Welcome to HAADS

Humber Adult Autism Diagnostic Service

We provide autism assessments to adults in the Hull and East Riding.

We hope this booklet may help whilst you wait for an assessment.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact the team on 01482 336740 or hnf-tr.haads@nhs.net

Please also see our website: Connect Humber

Wellbeing While Waiting Pack

Here are some resources and ideas that may help you during your wait for assessment.

If any point during the wait, your health and/or mental health changes, please contact the team so we are aware of any new wellbeing needs.

Contact us either by telephone: 01482 336740 and ask to be contacted by HAADS or email: hnf-tr.haads@nhs.net

Please be aware, HAADS is not a mental health service.If you require urgent support with your mental health, please contact the Mental Health Advice and Support Line (open 24/7) Freephone: 0800 138 0990 or call 111 and ask for mental health support in your area.

Contents

1. Waiting List Information
2. While You Wait
3. What Happens at an Assessment
4. Mental Health Support
5. Getting Help
6. Matthew's Hub
7. Signposting and Support
8. Support for Parent Carers and Partner Carers
9. Sensory Techniques
10. Support Tips

Waiting List Information

Times/Notifications/Support

Waiting Times:
Most people are now having a routine assessment within a year of initial referral. It is worth noting that if you choose to be seen via video call you may be seen sooner. Waiting for a face-to-face appointment you may have a slightly longer wait.

Occasionally a referral will be prioritised according to clinical need.

HAADS receives a high number of referrals. This means you might have to wait longer than you would like for your appointment. Our staff are working extremely hard to see people as quickly as possible.

Waiting List Updates:
HAADS offer an update service which provides either a text message or a letter sent on a regular basis to update you on the waiting list.

If you want to check if you are on the waiting list or check when you were referred then email us. Please note the first notification may not arrive until 12 weeks after the date of your referral acceptance letter.

Please do not call the service to find out when you will be seen. We are unable to say until you have been offered an appointment.

Support While You Wait:
Whilst you are on the waiting list you are eligible to access support from our partner service, Matthew's Hub, an autism charity in Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire. More information about Matthew's Hub can be found in this brochure.

01482 221028
hello@matthewshub.com

While You Wait

Collect your information

During the assessment, there will be questions about your childhood.

The areas covered may include, but are not limited to:

- Play
- School
- Friendships
- Developmental history

If possible, it may be helpful to speak with your parents to gather information. This can assist with completing your pre-assessment paperwork and provide useful context during the assessment.

It can also be useful to ask people who you trust to give any insights into your behaviours, experiences, and challenges. They can sometimes think of things you haven't considered.

Why prepare?

- Preparing can help you feel more informed and in control during the assessment.
- It can help you communicate your experiences more effectively.
- It can help the clinician make a more thorough and informed evaluation.

Fill in paperwork

Before your assessment, we will send some paperwork to complete.

To ensure your assessment is carried out efficiently and without delay, please provide as much detail as possible. This will help the clinicians understand your strengths and challenges clearly.

Would you like someone with you?

Some people prefer to attend appointments alone, while others like to have someone with them for support.

Take some time to consider what would work best for you.

The assessment may include questions you'd prefer to answer on your own, but we can work with you to ensure the process is structured in a way that feels comfortable.

What Happens at an Assessment?

Face-to-face or online appointments

Your assessment can be done either online or face-to-face, and online assessments often have shorter waiting times, so you might be able to get started a bit sooner.

For an online assessment, you'll need a laptop or smartphone with a stable internet connection. During the session, one of our team will guide you through various questions, and observations, all conducted via video call. The process is just like a face-to-face assessment, but being at home can make it easier to fit into your schedule and help you feel more comfortable.

During

During an autism assessment, we'll start by talking through your experiences and any concerns you may have. In more complex cases, we might invite you back for further assessments, either with the same clinician or a different one. Sometimes, we may ask you to attend a face-to-face appointment, which usually lasts between one and two hours. During the session, you may be asked to do simple activities. These activities are adapted from the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) and other diagnostic tools to ensure a thorough assessment.

During the assessment, we also look for other conditions that might be similar to autism, as we want to make sure we're doing a thorough evaluation. There are lots of things that can look like autism, so it's important to rule out other possibilities. We'll take our time to understand the full picture and make sure everything is carefully considered.

Outcome

After the assessment, the outcome could be a diagnosis of autism, a follow-up appointment, or no diagnosis if other factors are found to explain the difficulties. The team will discuss your case together in an MDT (multidisciplinary team) meeting to make sure everyone is involved in the decision-making process.

