own. However, it is better to do this with the help of your doctor or healthcare professional.

You may find that some sections are more helpful than others. We suggest you read through the guide and then use the ones that work best for you.

This guide may not be suitable if you have a more complex condition, such as obsessive-compulsive disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder. However, you may still find some sections useful.

The small, raised numbers in this workbook relate to the references section on page 41.

The confidence scale

How confident are you about staying well?

Spend some time thinking about how confident you feel on a scale of 1 to 10.

Circle your answer on the scale below.

Not confident at all



Totally confident

Don't worry if your score is low. This shows that it may be useful for you to work through this guide. Remember that your confidence level may change from day to day.

If you are looking at this workbook with your doctor or healthcare professional, you may find it useful to ask them where they think you fall on the scale. It may also be helpful to speak to your friends and family about where they see you. We will come back to the confidence scale later on in this guide.

SECTION 1 – YOU ARE THE EXPERT

Realising your strengths

Much of depression and anxiety is linked to what we think about ourselves, and what we do in our lives. The key to staying well lies in what we think and do. You will already have a number of things that help you to stay well.

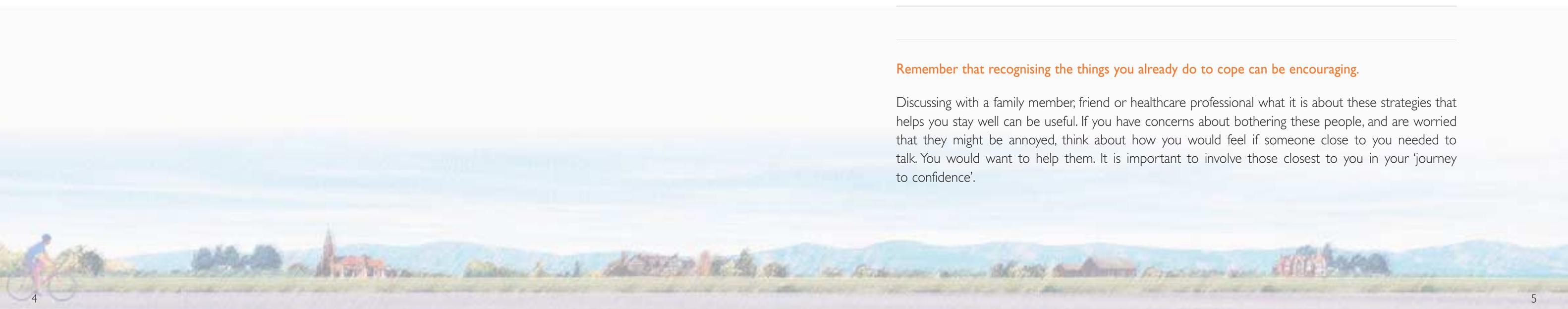
Examples of these may be:

- taking prescribed medication (for example, antidepressants)
- keeping yourself busy
- exercising or staying active, or
- taking part in interests or hobbies.

Try to think of the things you do to stay well and write them down in the space below.

Remember that recognising the things you already do to cope can be encouraging.

Discussing with a family member, friend or healthcare professional what it is about these strategies that helps you stay well can be useful. If you have concerns about bothering these people, and are worried that they might be annoyed, think about how you would feel if someone close to you needed to talk. You would want to help them. It is important to involve those closest to you in your 'journey to confidence'.



Catching it early

Scientific studies show that depression and anxiety are not conditions that suddenly appear.^{2,3} As with other life conditions, such as asthma or diabetes, there is often 'run-in time', and early intervention is always more effective. Depression and anxiety give us plenty of clues that they are developing. You may have noticed changes in your thoughts, feelings and behaviour, which can be early warning signs. These changes usually happen in the weeks or months before a return of the troublesome symptoms of these conditions.

Early warning signs

Below we have listed some common early warning signs of depression and anxiety. Please tick those that apply to you.

