



A warm welcome

Course introduction

Welcome to the carers resilience and wellbeing online self-help course.

We are delighted that you have chosen to join us today. This course is designed to help all unpaid carers, aged 18 and over, at any stage of the caring journey to find ways to manage the stresses and strains that everyday life throws at us.

As a carer, we often don't take the time to think about ourselves, always putting other people's health and wellbeing before our own. We do it so often that we forget how important it is to look after ourselves. It is easy to forget that if we look after our own health wellbeing, we can be stronger for the people that we care for.

During the course, you will learn about ways to:

- lower stress levels
- balance wellbeing
- build emotional resilience
- remember to be kind to yourself (we will be encouraging you to do this more often!)

There are 5 parts in this online course, which you can complete at your own pace. Each part and activity tells you how long it should take to complete.

The 5 parts are:

1. What does wellbeing and resilience mean?
2. Understanding stress
3. Your 'best self' and how to find it
4. Building your stress toolkit
5. Making change happen and thinking about the future

We suggest completing the activities over a 2 week period in order to get the best results. You can complete some of the activities over several days.

Like most things, it is best to start at the beginning and work your way through to the end.



Please remember to give your eyes a rest and take plenty of breaks away from your screen and make yourself comfortable before you start. A cup of tea and a biscuit, definitely helps!

You can download the **personal log book** to help you to work through the activities. However, it is not essential, some paper and a pencil will work just as well.

All of the course text is also available to download in PDF format.

This online tool kit is a shortened version of the Carers Resilience and Wellbeing training course, which is open to all unpaid carers in Ceredigion. If you are interested in attending free online or in person training, please contact the Carers and Community Support Team to find out when the next training course is available: 01545 574200 or email connecting@ceredigion.gov.uk

PART 1 - What does wellbeing and resilience mean?

(Takes around 30 minutes to complete)

In this part, you will learn about:

- What wellbeing means to you
- What resilience means and why it is important to have it

Let's start with an important question: **What does wellbeing mean to you?**

- Wellbeing has a different meaning for everyone, but it mostly means **comfortable, healthy, or happy**.
- Take a few moments to think about what wellbeing means to you...if it helps you can write it down. You can use your personal log book to make notes (page 1).
- Wellbeing can include things like your feelings, a place, an activity, people or even a favourite time of year.
- There is no right answer, watch this short video to find out what other carers have said. (*Watch the short video 'What does wellbeing mean to you?'*)



- Your wellbeing is important because we all deserve to be comfortable, healthy and happy. By doing the things we like best or being around the people we love the most, we can improve our overall wellbeing.

We know that it's important to look after our wellbeing, but did you know that it is just as important to have resilience?

Your plan vs reality

We would all like our life to be a smooth ride, with no big bumps in the road.



However, in reality, life does not work out that way. Sometimes there are great big dips and obstacles that get in our way.



Caring for someone can sometimes make your journey through life a bit harder, making the obstacles more difficult to get over.

If we look after our wellbeing and we are resilient, the obstacles become easier to handle and we can recover more quickly.

So, what is resilience and why is resilience important?

When we talk about a person being resilient, we usually mean that they are able to become strong again after something bad happens, then continue with their life.

Having resiliency is important because much of life involves difficulties and challenges that wear us down and teach us lessons. If we are resilient, we can learn from those lessons and make meaning from them.

Resiliency gets stronger over time and with practice. This course will help you to find ways to improve your resilient bounce!

You can find lots of good videos online that explain the importance of resilience, this one is a good example: **Brains: Journey to resilience**,



<https://youtu.be/HJvDrT6N-mw>

Part 1 summary

In this part, you have learned:

- What wellbeing means to you.

- What resilience means and why it is important to have it.

Now that you understand what your wellbeing means to you and what we mean when we use the term resilience, let's start part 2.

PART 2 - Understanding stress

(Takes around 40 minutes to complete)

In this part, you will learn about:

- What stress is and how it affects your body
- A different way of looking at your health and wellbeing

What is stress?

Stress can be both good and bad.

Believe it or not, a little bit of stress can be a good thing.

1000s of years ago, the way our brain and body reacted to stress or danger was essential for our survival, this reaction is sometimes called the **fight or flight response**.

The fight or flight response is used to describe what happens inside us when our brain senses danger.

When our brain detects danger, the oldest most primitive part of it kicks into action, quickly telling us to either run away or to fight against the danger.

You may also have heard of the **fight, flight, freeze, flop response**, this is the same thing but as it suggests, there are 2 more possible reactions:

- Freeze – you may go tense and freeze to the spot
- Flop – is like freeze but your body goes floppy

These reactions happen automatically, before the modern thinking part of our brain can decide whether we are really in any danger or not.



The fight or flight response was really helpful for our ancestors. They had to rely on it to escape real danger in life or death situations, like running away from an angry sabre toothed tiger!

These days, we still use it to keep ourselves safe but, all sorts of things that do not pose an actual threat to our life also trigger the response. Our bodies still react in the same way as they did all those years ago.