There are a few reasons why autism might not be diagnosed, and the most common ones are that your difficulties could be better explained by something else, like mental health issues, another neurodevelopmental condition such as ADHD, or even childhood trauma. If we don't make an autism diagnosis, we'll always explain why and, if needed, refer you to other services for further assessment or treatment of any other conditions. We're here to make sure you get the right support.

Advice

Mental Health Support

If you're concerned about your mental health, it's important to consult with your GP as soon as possible for advice and support. If you're experiencing thoughts of ending your life, please dial 999 (UK) or go to your nearest A&E, where you can request to be connected with the nearest crisis intervention team.

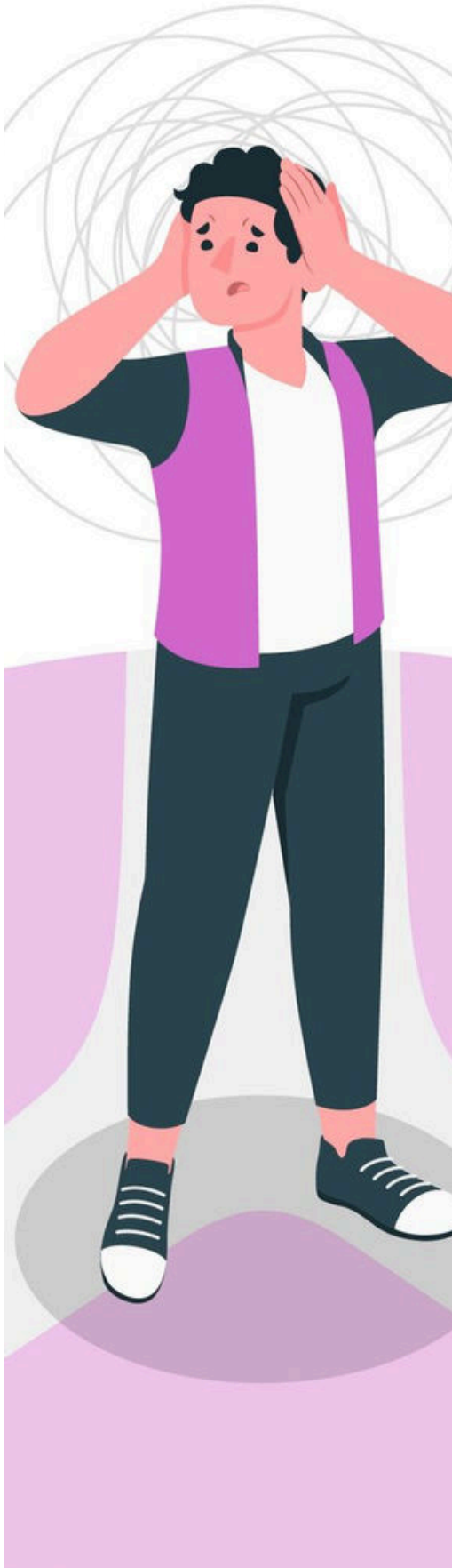
Below are contact details for organisations and services that can offer help and support directly.

The Mental Health Crisis Intervention Team is for adults aged 18 to 64. It is an urgent care service for people living in Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire who are experiencing an acute mental health crisis.

Their advice and support line is available 24 hours a day for anyone in Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire area who requires information, advice and support with their mental health. You can also contact this line if you are worried about family or friends who may be struggling with their mental health. Call 0800 138 0990.

Let's Talk offers support for mental health difficulties, providing access to talking therapies and a range of services to help manage mental well-being. It's a confidential service where you can get the support you need through appointments, whether in-person or online. You must have a Hull GP to access this service.
01482 247111 Refer yourself here

NHS East Riding Talking Therapies offers support for mental health through a range of talking therapies, helping individuals manage stress, anxiety, depression, and other concerns.
01482 335500 www.eastridingtalkingtherapies.nhs.uk



Advice

Mental Health Support

Shout 85258 For free, confidential support, 24/7, text SHOUT to 85258.
If you are struggling to cope and need to talk, trained Shout volunteers are available day or night. Shout can help with urgent issues such as:

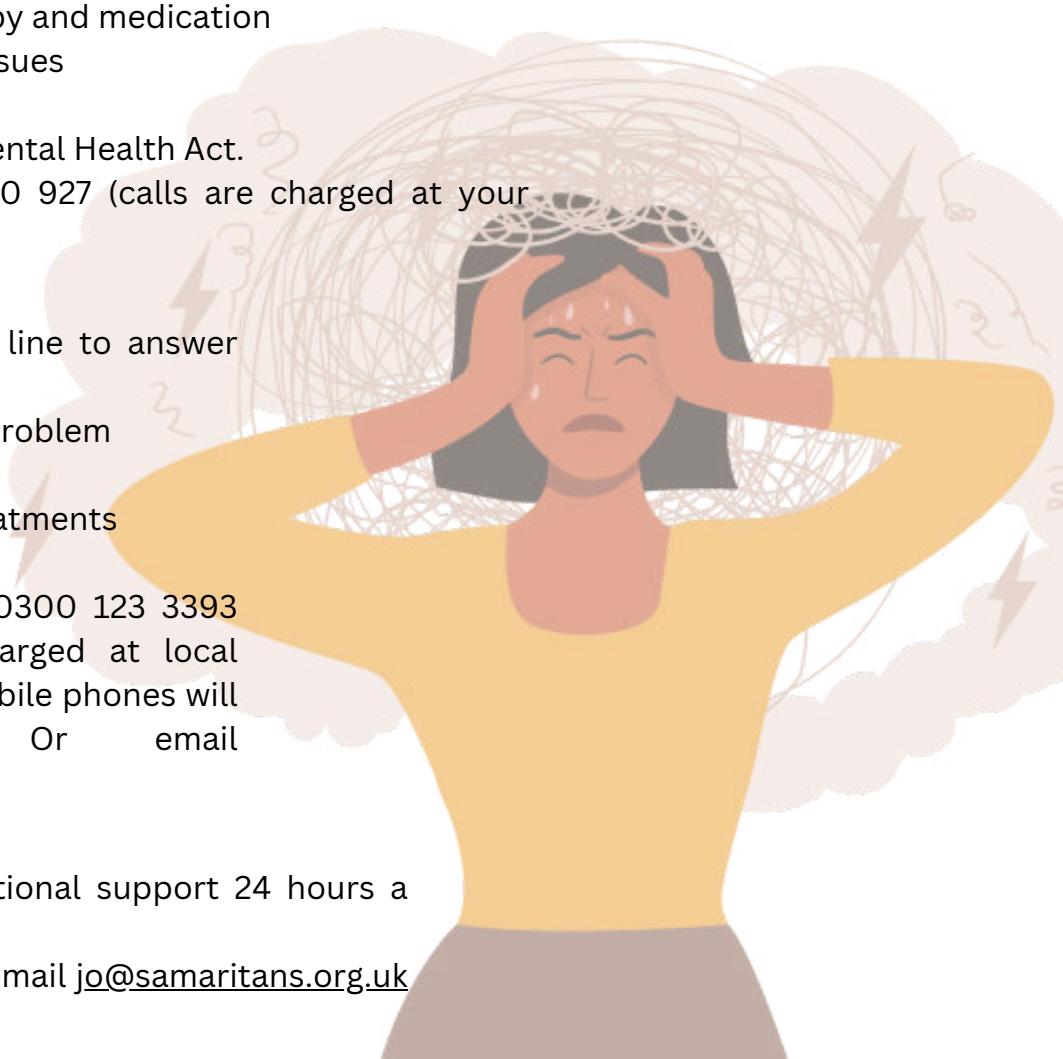
- Abuse
- Anxiety and stress
- Bullying
- Depression or sadness
- Loneliness or isolation
- Panic attacks
- Self-harm
- Suicidal thoughts

Find out more at https://giveusashout.org/get-help/

Rethink Mental Illness
You can call the Rethink advice and information line Monday to Friday, 10am to 2pm for practical advice on:

- different types of therapy and medication
- benefits, debt, money issues
- police, courts, prison
- your rights under the Mental Health Act.

Call Rethink on 0300 5000 927 (calls are charged at your local rate).



Mind offer an information line to answer questions about:

- types of mental health problem
- where to get help
- drug and alternative treatments
- advocacy.

Call the Mind infoline on 0300 123 3393 (UK landline calls are charged at local rates, and charges from mobile phones will vary considerably). Or email info@mind.org.uk .

The Samaritans offer emotional support 24 hours a day - in full confidence.
Call 116 123 - it's FREE. Or email jo@samaritans.org.uk .

Matthew’s Hub

Matthews Hub is a local charity whose ethos is to provide a support service for autistic people without a learning disability aged 13 or over, living in Hull or East Riding who have, or are waiting for a diagnostic assessment.

Matthew’s Hub workshops

Matthew’s Hub provide three workshops on topics to support those waiting for an Autism assessment in the Humber area.

The workshops will provide information and strategies that can be immediately implemented.