Common early warning signs of depression	✓	Common early warning signs of anxiety	✓
■ Feeling down		■ Feeling tense or nervous for no obvious reason	
■ Waking up early in the morning		■ An increased sense of worry	
■ Change in sleep patterns		■ Arguing with people close to you	
■ Lack of energy		■ Difficulty falling asleep	
■ Difficulty concentrating		■ Difficulty concentrating	
■ Memory problems		■ Feeling more restless than usual	
■ Increased irritability		■ Difficulty relaxing	
■ Withdrawing from your usual social activities		■ Drinking too much	
■ Losing interest in activities that you usually enjoy		■ Headaches	
		■ Constant sweating	
		■ Feelings of dizziness	
		■ Feeling like your heart is pounding	
		■ Avoiding familiar activities	

You may have experienced other early warning signs that are less general and are more personal to you. Try to write these down in the space below.

Remember that you are identifying early warning signs rather than symptoms of depression or anxiety.

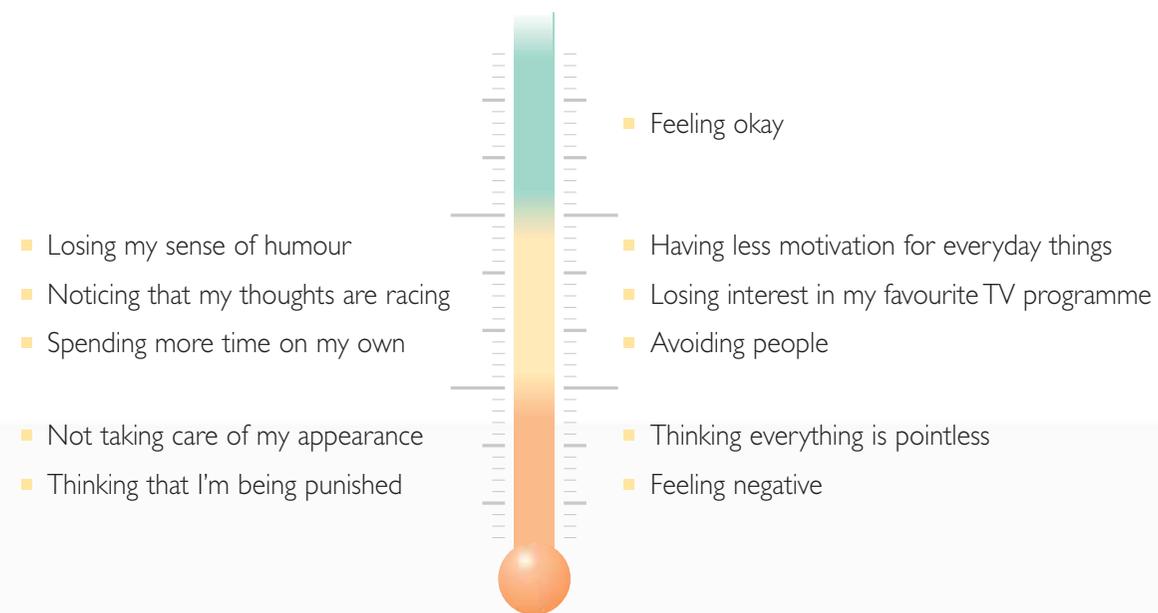
Your 'relapse picture'

Your collection of common and more individual early warning signs, and the order in which they happen, make up your 'relapse picture'. Think about how your thoughts, feelings and behaviour have been affected by these early warning signs.

Your relapse picture may look something like this.

Depression	Anxiety	A mixture of both
■ Feeling down more often than not	■ Worrying constantly	■ Worrying constantly
■ Irritable with the kids	■ Can't sleep	■ Lying in bed for too long
■ Lost interest in sex	■ Arguing with Mum	■ Heart pounding
■ Waking up really early	■ Sweating all the time	■ Avoiding socialising
■ Lying in bed for too long	■ Drinking too much	■ No interest in food

Rating your early warning signs according to how severe they are can be useful in helping you create your relapse picture. One way of doing this is to imagine where your early warning signs fall on a thermometer scale. Below is an example of one person's relapse picture. Feeling okay falls into the green section of the thermometer. The early warning signs that fall into the yellow section suggest that this person's depression or anxiety may be returning. The early warning signs that fall into the red section may be cause for concern and can be an indication that it might be useful for them to talk with their doctor or healthcare professional.