We face all sorts of stress, every day:

- Caring for someone
- Going to work
- Work deadlines
- Getting the kids to school
- Getting the kids home from school
- Financial worries
- Exams
- Relationship break ups
- Driving
- Moving home
- Going on holiday
- The list is endless...

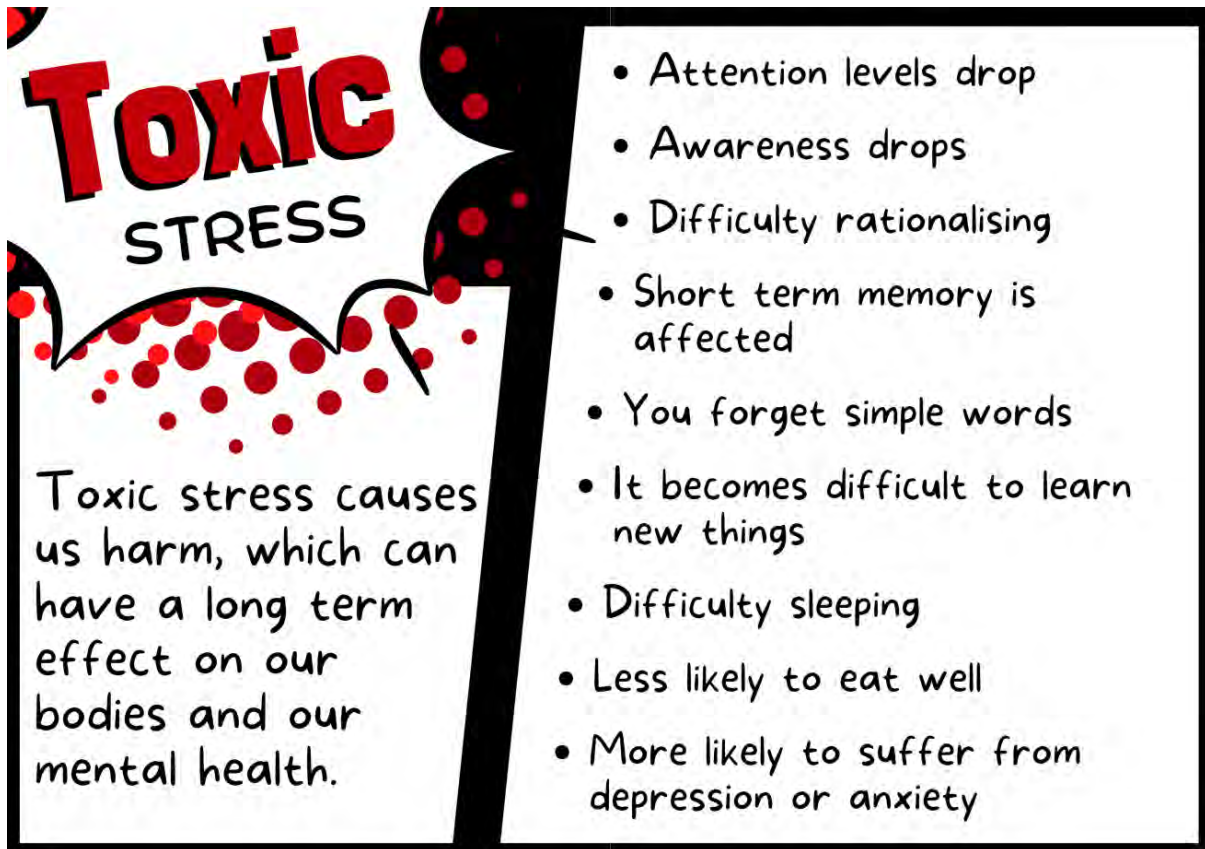


<https://youtu.be/JtSP7gJuRFE>

What is the difference between good stress and bad stress?

<p>GOOD STRESS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Motivating• Increases focus• Improves performance• Can be exciting• Lasts for a short period of time• There is no threat or fear	<p>BAD STRESS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decreases performance• Feels unpleasant• Can be short or long term• Is perceived to be outside our coping abilities• Causes anxiety or concern• Causes health problems
<p>EXAMPLES OF GOOD STRESS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Getting a promotion at work• Starting a new job• Getting married• Buying a home• Having a baby• Moving• Going on holiday• Retiring	<p>EXAMPLES OF BAD STRESS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Going into hospital (you or a family member)• Injury or illness (you or a family member)• The death of a spouse, family member or friend• Going through a divorce• Losing contact with loved ones• Abuse or neglect

Over time, if we suffer from too much **bad stress**, it can become worse and turn into **toxic stress**.