The workshops are delivered via zoom (on a mobile or computer/tablet) and there is no pressure to have your video or microphone on and you can contribute as much or as little as you feel comfortable with, the chat function is also available if you would feel more comfortable typing than talking too.

They also offer face-to-face appointments if that is more suitable for you.

Workshop Eligibility

Anyone who has had a referral accepted and is currently on a waiting list for an autism assessment will be eligible to attend appropriate workshops.

Matthew’s Hub

Pre-assessment Workshops

The pre-diagnosis workshops aim to give you a better understanding of autism and what the assessment process will require.

The sessions will cover introductory topics such as:

- What is autism?
- What you can expect from the assessment process
- What you can expect from a diagnosis or non diagnosis
- Methods that will help you manage your feelings and emotions while you wait for your Autism assessment

If you have any questions and are interested in benefitting from the pre-diagnosis workshops, contact Matthew’s Hub.

How to Contact

Address: Matthew's Hub, 69 Coltman Street, Hull, HU3 2SJ

Telephone: 01482 221028

Email: hello@matthewshub.org

Facebook: Like their Facebook page here.

Access Information: No stairs.

Additional Support

Signposting

Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice provides free, confidential support to people in the UK, helping them navigate various issues such as debt, housing, employment, and legal matters.

They offer guidance on managing money problems, understanding consumer rights, accessing benefits, and resolving disputes.

Citizens Advice also provides practical help with form filling, budgeting, and understanding legal processes.

With local offices and an online service, they ensure that individuals receive accurate information and support tailored to their specific needs.

Citizens Advice Hull
Address: The Wilson Centre, Alfred Gelder St, Hull HU1 2AG
Phone: 0800 144 8848

In addition to Citizens Advice, several other agencies provide valuable support:

- Social Services assist with housing, financial aid, and support for children, families, and vulnerable adults, including social care services.
- Job Centres help with job searches, applications, and benefits like Universal Credit or Jobseeker's Allowance.
- Food Banks provide free food and essentials for those facing financial hardship.
- Housing Associations offer affordable housing and support for those at risk of homelessness.
- Community Centres offer support groups, workshops, and social activities to help individuals connect and access resources.

Additional Support

Libraries

Your Local Library

Libraries offer a supportive environment for individuals who may need extra help with focus, structure, or sensory needs.

They provide quiet spaces for reading, studying, or relaxing, making it easier for people to work at their own pace without distractions.

Many libraries also offer sensory-friendly activities, books with visual aids, or tools to support different learning styles.

Staff are often trained to assist with specific needs, ensuring a welcoming atmosphere for everyone.

