

What I wish my younger self knew about mental health

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<https://agencyinmentalhealth.co.uk/>
<https://mcpin.org/>

Accepting & Supporting Yourself

No matter what anyone (or your mind) says, it is never your fault that you are struggling. Speak to yourself kindly. It is the most difficult thing to do when your mind is screaming at you to do the opposite, but this is the time when you need it most. Your feelings are valid. You can acknowledge that some people have it worse than you, but that doesn't make your feelings any less important.

Prioritizing Your Mental Health

Exercise can make a bigger difference than you think. Everyone's different, but for me, running is a natural medicine.

Sleep is important. Compromising on how much sleep you need will not just impact your physical health but also your mental health.

It's okay to take medication to help you manage your mental health if that's what your doctor recommends. No one says a person is "strong" for not taking medication for a physical health problem.

Place boundaries against things that harm you emotionally and mentally. Having boundaries doesn't make you a bad or uncaring person.

Support & Making Progress

Coming from a culture where mental health is highly stigmatised - your family may not understand what you're going through. Please do not bottle it in. Seek out professional support.

Just because one type of therapy didn't work, doesn't mean you're a lost cause. Personally, I didn't get on with CBT but responded really well to art and music therapy.

Speaking with people who had similar experiences made me feel less alone and we could share coping techniques and strategies. There are brilliant online support groups.

Take Action Today

Young Minds | Web: www.youngminds.org.uk

This is a national charity that specialises in young people's mental health. There is good information about common mental health problems and how to keep yourself well on their website. They also offer a confidential helpline for parents who are concerned about their child.

Childline | Web: www.childline.org.uk | Tel: 0800 1111

You can talk to Childline about anything that's troubling you, whether it's about friends, family, relationships or simply how you're feeling. They offer a one to one counselling service online.

The Mix | Web: www.themix.org.uk/get-support | Tel: 0808 808 4994 | Text: "THEMIX" to 85385

The Mix offer free information and support about mental health problems to young people. You can get in touch with them via telephone, email or webchat. They also provide counselling services.

Kooth | Web: www.kooth.com

Kooth is an online mental wellbeing community that offers emotional and mental health support.