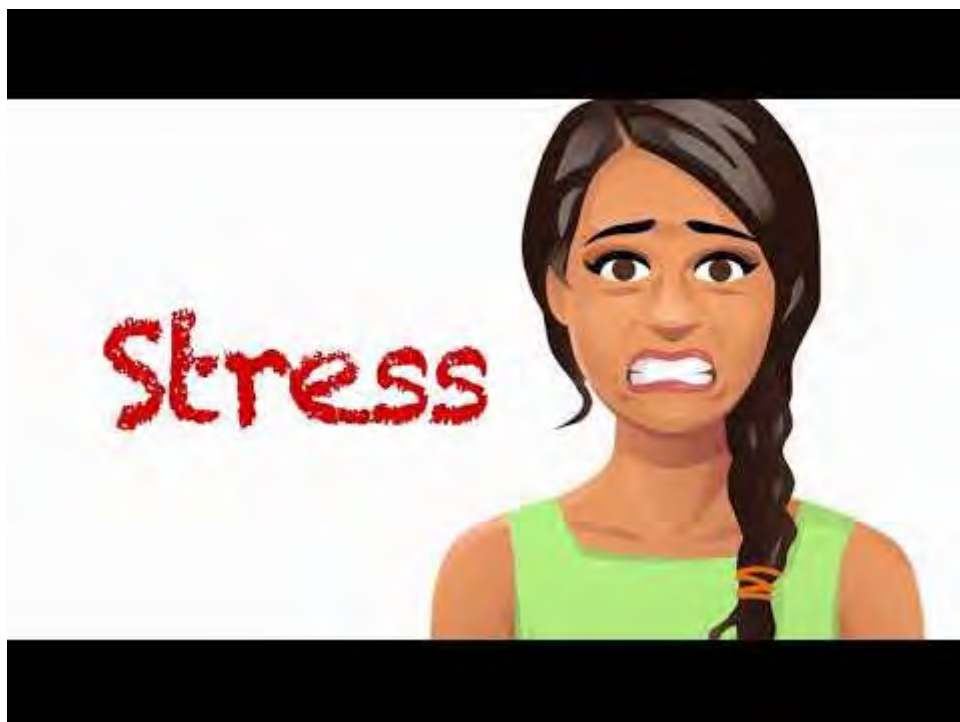
Toxic STRESS

Toxic stress causes us harm, which can have a long term effect on our bodies and our mental health.

- Attention levels drop
- Awareness drops
- Difficulty rationalising
- Short term memory is affected
- You forget simple words
- It becomes difficult to learn new things
- Difficulty sleeping
- Less likely to eat well
- More likely to suffer from depression or anxiety

The infographic features a large, stylized red and black graphic on the left that resembles a brain or a cluster of cells, with the words 'Toxic STRESS' written in bold red and black letters. To the right, a list of symptoms is presented in a clean, black font. The background is white with a black border.

Here is a short YouTube video that explains the effects of stress on our brains.



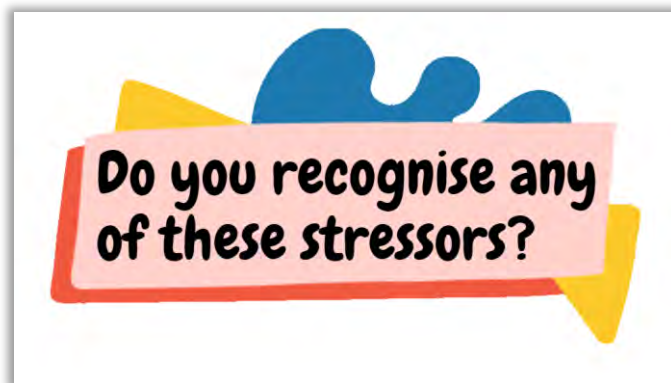
How stress affects the brain - <https://youtu.be/5u0z7-BJec0>

“Knowledge is power” – Sir Francis Bacon, 1597
“Forewarned is forearmed” – Abraham Tucker, 1768

Understanding what is happening in your brain and body can help you to make sense of situations and prepare for bad or stressful things, when they happen.

It also helps you to know what stresses you out, so that you can plan and be ready for the next time it happens.

We asked carers to tell us what stressed them out the most, watch the video to find out what they said:



Take some time to think about what makes you feel stressed, write it down if it helps. You can use your personal logbook to make notes (page 1).

We will look at these stresses again, in part 4, when you will look at ways to manage stress.

A different way of thinking about your health and wellbeing

Common thinking – wait until you become ill or for things to go wrong before you fix it.

All through our lives, we have times that we are in good health and times that we have bad or poor health.

While we have good health and feel good, we rarely think about the bad times. Usually, we wait for something to go wrong and then we go to the doctor and ask them to cure us.

Most people think that we can only be healthy and happy if we are completely well and have nothing wrong with us:

- no illness or disease
- no stresses
- no unexpected difficulties

Think back to the pictures 'your plan' versus 'reality' that we looked at earlier.



Thinking in this way is just not realistic and it sets us up for disappointment.



In reality, life is full of ups and downs, times of good health and times of bad health.

You will be glad to hear that if we accept this reality of life, there is a different way for us to think about our health, which is more realistic and can improve our wellbeing at the same time.

A different view – focus on the things that support our health and wellbeing

Think about your health as a sliding scale that you are constantly moving up and down, between good health and bad health and you can be at any point in-between.



If we accept that over the course of our lives, we will:

- have times of good health and times of bad health or even a bit of both;
- face challenges;
- and have obstacles thrown in our way that we cannot control.

We can prepare for the bad times and can even learn how to live well with bad health.

By focussing on living well, despite life's challenges, you can improve your general wellbeing, boost your resilience and manage your reality.