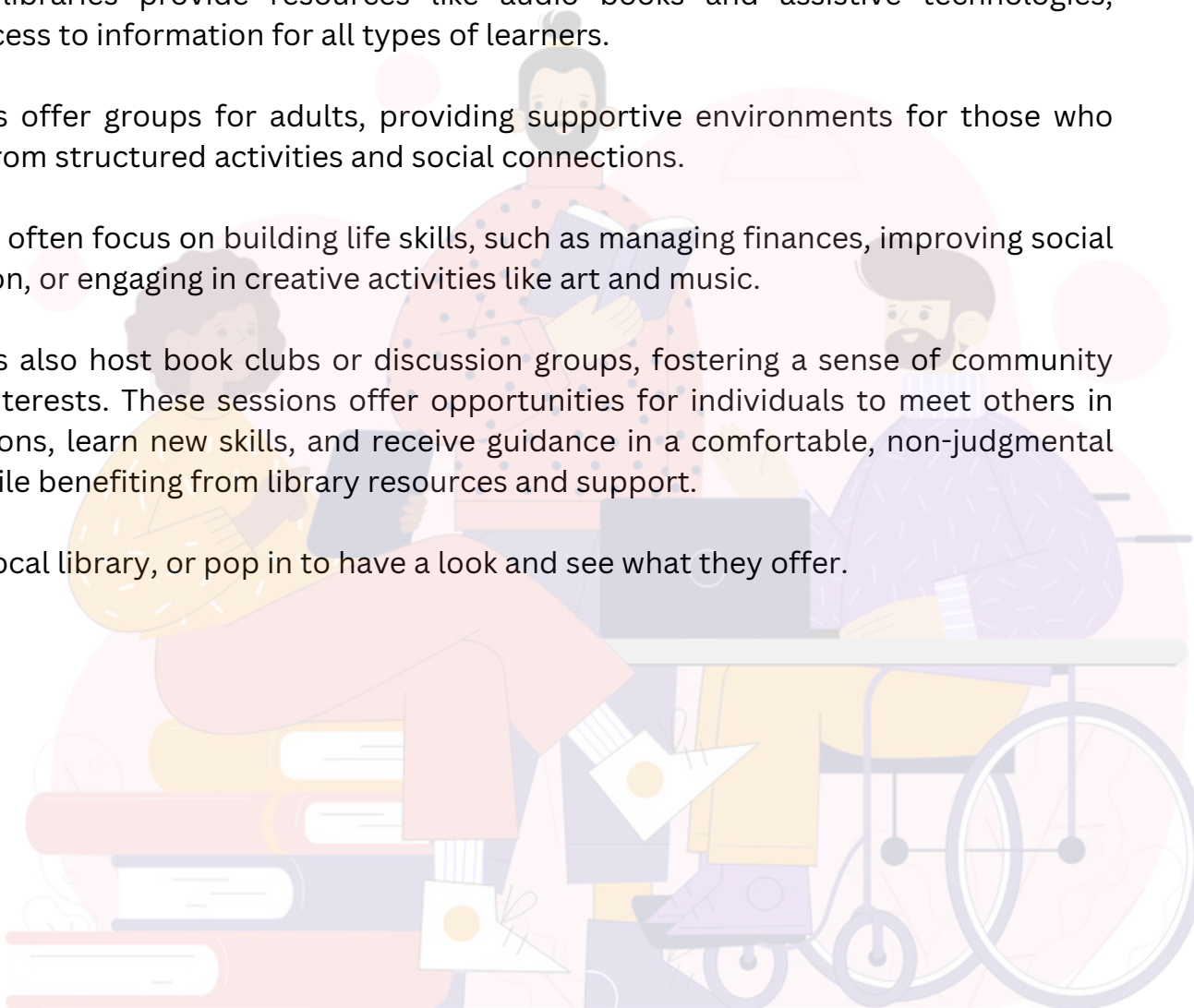
Additionally, libraries provide resources like audio books and assistive technologies, enhancing access to information for all types of learners.

Many libraries offer groups for adults, providing supportive environments for those who may benefit from structured activities and social connections.

These groups often focus on building life skills, such as managing finances, improving social communication, or engaging in creative activities like art and music.

Some libraries also host book clubs or discussion groups, fostering a sense of community and shared interests. These sessions offer opportunities for individuals to meet others in similar situations, learn new skills, and receive guidance in a comfortable, non-judgmental setting, all while benefiting from library resources and support.

Google your local library, or pop in to have a look and see what they offer.



Additional Support

Free Online Course

Autism Essentials

Reframing Autism is a free, self-paced online course that provides a neuro-affirming understanding of Autism.

This course is designed for a wide variety of lived experiences as well as different levels of pre-existing knowledge about Autism, from those that are totally new to the topic to those that have formal education in Autism.

Whether you are Autistic, formally diagnosed, self-identified or think you might be Autistic, a family member or loved one of an Autistic person, a researcher, teacher, other professional, or ally, you may learn something new or deepen and extend your existing knowledge of Autism and the Autistic community.

The course focuses on five main areas:

- Language
- What Is Autism?
- Brain Differences
- Communication and Socialising
- Thinking and Processing

All learners access the same base information in the course, but each topic has multiple worksheets available for different levels of knowledge about Autism. You can choose to complete the level that best fits your knowledge to customise your learning in a way that works for you.

Click this link to register:

https://reframing-autism-s-school.teachable.com/p/autism-essentials

Support for Carers

Do you provide support to someone who is ill, disabled or has a mental health problem?

You are a carer if you are spending a regular amount of time looking after or supporting someone. This could be a relative, partner or friend who without your support or the help of other carers would be unable to live independently.

As a carer your role may be causing you additional practical, emotional or financial worries that you need support with.

Both Hull and East Riding Care Support teams will be able to support carers with the following:

- Carer's Needs Assessment
- Carer's Reviews
- Carer Break Funding
- Information and advice
- Signposting and referral to other services
- Listening ear
- Peer Support groups
- Emergency planning

Hull:

Carers Information & Support Service (CISS)

chcp.carersinfo@nhs.net

01482 222220

Calvert Centre, 110a Calvert Lane, Hull, HU4 6BH

East Riding:

Carer Support

ercarers@eastriding.gov.uk

01482 396500

East Riding Carers Support Service
County Hall, Cross Street,
Beverley, HU17 9BA

Sensory Techniques

Taking care of your sensory system helps improve your overall well-being. Since your sensory system is connected to your nervous system, activities that calm one also calm the other. Here are some simple ways to calm your sensory system:

- **Breathing Exercises:** Slow, deep breathing helps relax your mind and body. Focus on breathing deeply into your belly and exhaling slowly. This helps calm both your nervous and sensory systems.