Complete your own relapse picture by writing your early warning signs in the green, yellow and red sections of the thermometer; according to how severe you feel they are. Remember that your relapse picture may look quite different from the example opposite.

Remember that we all have days when we feel anxious and nervous, or just plain miserable. It doesn't mean that we are getting ill.

If your illness is returning, you will notice clear changes in the way that you think, feel and behave over a period of time.

If you've struggled with trying to identify your early warning signs, don't worry. Lots of people do. A good starting point is talking to people, such as your family and friends, who have been with you when you have been both ill and well. You may find that they noticed things you may have forgotten.

SECTION 2 – STAYING WELL

This section includes a number of practical ideas to help you stay well, which other people have found helpful. Read through it and try some of the ideas out for yourself.

Lifestyle

By looking at research, we know that your lifestyle is linked to you staying well.^{5,6} A car would not run well without fuel, oil, regular tuning and servicing, yet we frequently expect ourselves to function without proper care and maintenance. You need to pay attention to your lifestyle to make sure you are giving yourself every chance of staying well.

We will now look at the role of relaxation, exercise, sleep, diet, planning activities and solving problems in maintaining a sense of wellbeing.

Relaxation

Being able to relax is an important strategy for staying well. If practised regularly, it will give you a valuable tool in your 'journey to confidence'. You can help yourself relax by using a number of enjoyable techniques, from meditation to taking a bubble bath.

Try to think of the things you do to relax and write them down in the space below.

You may have also learnt specific relaxation techniques. These might have been from your doctor or healthcare professional, an evening class, or even a book or tape borrowed from the library. A relaxation technique is a personal choice, and there are many different kinds.

Here is a simple breathing exercise you may want to try.

- As soon as you begin to feel anxious or worried, start breathing slowly, using your stomach muscles.
- Breathe in slowly and deeply. As you breathe in, count in your head: one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three, one thousand and four, one thousand and five, one thousand and six, while expanding your stomach.
- Breathe out slowly and count: one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three, one thousand and four, one thousand and five, one thousand and six.
- Hold your breath for a couple of seconds.
- Repeat this exercise for five minutes each day, and again whenever you feel you need to. At first, you may only be able to reach one thousand and three, but after a while, you will be counting to one thousand and six.

If relaxation techniques don't seem to work...

Relaxation is a skill that you need to learn. The following tips may help you.

- Try to practise your chosen relaxation technique regularly during your normal daily routine.
- Choose a time and place where you will be uninterrupted and comfortable.
- Read through or listen to any instructions you may have before beginning.
- Keep a diary of your experiences and progress.
- Ask a friend or family member to help, for example, by looking after your children.

Exercising to stay well

Research suggests that regular exercise can help you to stay well.⁶ Some of the benefits include changes in your body, such as releasing 'feel-good' chemicals in your brain. These chemicals are called endorphins and provide a distraction from depressing or worrying thoughts. Exercise can also relieve stress by making you feel good about mastering a new skill, as well as improving your fitness and energy levels. Your doctor can advise you on the types of activity you could do. Here are some useful tips to help you exercise to stay well.

- Try to exercise for about 20 minutes, three times a week, at a pace that leaves you slightly out of breath. It's good for you, and forms part of a healthy lifestyle.
- Make sure that you enjoy yourself. You will be more likely to keep it up if you do. Ask a friend to join you, or join an exercise class or group. Local libraries and noticeboards in shops, supermarkets and surgeries often have information about what is available in your area.
- Aim to make exercise part of your weekly routine.
- Exercise doesn't have to be expensive – a brisk walk won't cost you a thing.

Eating to stay well

Aim to eat a balanced diet that nourishes your body with all it needs. Your doctor or healthcare professional will be able to give you up-to-date, accurate information about healthy eating. However, the main principles are shown below.

- Eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day.
- Cut down on foods containing saturated fats and cholesterol that come from animals, such as red meat and dairy products.
- Increase the amount of dietary fibre you eat from wholegrain cereals, fruit and vegetables.
- Cut down on sugar and salt.
- Eat sensible portions three times a day.
- Drink two litres, or eight glasses, of water each day.
- Limit the amount of caffeine you drink (for example, tea, coffee and some soft drinks) to two or three caffeinated drinks each day, as these may increase your anxiety.
- Stick to sensible alcohol limits – 14 units each week for women, and 21 units each week for men (one unit = half a pint of beer, one small glass of wine, or one pub measure of spirits).

You need to fuel your body properly to stay well. Doing this means that you are increasing your chances of success.



Sleep yourself well

We all need different amounts of sleep, with the average adult range being between four and eight hours a night. Some people need more than this, and some people need less. The older we get, the less sleep we need, and the more likely we are to wake up during the night. The amount of sleep we need also depends on how active we are, and the state of our health. Here are some useful tips to help you sleep yourself well.

- Get into the routine of going to bed at a regular time.
- Avoid taking 'cat naps' during the day.
- Eat your evening meal three to four hours before going to bed.
- Take regular exercise.
- Cut down on smoking, alcohol and drinks containing caffeine, and avoid having these close to bedtime.
- Try a relaxing activity, for example, enjoy a warm bath before going to bed.
- You may find it useful to keep a notepad beside your bed to write down your worries or things you mustn't forget.
- If you lie awake for more than half an hour, get up and find something constructive to do, for example, reading.
- Try not to worry about not sleeping, as it will make things worse.

If you are worried that your sleep is becoming disturbed, keep a sleep diary. Record:

- the quality of your sleep, for example, doze, fitful or deep
- where you slept, for example, on the sofa or in bed
- the approximate times, and
- whether you did anything that helped, for example, took a milky drink or tried relaxing.

This will help you to look at the situation and to monitor whether your sleep really is getting worse.

Planning activity to stay well

Having some structured activity in your day can help you to keep yourself healthy.⁷ Structured activity can:

- make you feel better and distract you from problems and unhelpful thoughts
- give you a sense of purpose and control
- make you feel less sluggish and more energetic – not being active increases feelings of not being interested in anything
- motivate you to do more and increase your ability to think clearly, and
- help increase your sense of achievement and pleasure.

There should be a balance between activities that are essential, for example, work, and those that give you pleasure, for example, listening to music.

Don't worry if you find this difficult at first. The following tips may help.

- Plan your day, but don't be too rigid. If you miss one activity, move on to the next.
- If planning a whole day seems too difficult, break it down into smaller parts, for example, between breakfast and your morning coffee break.
- Reward yourself for what you have done, instead of worrying about what you haven't done.
- Aim for a balance between essential and enjoyable activities.
- Plan for quality, not quantity.
- Ask a friend or family member to give you moral support.
- Use problem-solving techniques (see next page).

Ask yourself which of these thoughts are going to help you stay well. Congratulate yourself for the helpful thoughts, and hold on to them, because they will be useful.

Let's try working on those thoughts that are less helpful. Some typical unhelpful thoughts about staying well are:

- I know that I'll get ill again
- I'm a depressive or anxious sort of person
- I'm terrified of becoming unwell again, and
- other people think I'll never stay well.

Add your own unhelpful thoughts to the list, and then we'll look at ways of challenging them. You can do this in the space below.

To stay well, it will help to become more skilled and confident in your ability to challenge the unhelpful thoughts that you have highlighted above.

Below are some examples of unhelpful thoughts you may have, and ways that might help you to challenge them.

1 You can group a number of unhelpful thoughts under the 'fortune teller' or 'mind reader' label.

"I know that I'll get ill again."

"Other people think I'll never stay well."

"If I do this, I will fail."

"People will think I'm a failure."

"I have nothing to offer people."

If this sounds familiar, try asking yourself the following questions.

- Am I jumping to conclusions without really checking the evidence?
- Am I confusing a thought or feeling with a fact?
- Am I predicting the future, instead of experimenting with it and finding out what really happens?