Part 2 summary

In this part, you learned about:

- What stress is and how it affects your body
- A different way of looking at your health and wellbeing

In the following parts, we will look at ways to help you focus on your wellbeing and how, with practice, you can better prepare yourself to deal with life's challenges.

PART 3 - Your 'best self' and how to find it

(Takes around 40 minutes to complete)

We all have a version of ourselves that we imagine is us at our best. We call this our '**best self**'. Much like how we think of our wellbeing, each of us will have a different idea about what our best self is.

In part 3, you will:

- Find your 'best self'
- Learn about your best self scale
- Set some goals to improve your wellbeing

What is your 'Best Self'?

What does it mean to be your best self?

How do you know what is your best and if you are even heading in the right direction?

Everyone is different. We all have our own version of our best self and each of us would answer these questions differently.

Your best self will **never** be like anyone else's. It is unique to you. Try not to compare yourself to others or copy what you think someone else's best self is. It does not work and it will not make you feel good.

Just remember this:

- **We all have our own journey in life**, with our own challenges, skills and talents.
- When you are trying to describe your own best self, you are in control of it and **you get to choose what it means for you.**
- Your definition of **your best self will change over time.** Throughout your life journey, your ambitions, achievements and goals will change as you learn more about yourself. As you grow, your best self will grow too.

Try it out... take some time to think about and describe your best self.

When you are your best self:

- How do you feel?
- What are you thinking?
- How are you behaving?

Try to include as much detail as you can, this will make it easier for you to picture yourself at your best.

To help you do this, try writing it down. There is space in your personal logbook for this (page 2), or you can use scrap paper and a pen.

Here are some short examples other people have used to describe their best self.



Now you have an idea of who you are when you are your best self, let's look at who you are when you are not feeling so good.

Best Self scale

It is unlikely that you will feel your best self all of the time, but you can aim to be your best self whenever you can.

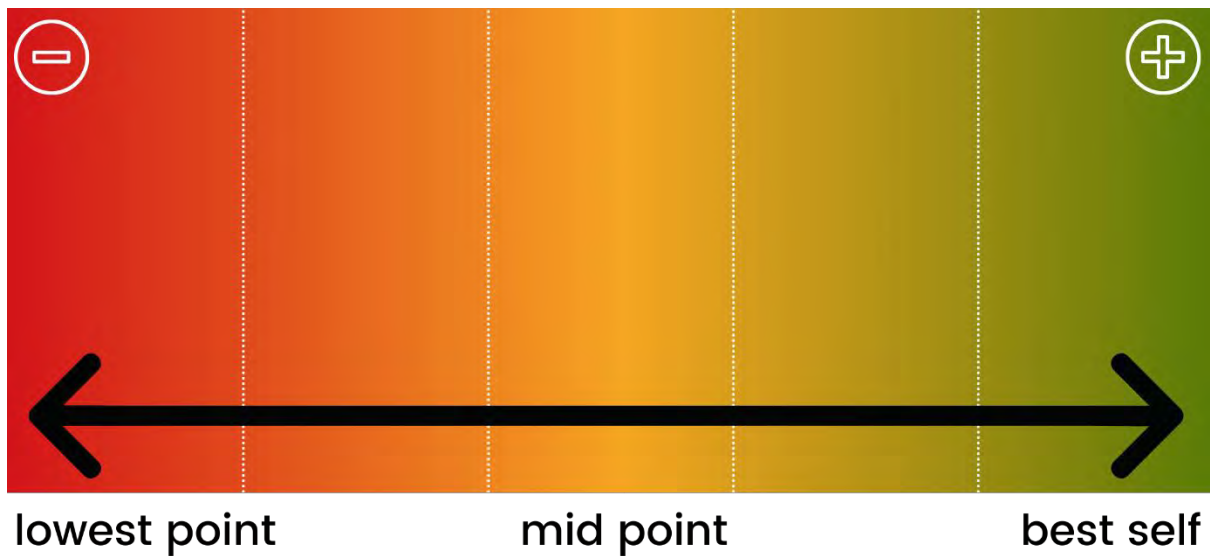
When we are stressed out or feeling down, it is not always easy to be our best self or to feel like we can be our best self.

Our brains do not make it easy for us, especially if we go into fight or flight mode and we cannot get the thinking part of our brain to work. In a constant stressed state, we are more likely to fall into the same patterns of unhelpful behaviour, making it harder to become our best self.

The good news is, we can look for ways to help us get back to our best self. Through practice, and even if we do it one small step at a time, we will get better at it and we will become more resilient.

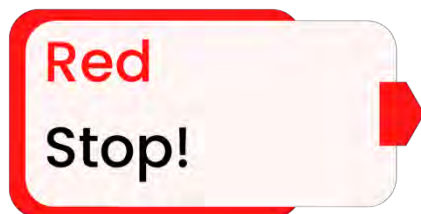
To help make it easier to work our way towards being our best self, we can think of our wellbeing as a sliding scale and we can break it down into stages.

The sliding scale:



On the sliding scale, 'best self' is the best you can possibly be and 'lowest point' is the lowest you can be. Think about how you are feeling right now. Where are you on the scale?