- **Create a Calm Space:** Make a quiet, tidy area with soft lighting and minimal noise. Having a calm space to retreat to can really help when things feel overwhelming.

- **Use Aromatherapy:** Scents like lavender or chamomile are relaxing. Try using essential oils or a diffuser to fill your space with calming smells.

- **Move Your Body:** Gentle movements like yoga, walking, or stretching can release tension. If you need more sensory input, try weightlifting or intense exercise.

- **Visual Relaxation:** Calm your senses by looking at peaceful images like nature scenes or soft colors. If you need more quiet, try wearing a sleep mask or cool eye mask.

- **Deep Pressure:** Things like weighted blankets, compression clothing, or a hug can help calm your sensory system.

- **Listen to Calming Sounds:** Try listening to soothing music, nature sounds, or white noise to find what helps you relax. These can be found on YouTube or streaming services.

Using these simple tips, you can create a routine to calm your sensory system and feel more balanced.

Support for All

Helpful tricks and tips

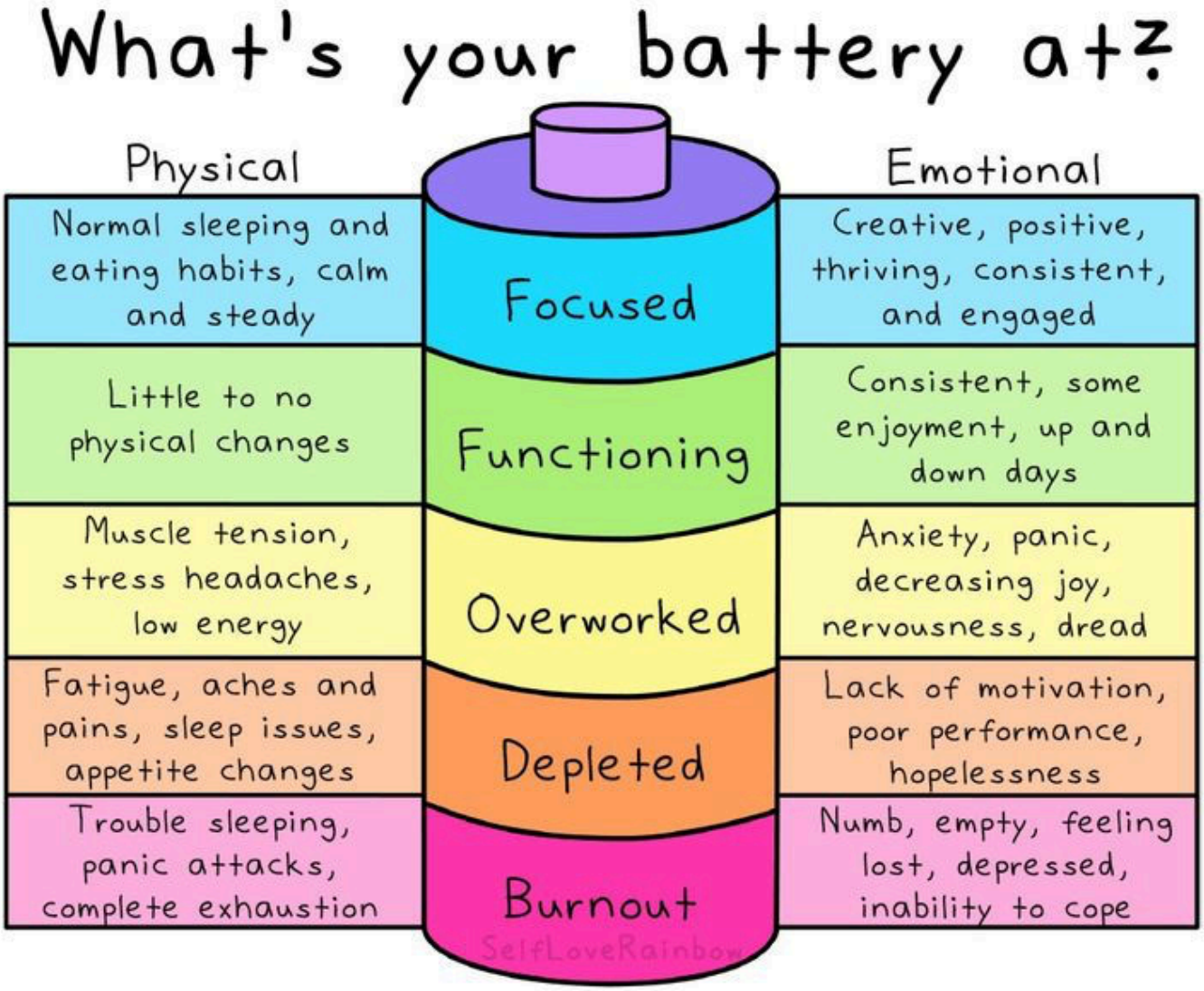
Quick Calming Techniques

The below tips are designed to help with self-regulation and distraction.