2 Many people, despite being well, can attach negative and unhelpful labels to themselves. These can affect your self-esteem, and can jeopardise your chances of staying well.

"I'm a depressive or anxious sort of person."

"I'm a loser."

If you are someone who thinks in this way, ask yourself the following questions.

- Am I concentrating on my weaknesses and forgetting my strengths?
- What do I gain by thinking in this way?
- Is there a more helpful way I could think about myself?

3 Another common, unhelpful way of thinking that can damage your chances of staying well is a tendency to blow things out of proportion, and using language that actually makes you feel fearful.

“I’m terrified of becoming unwell again.”

If this sounds like you, try asking yourself the following questions.

- Am I exaggerating the importance of events?
- Am I overestimating the chances of disaster?
- How likely is it that I will actually become ill again?

Give yourself a boost

Many people, despite having recovered, continue to be hard on themselves. They may be overly self-critical, even ignoring positive and encouraging compliments that other people give them.

If this sounds like something that you do, try making a list of your achievements, however small, and the compliments you receive. Practise just saying “Thank you” to anyone who says something nice to you, and add the compliment to your list.

When you feel down, it may be helpful to look through this list. You might find it encouraging, and it may give you a boost. And don’t forget to congratulate yourself when you do something that you are proud of.

Thinking for confidence

Having confidence in yourself can play a central role in you staying well. Believing that you will be able to do this can be a great motivator.

Think about the main reason why you feel you might not stay well, and then we’ll examine it. Write it down in the space below.

Estimate how strongly you believe this thought on a scale of 1 to 10. Circle your answer on the scale below.

<i>Not at all</i>										<i>Absolutely</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Now ask yourself the following questions and write your answers on a piece of paper:

- 1 What evidence do I have to support this thought?
- 2 What evidence is there to challenge this thought?
- 3 How would someone I admire deal with this thought?
- 4 How would I have dealt with it before I became depressed or anxious?
- 5 Is thinking in this way likely to help me?
- 6 What other way of thinking is there?
- 7 What can I do to improve my chances of staying well?
- 8 Am I predicting the future, rather than waiting to see what actually happens?

How strongly do you *now* believe the thought? Circle your answer on the scale below.

<i>Not at all</i>										<i>Absolutely</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

You may find that the strength of your unhelpful thought has weakened. This exercise can show you that thoughts are not facts – they can change.

If you have found this section particularly useful, discuss with your doctor or healthcare professional other ways in which this approach may be able to help you.

SECTION 3 – PLANNING FOR RELAPSE

Having now created your relapse picture, you may be in a position to recognise your own early warning signs of returning depression or anxiety. It is important that you think about what to do if you begin to relapse.

What you can do

Creating a plan will help you to prepare for the possibility of a relapse. This plan for coping with relapse will include your own early warning signs, together with a clear plan of action, to help you manage the signs as they happen.

Your plan for coping with relapse is more likely to succeed if it includes:

- your own strategies for coping
- access to expert help, and
- your family and friends.

Access to expert help

Although you are the real expert when it comes to your mental health, part of your plan for coping with relapse is likely to involve doctors and healthcare professionals. Here are some of the areas they may be able to help you with.

- Monitoring your early signs.
- Managing your depression and anxiety.
- Providing advice on medication.
- Solving problems.
- Using the cognitive behavioural approach.
- Developing skills in asserting yourself.
- Learning relaxation skills.
- Providing therapy which focuses on solutions.

Thinking about your plan for coping with relapse

Some of the work you've done on your 'journey to confidence' might prove useful when deciding what to include as part of your plan for coping with relapse. Before you complete the next section, read through the workbook again and remind yourself what you have learnt that may help prevent you relapsing.

Your own plan for coping with relapse may look something like the one below. Remember that this is just an example. Your own plan will be individual to you.