The traffic light colours may also help you to think about where you are on the scale too.



Emotions and feelings are out of control.

You may have strong feelings of:

- rage
- anger
- panic
- or explosive behaviour.

Amber

Slow down or
get ready

You have some control over your emotions and feelings and you are alert.

Some feelings could be:

- stress
- excitement
- confusion
- anxiety.

Green

Good to go

You are in control, your emotions and feelings feel good and appropriate for all situations.

You might feel:

- calm
- happy
- comfortable
- content.

You can use the scale to help you move towards your best self. It just takes a bit of practice.

Let's try it...

Using your personal logbook (*page 2*), or a piece of paper, describe who you are at the following points of the scale:

BEST SELF

Describe your best self

If you have already written something down, try to expand on it.

- How are you feeling?
- How are you are behaving?
- What are you thinking about?
- How does your body feel?

LOWEST POINT

Describe your lowest point

Again, try to answer these questions:

- How are you feeling?
- How are you are behaving?
- What are you thinking about?
- How does your body feel?

Was it easier to describe, your best self or your lowest point? Mostly, people say that the lowest point is easier.



Why do you think we find it easier to describe our lowest point?

Quite simply, our brains find it easier to remember bad experiences. Our brains are constantly pulling us down the scale, so we need to remind it about the good times and give it a helping hand to get us back up the scale towards our best self again.

MID POINT

Now describe your mid point

- How are you feeling?
- How are you are behaving?
- What are you thinking about?
- How does your body feel?

It may take you some time to think about how you feel at each point in the scale and it will take practice to get used to thinking about yourself in this way. Throughout the next week, when you feel yourself becoming stressed, take time to **stop, take a breath** and ask yourself **'What's going on? How do I feel? Where am I on the scale? Is there anything I can do to make it better?'**

You may even want to think about who you are in the spaces between the lowest point, mid point and best self, as the colour changes. To help you do this, we have divided the scale up into more sections, which you will find in your logbook (*pages 6 and 7*).

You have almost reached the end of part 3, but before moving on to part 4, we suggest that you try to fill in as much of your scale, between your lowest point and best self, as you can.

Why should I do this?

Using the scale to make sense of how you are feeling can help you to interrupt your fight or flight response.

When you are feeling low or a bit stressed, the more you practise interrupting your negative brain and stop it from pulling you further down your scale, the easier it will be to use your thinking brain. You need to be able to use the thinking part of your brain to make sense of your thoughts and to make decisions about what you need to do to make things better.

Setting some goals

Now is a good time to set yourself some goals that will help you to:

- boost your wellbeing;
- pull yourself up the scale towards your best self;
- be kinder to yourself.

Set yourself 3 goals that you think will help you to do this. They can be as big or small as you want them to be. Make sure they are manageable and realistic or you will set yourself up to fail before you even begin!

Write your goals down on a piece of paper. There is space in your personal logbook (*page 8*) for your goals, but you may want to pin them to your fridge or keep them by your bed. Keep your goals somewhere you will see them often as a reminder.

These are your goals and your commitment to looking after yourself.

Here are some examples of goals that other carers have set:

Goals

• I will walk
• around the
• block at least
• once a day.

★ I will take all
my allocated
breaks at
work.

I will start a
new knitting
project.

I will start
using my
exercise
bike again.

I will cut the
hedge at the
front of the
house.

I will go to
bed 1 hour
earlier than
usual.

I will eat at
least 1
cooked meal
a day. ★

I will meet my
friend for coffee
the next time
she asks me.

Part 3 summary

In this part, you have:

- Found your 'best self'
- Learned about the best self scale
- Set 3 goals that will improve your wellbeing

We suggest allowing at least 1 week before moving on to part 4. This will allow you time to get to know your scale a bit better and to set yourself some goals.

PART 4 – Building your stress toolkit

(Takes around 30 minutes to read)

We suggest that you complete the activities over a few days to get the most benefit from them.

In this part, you will:

- Work on your best self scale
- Look at the effect stress has on you and the people around you
- Discover ways to manage your stress