- Drink some cold water
- Reach your arms as far as you can and count to 10
- Draw or doodle Try drawing as many circles on a page as you can
- Count to 20 slowly
- Listen to a song you enjoy
- Wrap your arms around yourself and give yourself a hug
- Name 3 things you can see.
  2 things you can feel
  1 sound you can hear.
- Run your wrists under cold water
- Take ten deep breaths

Support for All

Helpful tricks and tips



If you are on social media, Selfloverainbow is an illustrator who is known for promoting self-acceptance, self-acceptance, mental health awareness, and positivity.

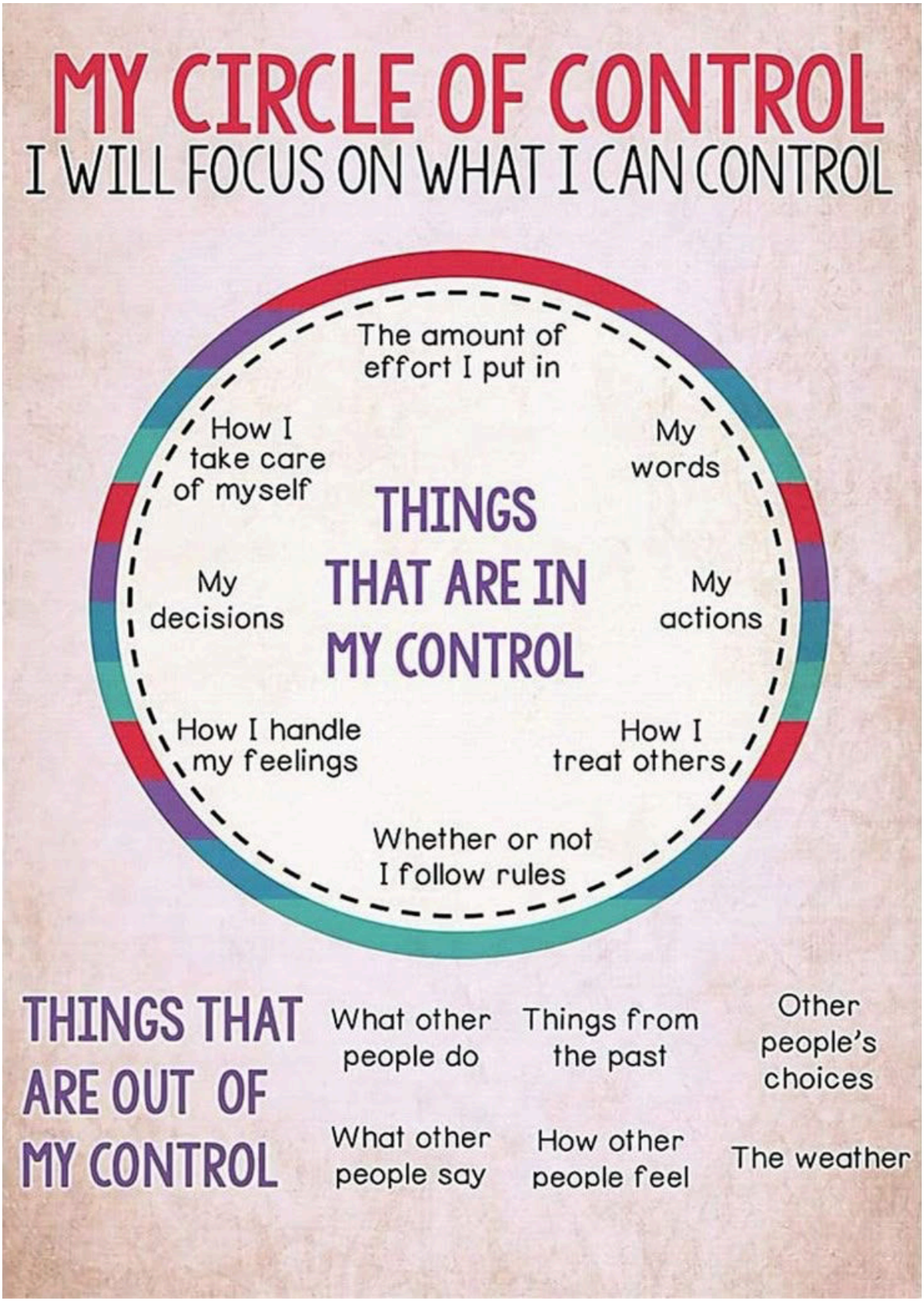
She shares various strategies for mindfulness including exercises, affirmations, and self-compassion practices. Through her posts, she encourages her followers to embrace their uniqueness and focus on their well-being, often offering practical tips on how to overcome negative thoughts, build confidence, and cultivate a more positive mindset.