<i>Relapse picture</i>	<i>Plan for coping with relapse</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">I feel worried.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Look at the way I'm thinking about things, and run things past Mum. Maybe take a relaxing bath.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">I can't get out of bed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Speak to my doctor or healthcare professional, and look at ways of getting the sleep I need.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">My heart keeps pounding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Keep myself busy, and make sure I get exercise each day.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">I don't go out because I worry about mixing with other people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Speak to my doctor or healthcare professional about going back on the tablets that helped last time. Practise the cognitive behavioural approach to find a more helpful way of thinking.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">I lose interest in food, and get really worried about getting ill again.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Spend more time with others, and make a point of relaxing at least twice a day.

Now fill in your own plan for coping with relapse, either on your own or with someone you trust. However, remember to make it your own. Looking back through section 1 (pages 5–11), write down your relapse picture in the left-hand column. Looking back through your lists of how you relax and your strategies for staying well in section 2 (pages 12–26), create your plan for coping with relapse in the right-hand column.

Your plan for coping with relapse

<i>Relapse picture</i>	<i>Plan for coping with relapse</i>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Useful books

Barker PJ. *A self-help guide to managing depression*.
London: Nelson Thornes, 1997.

Butler G and Hope T. *Manage your mind: the mental fitness guide*.
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Kennerley H. *Overcoming anxiety: a self-help guide using cognitive behavioural techniques*.
London: Constable & Robinson, 1997.

Fennell M. *Overcoming low self-esteem: a self-help guide using cognitive behavioural techniques*.
London: Constable & Robinson, 1999.

Useful websites

BBC Online – mental health section www.bbc.co.uk/health/mental

Connects – mental health portal www.connects.org.uk

The Mental Health Foundation www.mentalhealth.org.uk

National Institute for Mental Health in England www.nimhe.org.uk

Netdoctor.co.uk www.netdoctor.co.uk

NHS Direct Online www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

The Samaritans www.samaritans.org

UK Depression – online forums www.ukdepression.co.uk

UK Self-Help Groups www.ukselfhelp.info

Useful organisations

Neurolink

c/o IntraMed, Level 4, Middlesex House, 34 Cleveland Street, London W1T 4JE. Telephone: 08457 023 070
Website: www.neurolink.org

Neurolink is a well-established, independent group of experts from a number of backgrounds involved in caring for people with depression and anxiety. Its aim is to provide practical solutions for both service users and healthcare professionals in treating depression and anxiety. Publications include: 'Beating worries that won't go away – your personal guide to fighting general anxieties and worries' and 'Overcoming depression – your personal guide to fighting depression'.

Advocacy Really Works Training and Consultancy

27 Ladyfields, Loughton, Essex IG10 3RP. Telephone: 020 8502 3132

A service user centre and mental health consultancy, Advocacy Really Works (ARW) concentrates on developing mental health service users. ARW works with other mental health organisations to deliver training and works to help and promote involvement from service users.

Aware

72 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2, Ireland. Telephone: 01 661 7211. Helpline: 1890 303 302
Website: www.aware.ie

A voluntary organisation in Ireland for patients, relatives and mental healthcare professionals, which aims to help people whose lives are directly affected by depression. Publications include: 'Depression: the facts' and 'Postnatal depression and mental illness is a family affair'.

Aware Defeat Depression

10 Clarendon Street, Derry, County Londonderry BT48 7DA. Telephone: 02871 260 602
Website: www.aware-ni.org

A voluntary organisation that offers support for people in Northern Ireland whose lives are directly affected by depression. Publications include: 'Depression: keeping hope alive: a guide for families and friends', 'Depression: the facts', 'Coping with depression' and 'Helping you defeat depression' (audio tape).

Depression Alliance

212 Spitfire Studios, 63–71 Collier Street, London N1 9BE. Telephone: 0845 123 2320

Website: www.depressionalliance.org

Depression Alliance provides a national network of self-help groups and runs workshops, seminars and conferences on depression. Publications include: 'Myths and misunderstandings about depression', 'Cognitive therapy', 'Depression and anti-depressants', 'Young person's guide to stress' and 'Surviving depression at Christmas'.

Engaging Service Users Network

The Engaging Service Users (ESU) Network is made up of a number of organisations representing people with depression and related conditions. These include: Advocacy Really Works (ARW) Training and Consultancy, Cancerlink, Depression Alliance, Manic Depression Fellowship and National Phobics Society. We have included contact details for these groups in this section of the workbook.