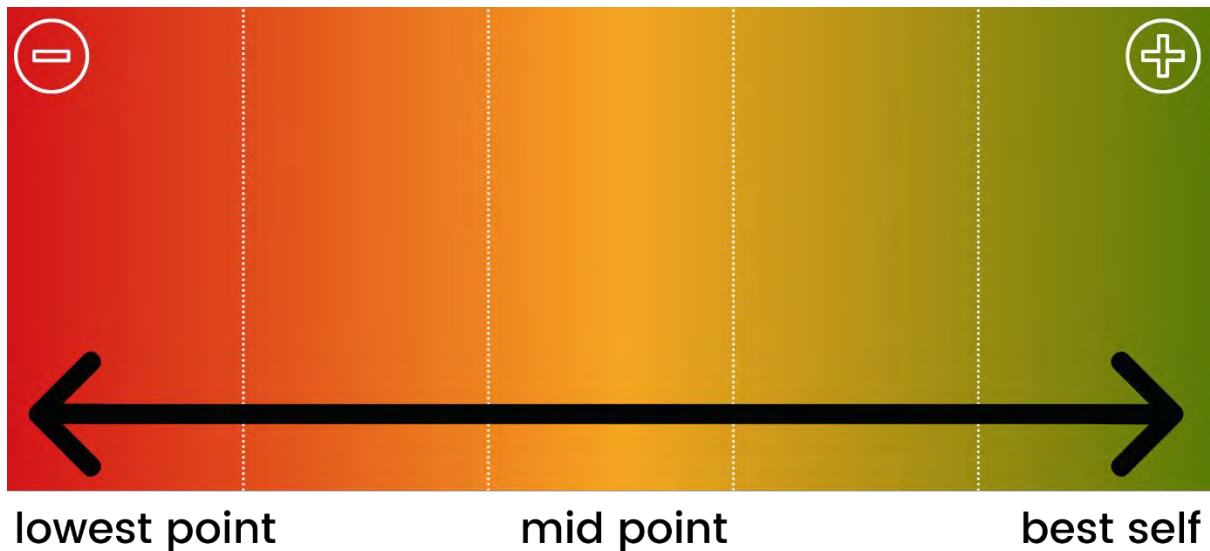
My best self scale

Hopefully you have been working on your best self scale and getting to know how you feel at the different points on the scale.

Please don't worry if you are finding it difficult to write about your feelings. We will look at different ways you can make your own scale, so that it works for you.

Where are you on the scale today?

To begin with, **stop** and take a moment to think about where you are on your best self scale, right now.



- Has it changed throughout the day?
- Has it got worse or has it got better?
- If you are feeling anything less than your best self, can you think of something that will help you to move towards your best self?

It's possible to experience a whole range of points on the scale in just one day!

How can this happen?



You might start the day feeling very close to your best self.

'I am feeling good today. I am organised and calm. I didn't have to get up to help Mum last night, I am ready to get on with my day.'



Then something unexpected happens.

'I forgot about Mum's hospital appointment, it's at the same time I need to pick the kids up from school and my manager is expecting me to hand in a report by lunchtime.'

This causes you drop to below your mid point. The extra stress quickly effects your mood and how you are managing your workload, this brings you down the scale.



You stop to think how you can make things better.

- You talk with a friend who makes you feel better and offers to collect the kids for you.
- You talk to your manager, they tell you to take your mum to her hospital appointment and that you can hand in the report the next morning.
- Your manager also tells you about the support your employer can offer you as a working carer and you both set up a meeting to talk about it on another day.

It really is up to you, the more you personalise your best self scale, the easier it will be to use. You will also find it easier to recognise when you are slipping down the scale, to understand what is happening and what you need to do to bring yourself back towards your best self.

ACTIVITY

Time to try it out... (You can spend as little or as long as you like on this activity!)

Try to make yourself a scale using some of the suggestions above, or try mixing different ideas together. You do not have to share your scale with anyone and it does not matter what it looks like, just do what feels right for you.

There is space in your personal log to try this out (pages 9 to 12), or you could use paper and a pen or even use a mobile device, if you have one.

How stress affects you and the people around you

So far, we have looked at the different types of stress we face in our lives and how our feelings can vary from day to day and even from one minute to the next.

Our thoughts, feelings and behaviours can be affected by what is happening around us.

We do not always have control over what is happening around us and we cannot control all of life's challenges.

What can you do to feel less stressed during life's challenges?

You may not be able to predict all of life's challenges, but you can probably list a number of things that make you feel stressed or have made you feel stressed in the past.

Let's look at how you respond to stress...

Take a look at the list of stressors you made in part 2, feel free to add more to the list or start a new list if you like.

If you are starting a new list, make a note of all the things that make you feel stressed.

There is space to do this in your personal log (pages 13 to 16), or you can write your list down using a piece of paper and a pen.

Here are some examples of the things that other carers have said causes stress:

Stressors



You will probably recognise some of these examples, they may even be on your list and perhaps you have been able to list a few more.

It is important to identify what it is that causes you stress. It can help you to work out what steps you need to take to lessen the effect of the stress and to bring you back up the scale towards your best self, these steps will help to improve your wellbeing.

What happens to me when I am stressed?

Looking at your list of stressors, think about how you respond to each stressor when it is happening...

Make a note of the following:

- How do you feel?
- What are you thinking about?
- How does your body feel?

These are your internal responses to stress. Can you pinpoint where you might be on your scale?

How does my response to stress affect what is happening around me?

Now look at each stressor and make a note of what happens next:

- How do you behave?
- How do other people react to you?
- What is the result of your response?

These are the external responses to stress.

Now look at what you have written, can you see how your internal responses can cause a chain of events that:

- can make you behave or act in ways that you do not want to;
- affect the people around you;
- can cause you even more, unnecessary, stress?

If you know how a situation is going to play out, you can prepare yourself for when it happens. You may not be able to stop the stressor from happening, or have any control over the stressor, but **you can manage and change how you respond to it.**

How can I manage my response to stress?

You have spent some time thinking about the things that cause you stress and you have identified what happens when you get stressed. Now it is time to think about what you can do about it.

If we do not find ways to relieve stress, the stress can build up to a point that is damaging to us (toxic stress).