Try her 31 Day Mental Wellness Prompts - here

Polite Notice: While we appreciate the content shared by Selfloverainbow, please be aware that we do not endorse, own, or control their posts. The views and strategies presented are solely those of the individual.

Support for All

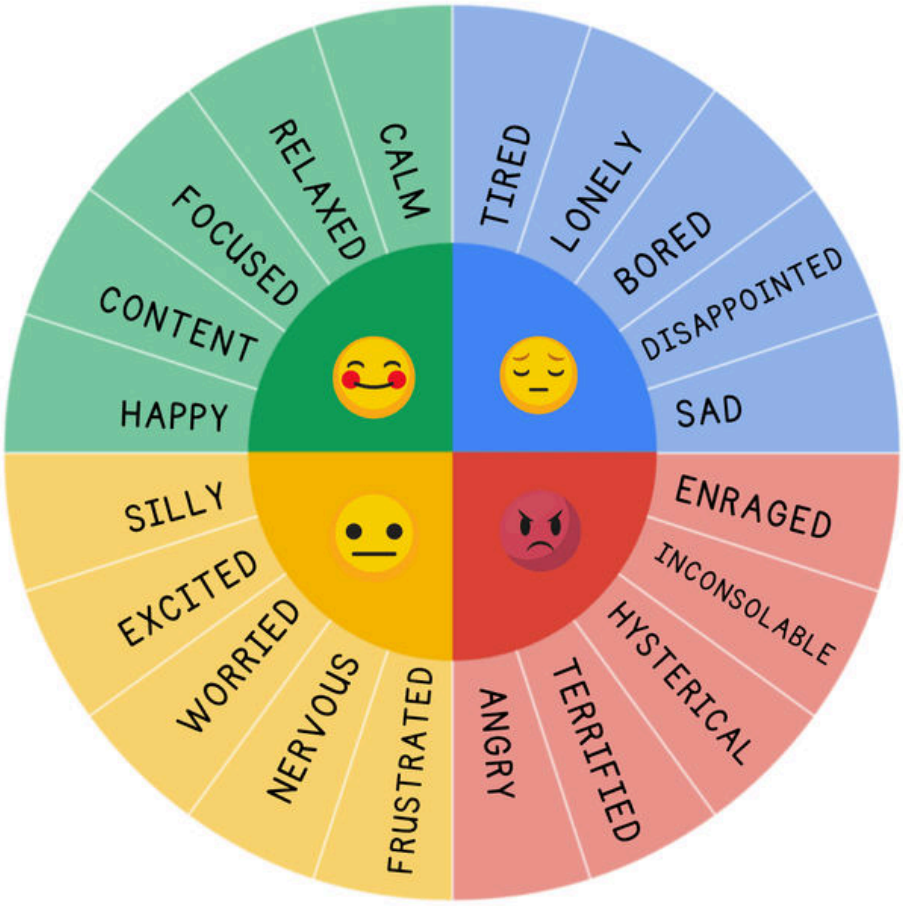
Helpful tricks and tips



Support for All

Helpful tricks and tips

Feelings Wheel



Sometimes, it's hard to figure out what we're feeling. A feelings wheel can be really helpful for identifying emotions and starting conversations about them.

Another way to make it easier is by picking a color that matches how you're feeling and going from there.

You might also find it useful to keep a mood diary. Writing down how you feel each day can help you spot patterns and better understand your emotions over time.

Support for All

Helpful tricks and tips

Movement

Pick a time in your daily routine to practice mindful walking for at least five minutes.

Concentrate on the physical sensations of walking - the sights, sounds and feelings of each step.

If your mind wanders, gently return your focus by repeating "left, right" as you walk.

If you can't walk outside, walking at home is a great alternative! You can easily find many walking videos on YouTube to follow along with. It's a good way to get moving without leaving your house.