

# MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS TOOLKIT

# OVERVIEW

We all have a hard time once in a while, and this toolkit was created to make sure that you know you're not alone. We're going to provide you with some information that might help you get through it.

**QUICK FACT:** As many as **1 in 4 people** will experience some form of mental health challenge in their lifetime. (World Health Organization)

**What this toolkit includes:**

- An overview of some common mental health challenges
- Some useful tips to help you feel better in the moment and in the long term
- A list of resources that you or your parents can use when you need more information or support

**\*If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, please seek help urgently by:**

- Calling emergency services or going to your local hospital's emergency room
- Calling a crisis hotline or distress center for confidential, non-judgmental, free support. A list of global resources are listed here:

<https://support.wattpad.com/hc/en-us/articles/200774284-Counseling-and-Prevention-Resources>

# Writer Burnout/Fan Pressure

**Writer burnout** is not the same thing as writer's block. For many Wattpad users in the early stages of writer burnout, content may be actively produced, but you might be feeling pressure to keep up, or you may feel negativity towards the writing process or the stories you produce. This could be because you feel like they have no choice but to produce a certain quality of content within a particular time frame.

*If you're experiencing writer burnout, you might also be experiencing feelings of anxiety, or depression. If this sounds like you, refer to those sections of this toolkit as well.*

## What are the signs of writer burnout?

- Decreased enjoyment of writing
- Lack of ability/decreased ability to concentrate
- Neglecting your own needs/wellness in order to please fans
- Frequent boredom
- Feelings of pressure to write faster or the constant need to appease fans/followers
- General apathy towards daily tasks

## What can I do to help myself through this?

- Take a break. It's okay to step back and do something else for as long as you need.
- Try out a new hobby! It may be a great time for you to join a team, or grab some paint brushes! Anything goes, as long as it isn't harmful to yourself or others, and makes you feel relaxed or engaged.
- Hang out with friends, family or loved ones. It can be super lonely to work independently, so make sure you make time to socialize.
- Reach out to a trusted adult. Sometimes, we all need someone to talk to, and finding someone who is willing to talk through this issues can be invaluable.

# Anxiety

Everyone goes through feelings of **anxiety** sometimes. Anxiety can come in many forms, but often includes feelings of worry, nervousness, and panic. Anxiety is common, and many types of anxiety are healthy. When it starts to impact your daily life, it might mean that you could use a little extra help to deal with it.

## What are the signs of an anxiety disorder or episode?

- Constant worrying
- A desire to be perfect
- Fear of making a mistake
- Obsessing about worst case scenarios
- Avoiding friends or social situations

## What can I do to help myself through this?

- *Focus on your breathing.* Sometimes, during an episode of anxiety, we need to remember to breathe. It might help you to count your breaths. You can also lay on your back or stomach and breathe in and out deeply, as if there is a pump filling your lungs, and then letting the air out. You can repeat these exercises until you feel calmer.
- *Unplug.* Sometimes, it's a great idea to step away from electronics. When you're feeling anxious, fresh air or another activity might be helpful. Even though activities like watching TV, playing a video game, or hanging out on Wattpad might be good distractions, the bright lights of your devices don't help your body relax.
- *Distract yourself.* Hanging out with friends, drinking some water, playing with a pet, and colouring are all great suggestions for ways you can re-direct your brain. Remember, distracting yourself shouldn't always include electronics!
- *Talk to someone.* Calling a helpline, or talking to a trusted adult might be helpful if you're dealing with feelings of anxiety. There is no shame in telling someone how you feel!

# Substance Abuse/Addiction

Addiction can sneak up on you, and in some cases, you might not realize you're addicted to a substance until it's been a little while. Addiction happens when a person continues to use drugs or alcohol even if there are negative consequences of their usage.