We can avoid reaching dangerous stress levels by using resources around us that can get rid of the pressure building inside us.

Introducing the stress bucket!

Watch the stress bucket video, which explains the effects of building stress...



You probably already have some coping strategies that you use when you are stressed; we will call these '**your tools**'. There are tools all around us and we just need to find the right tool for the job!

What are 'your tools'?

Our tools are what we can use to release the pressure of stress when we need to.

- Can you think of some useful tools that could help you manage the level of stress in your stress bucket?
- What tools are you already using?
- Can you think of some new ones?



To help you, make a list of all your tools. There is space to do this in your personal logbook (page 17) or you can make your list on a spare piece of paper.

Here are some examples:



The list is endless; it can change and grow with each new challenge you face.

As you journey through life, you will overcome new and difficult challenges. Each time you do this, you will be able to use what you have learned from your past experiences to overcome those challenges and you will gain more tools along the way.

Being aware of the tools you have, in your toolkit, helps you to be prepared for the things that cause you stress and interrupt your fight or flight response.

Use what works for you.

You are your own tool! You can choose how you respond to stress and what tools to use.

Part 4 summary

In this part, you have:

- Worked on your best self scale and looked at the different ways you can make your scale.
- Looked at the effect stress has on you and the people around you.
- Discover how using 'tools' can help you manage your stress.

Before we go on to the final part of the course, you may want to take a few days to work on getting to know your best self scale a bit better.

You may also want to take a bit more time to think about your tools.

Also, **do not forget your goals**. How are you getting on with those? Are you managing to keep to them?

Part 4 complete, move on to part 5.

PART 5 – Making change happen and thinking about the future

(Takes around 1 hour to complete)

In the final part of the course, you will:

- Learn about reframing
- Manage current challenges
- Plan ahead and set some goals

Change your thinking



Talking to yourself, inside your head or aloud, is something that many of us do.

No, it does not mean that you are crazy!

It is normal to talk to yourself and it's actually quite good for your mental health, if you are having the right conversations.

Sometimes our inner voice speaks to us in an unhelpful and negative way. This can:

- affect our thinking;
- change how we see things;
- make us feel worse;
- trigger our fight or flight stress response.



This is something that you can learn control.

Learning how to **reframe** your thinking trains your brain and your inner voice to stop giving you unhelpful messages.

Reframing means looking at a situation, thought or feeling from a different angle.

Taking time to reframe your thinking can also slow down your stress response.

Here are some examples of an unhelpful inner voice:

(You can find these written on page 18 of your personal logbook)



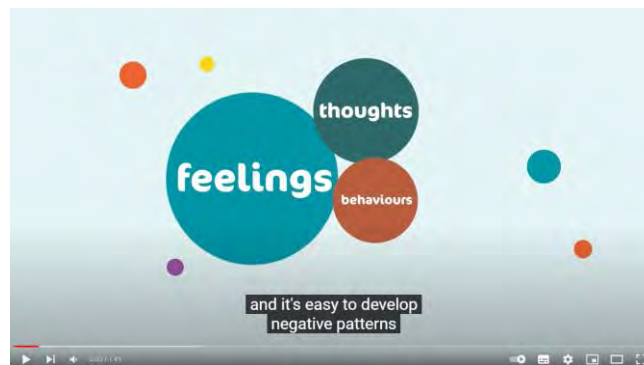
I never get anything right.
It's too hard, I should just give up.
I should be better than I am.
Nobody cares.
Something bad is going to happen.

You may be familiar with these thoughts. In times of stress, you may have said these things to yourself.

This type of thinking is unhelpful; this is your brain pulling you down. It gets in the way of you improving your wellbeing and becoming your best self.

Reframing negative thoughts can help to pull you back up towards your best self.

To help you understand the effects of negative thoughts, watch the following short YouTube videos:



<https://youtu.be/tfkhkFwCtxs> (1.4 mins)



https://youtu.be/71_NkXgAK1g (3.5 mins)

How do you reframe your thinking?

You may have heard a friend or family member say some of the things, listed above, to you.

If a friend said any of these things to you:

- What would you tell them?
- Would you agree with them?
- Would you try to help them look at their situation from a different angle?

Let's try it out:

Imagine a friend or family member has said these things to you, what would you tell them?

You can use your logbook (page 18) or a piece of paper to write down what you would say to them.

Negative statement	My response
I never get anything right.	
It's too hard, I should just give up.	
I should be better than I am.	
Nobody cares.	
Something bad is going to happen.	

Use the space at the bottom of the list to try using a real example. Think of a time someone said something to you, or write down a negative thought of your own and respond as if you were talking to a friend.

Let's look at your answers:

- How did you get on?
- How did you respond?
- Did you agree with them?
- Did you try to reassure them?
- Can you see that there is no proof that these statements are correct?
- Do you think it is easier to reframe someone else's thoughts?

We have added a few more examples of negative thinking in your personal logbook for you to practice reframing.



Keep practicing

The trick is, to catch the negative thoughts when you are having them and to teach yourself to talk back to them.

The next time you catch yourself having a negative thought, tell yourself to “**STOP!**”

Then talk back to yourself. **THINK**, what is going on here, what is causing me to think in this way?

