

Beat the January Blues

After Christmas it is easy to feel a bit flat and deflated.

Money can be tight, the weather is grey and the fun of the festive season seems so long ago already.

In this session we are looking at mental health, paying particular attention to the mental health of men and how toxic masculinity can be impacting them and causing harm to their mental health.

What is Blue Monday

Do you know what is meant by
Blue Monday?

However...

Mental Health charity Mind dispute the idea of Blue Monday...

Mind's Head of Information Stephen Buckley said:

"Blue Monday contributes to damaging misconceptions about depression and trivialises an illness that can be life threatening. There is no credible evidence to suggest that one day can increase the risk of people feeling depressed. There are of course certain things that may make people feel down at this time of year, such as post-Christmas financial strains and short daylight hours, however, depression is not just a one-day event. We want to remind people that depression can happen at any time and that Mind is available to help people throughout the year."

People with personal experience of depression also disagree with the notion of 'Blue Monday'..

"Blue Monday is absolute nonsense. It completely trivialises a serious illness that affects people, like me, every day." - Jess

Read more of Jess's story [here](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/your-stories/there-s-no-such-thing-as-a-depression-day/)

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How Common are Mental Health Issues?

- 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem of some kind each year in England
- 1 in 6 people report experiencing a common mental health problem (like anxiety and depression) in any given week in England

In any given week in England:

- **8 in 100** people are diagnosed with mixed anxiety and depression
- **4 in 100** people are diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):
- **3 in 100** people are diagnosed with depression
- **1 in 100** people are diagnosed with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

**Try not to worry if you suffer with mental ill health.
You are not alone and support is available.**

Toxic Masculinity

Can you explain what toxic masculinity is?

Toxic Masculinity

It is a set of attitudes and ways of behaving stereotypically associated with or expected of men, regarded as having a negative impact on men and on society as a whole.

Andrew Tate

This toxic mindset has been further encouraged by Andrew Tate, a figure popular on social media for his luxurious lifestyle who derides any male who embraces his emotions:

"In Tate's view, it is feminine to express emotion, and femininity is demeaning, and thus encourages his male viewership to dismiss serious mental health conditions in order to preserve their masculinity." -Caitlyn Cooper, *The Oxford Blue*

Not only is this a misogynistic view, but it is also harmful when you consider the high rate of men who die by their own hand.

<https://theoxfordblue.co.uk/the-values-of-manhood-the-dangerous-rise-of-andrew-tate/>

Male Self Harm

Taking one's own life is still the biggest killer of men under 45.

In the UK the suicide rate is 15.5 deaths per 100,000.

Compared to women:

- Men are **three times more likely** to die by suicide in Australia
- **3.5 times** more likely to die by suicide in the US and
- More than **four times more likely** in Russia and Argentina.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has data which shows that nearly **40% of countries have more than 15 suicide deaths per 100,000 men**; only 1.5% show a rate that high for women.

Why do you think this is?



What do you think of these images?

Do they invoke any particular feelings?

Five Steps to Wellbeing

It is important to maintain your mental wellbeing as well as your physical health. The five ways to wellbeing can help you do this. Think of them as the mental health '5 a day' and try to build them into your routine.

The Five Ways to wellbeing



Connect...



Be active...



Take notice...



Keep learning...



Give...



CONNECT

Make the effort to contact friends and family for a chat. Join one of College's enrichment groups to meet more people with similar interests. We have an LGBTQ+ group, a Debating Society, Book Group and Craft Club. To be added to the Teams groups, contact Jamie Green

jgreen@halesowen.ac.uk

BE ACTIVE

Try a walk or take up the Couch to 5K. Find a physical activity you enjoy, you're more likely to keep it up and have fun!

KEEP LEARNING

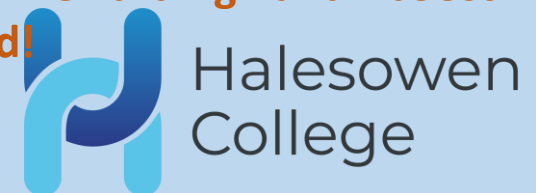
Learn a new hobby such as baking or crochet, to give yourself a break from college work. Find something to relax you.

TAKE NOTICE

Get out in nature and listen to the birds, or find patterns in the clouds. Take note of the sunset, and take a moment to breathe.

GIVE

Do something for a friend. Donate to a local food bank, we are collecting food donations at College. Volunteer your time. Doing something for others can feel very rewarding and boost your mood!



External Support

- Mind - <https://www.mind.org.uk/> - Source of information, support and guidance for various mental health related concerns.
- Samaritans - <https://www.samaritans.org/> - 24/7 365 days a year support and a listening ear if you are struggling to cope with life events or mental health concerns.
- Mermaids - <https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/young-people/> - support for young trans people, with a helpline, web chat and text support available.