## What are the signs that someone is addicted to/abusing substances?

- Cravings for a specific substance as addiction develops
- Tolerance for a specific substance
- Withdrawal symptoms
- Poor judgement or high-risk behaviours
- Sudden financial trouble
- Neglecting responsibilities
- Development of unhealthy friendships

## What can I do to help myself through this?

- Admitting you have an addiction is the first step. You should be proud of yourself for seeking help. Remember, this manual is an overview, but does not replace treatment or counselling.
- You can get information and help for substance abuse from your local doctors/counsellors, drug hotlines and addiction referral services, support groups, school counsellors, and crisis centres
- Talk to a trusted adult.

# Depression

Everyone experiences an occasional bad mood, but depression is a more consistent low that causes lack of energy and a negative outlook on life. Depression is not a sign of weakness, and if you're going through depression, you should know that even in severe cases, it is highly treatable if you access the support you deserve.

## What are the signs of depression?

- Feeling sad, down, or alone
- Having negative thoughts or feelings about yourself
- Having trouble sleeping or feeling tired all the time
- Having trouble concentrating or completing daily tasks
- Losing interests in the things you enjoy
- Withdrawing from family or friends
- Using drugs or alcohol to cope with moods
- Having thoughts about death or suicide

## What can I do to help myself through this?

- Remember that your feelings are valid. Sometimes, you might feel embarrassed to admit that you're feeling low. But you are important, and so are your feelings.
- Know that you are not alone. It can be hard to remember this when things are feeling bad, but help is always available.
- Breathe in the bad, exhale the good. Sometimes, life gets tough, but if you hold all your anger and resentment inside of you, sometimes, it's hard to move past it. Take a moment and try to let go of negative feelings.
- Talk to a trusted adult.

# Cyberbullying

**Cyberbullying** is the use of technology or online platforms to hurt another person emotionally. This can include harassment, threatening, embarrassment, or targetting.

*If you are being cyberbullied or see someone being cyberbullied on Wattpad, please report the offending user by providing as much information as possible.*

## What are the signs that someone is being cyber-bullied?

- Sudden variation in device use
- Deleting social media accounts
- Asking how to block others
- Decreased self-esteem

## What can I do to help myself through this?

- Block offending users and report the user with screenshots if necessary.
- Talk to a trusted adult.

# Eating Disorders

There are three main eating disorders (the most commonly diagnosed):

1. **Anorexia Nervosa**
  - People with anorexia lose a significant amount of weight by restricting the amount of food they eat.
2. **Bulimia Nervosa**
  - People with bulimia binge on large amounts of food and then purge (or get rid of the food) by throwing up, taking laxatives, exercising or restricting what they eat afterward.
3. **Binge-Eating Disorder**
  - People with binge-eating disorder eat large amounts of food in a relatively short time, but unlike people with bulimia, they don't purge it.

**What are the signs of that someone has an eating disorder?**

- Sudden or rapid weight-loss/gain
- Evidence of binge eating or purging
- Constant dieting
- Making lists of 'good' or 'bad' foods
- Deceptive behaviour around food

**What can I do to help myself through this?**

- Reach out to a trusted adult. Some issues are hard to face alone, and help is available.
- Remember to be body positive, even when it's hard.
- Know that you are not alone. It can be hard to remember this when things are feeling bad, but help is always available.



# Resource List

## **TEEN/YOUTH RESOURCES**

<https://foundrybc.ca/info-tools/mental-health-substance-use/>

<http://teenmentalhealth.org/>

<https://kidshelpphone.ca/>

<https://mindyourmind.ca/>

<http://webwise.ca/> (specific to girls and sexual cyberbullying)

<http://www.bluewavebc.ca/>

<http://dwdonline.ca/>

<http://kidshealth.org/en/teens/>

<http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/>

<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/health/topics/index.shtml>

[http://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/health\\_information/Pages/information\\_in\\_other\\_languages.asp](http://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/health_information/Pages/information_in_other_languages.asp)

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<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

## **CRISIS REFERRAL**

<https://crisis-referral.typeform.com/to/GqL4GU/>

This is a free anonymous service that will direct you to services based on what your needs are!