Here are some questions to help you; you can find them on page 21 of your personal logbook:

- Is there any proof that what I am thinking is true?
- Is there any evidence that shows me my thought is untrue?
- Am I blaming myself for something I have no control over?
- Am I using any words that are exaggerated?
- Am I trying to read someone else’s mind and believe it is a fact?
- Do any of my past experiences show me that this is not always true?
- Am I ignoring any positives in the situation or any of my strengths?

You can **CHOOSE** to change your thinking and the more you do it, the easier it will become.

Reframing your thoughts also helps to slow down your stress response. This has a calming effect and means you are able to think more rationally.

Managing current challenges



Having an understanding of our challenges, allows us to manage them better and take control of the outcomes.

You are in control of how you respond to what is happening around you and you are responsible for becoming your best self.

Taking control and making small changes can affect how you feel and, in turn, improve your wellbeing.

You are almost at the end of the course, so now is a good time to bring everything together and try out what you have learned.

Before you do this, let's do a quick recap of what you have learned so far.

In the course, you have learned:

- What wellbeing means to you and why it is important.
- What resilience is and how it gets stronger as we learn from life's challenges.
- What stress is, how it affects your body and how it can affect the people around you.
- A positive way of looking at your health and wellbeing.
- About your best self and how to use a scale to help you bounce back.
- You have 'tools' that you can use to lower your stress levels.
- How reframing your thinking can help to improve your wellbeing.

If you bring all of these lessons together, in your daily life, you can work through anything!

Let's try it out...

For this next activity, you will need a piece of paper, or you can use your personal logbook (page 22).

Draw 3 columns and write the following at the top of each column:

- **Challenges**
- **What needs to happen**
- **Why it matters**

Challenges	What needs to happen	Why it matters
1.		
2.		
3.		

In the first column, under the heading **CHALLENGES**, make note of the challenges you are facing in your life now. It might help to work through one challenge at a time.

In the second column, under the heading **WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN**, make note of what you think needs to happen for each challenge. Use what you have learned in the course to help you:

- What would make it easier for you to manage?
- Are there any tools you can use? Can somebody or something help?
- What can you do to make things better right now?
- Try reframing; what would you tell a friend to do?

In the third column, under the heading **WHY IT MATTERS**, make note of the reasons why it is important for you to work through it:

- Why do you care?
- Do you care what happens?

Finding meaning in life's challenges is important; it gives you a purpose and a sense of control. If you do not care or cannot find meaning, there is no point and you are in danger of causing yourself more stress. Working out why something matters can help you decide what steps you need to take next.

You can work through this process and these questions to help you overcome any challenge you are facing. Doing this can help you prepare for the same challenges, if they happen again, and you can use what you have learned to overcome new challenges.

Planning ahead and future goals

During the course, you set yourself 3 goals.

- Have you managed to achieve them?
- Are you still working on any of them?
- Has your wellbeing improved by sticking to them?

Be kind to yourself!

If you have found it difficult to stick to your goals, try changing them to make them easier for you. Start small, you can always work your way up towards larger goals.

Setting yourself small goals that will improve your wellbeing is important. It can motivate you and give you purpose, helping you make the most of your life.

Do not make life harder than it needs to be

If there is one thing that we can be sure of, **life will carry on and the challenges will keep on coming!**



Checking in with yourself on a regular basis and keeping track of your goals can motivate you and help you to prepare for future challenges.

To help you keep on track, you will find some 'weekly check in' worksheets at the back of your personal logbook. The worksheets are also available to download individually or you can make your own.

You can use these worksheets to help you:

- keep track of your goals;
- work through challenges;
- recognise the good parts your life;
- aim for your best self.

Weekly check in _____ DATE _____

THIS WEEK I FELT:



lowest point mid point best self

CHALLENGES WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN WHY IT MATTERS

THE BEST THING ABOUT THIS WEEK: GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK:

Keep practicing the skills you have learned



Each time you feel yourself being pulled lower down your scale, **you** will be able to use your skills and tools more easily.

The more you practise, **you** will be better prepared and **you will** bounce back towards your best self more quickly.

You have reached the end of the course.

Well done for sticking with it and for making it to the end of the course.

It is not easy to change old habits. Any positive changes you can make to improve your resilience and wellbeing, no matter how small, are a **big** achievement.

We hope that you have enjoyed the course and that you have been able to make the changes that you need, in order to look after your wellbeing.



BE YOUR
**BEST
SELF**

&

BE **KIND**
to YOUR
SELF

This online tool kit is a shortened version of the Carers Resilience and Wellbeing training course, which is open to all unpaid carers in Ceredigion. If you are interested in attending free, online or in person, training, please contact the Carers and Community Support Team to find out when the next training course is available. 01545 574200 or email connecting@ceredigion.gov.uk

The Carers Resilience and Wellbeing training programme is funded by the West Wales Care Partnership and is developed by Ceredigion County Council's Carers and Community Support Team.

If you have any questions about the Carers Resilience and Wellbeing training or the online toolkit and materials, please contact the Carers and Community Support Team connecting@ceredigion.gov.uk