"The ESU Network believes that the wellbeing of people affected by depression will be significantly enhanced if five priorities are achieved. These are:

- recognition that depression is a severe and enduring mental illness, often coexisting with other illnesses
- increased resources to tackle the lifestyle, social and environmental factors associated with depression
- an individual care plan for every patient that reflects their priorities, preferences and personal experience, with sufficient NHS funds to implement it
- ready access to information that is high quality, up to date and in an appropriate format for the individual
- long-term statutory funding for research into the bio-psychosocial causes of, and effective treatment for, depression."

Publications include: 'Improving services for people with depression: Making your experience count' – a booklet designed to help people affected by depression take the first step in becoming involved in representing health service users in local planning.

Manic Depression Fellowship

Castle Works, 21 St George's Road, London SE1 6ES. Telephone: 0845 634 0540

Website: www.mdf.org.uk

The Manic Depression Fellowship is a charity led by users that organises self-help groups across the country, as well as providing information, support and legal advice to people with manic depression. Publications include: 'Together we can make a difference' – outlines the facts about manic depression and the Manic Depression Fellowship; 'Manic depression – bi polar illness'; 'Drug treatment of manic depression'; 'Parenthood and manic depression'; and 'Why did my world have to change?' – a leaflet written in the words of teenagers.

Mind

15–19 Broadway, Stratford, London E15 4BQ. Telephone: 0845 766 0163 or 020 8519 2122

Website: www.mind.org.uk

Mind is a charity that aims to improve quality of life for those with experience of mental distress. 'Diverse Minds' works to improve services for black and other ethnic communities, and 'Rural Minds' focuses on the mental health needs of those in isolated rural areas. Publications include: 'How to' – a series of booklets on a wide range of topics; 'Make sense of' – a series of booklets on treatment for mental health problems; 'Mind guide to' – managing stress, relaxation, and yoga; 'Rights guides' – information about your rights; 'Understanding' – a series of leaflets on a range of conditions; and 'Legal briefings' – tackles frequently asked legal questions.

National Phobics Society

Zion Community Resource Centre, 339 Stretford Road, Hulme, Manchester M15 4ZY. Telephone: 0870 7700 456

Website: www.phobics-society.org.uk

A charity for people with anxiety disorders that provides self-help services and information for service users and also aims to raise awareness of these conditions among the general public. Publications include: 'The NPS Self-help essential guide to understanding anxiety', 'Complementary therapies – a self-help guide', 'Carers' guide to Anxiety', 'The theory & practice of anxiety management' and 'In Control of Panic & Anxiety' (audio tape).

No Panic

93 Brands Farm Way, Telford, Shropshire TF3 2JQ. Helpline: 0808 808 0545

Website: www.nopanic.org.uk

No Panic is a voluntary charity which aims to provide relief and rehabilitation for people suffering from panic attacks, phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder and other related anxiety disorders. Publications include: 'Anxiety disorders (general)', 'Anxiety management skills', 'Written recovery programme (for phobias)', 'No panic – a practical guide to managing panic and phobia' and a muscle-relaxation audio tape.

SANE

1st Floor, Cityside House, 40 Adler Street, London E1 1EE.

Telephone (SANELINE): 0845 767 8000 (12 noon to 2am daily)

Website: www.sane.org.uk

SANE aims to raise awareness, encourage research, and provide information about mental health problems. Publications include: 'Depression and manic depression', 'Anxiety, phobia & obsession', 'Medical methods of treatment' and 'Psychological methods of treatment'.

YoungMinds

YoungMinds, 102–108 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1M 5SA. Telephone: 020 7336 8445

Website: www.youngminds.org.uk

YoungMinds focuses purely on the mental health issues surrounding children and young people, providing information and support for both parents and children. Publications include: 'Do you ever feel depressed?', 'In School, Stay cool', 'Why do young minds matter?', 'Children and young people get depressed too' and 'Directory of child & adolescent mental health services'.

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