

### LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

Helping someone with a mental health problem can be very rewarding. But it can also be time-consuming and emotionally overwhelming.

Here are five evidence-based tips to support your own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

Tip	Description	For Example, For Referees:
<b>CONNECT</b>	Feeling close to, and valued by, people is a fundamental human need and one that contributes to functioning well in the world. Social relationships are critical for promoting wellbeing and for acting as a buffer against mental ill health for people of all ages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend County FA training events;</li> <li>• Join the local Referees' Association (LRA);</li> <li>• Complete fitness training with other referees, rather than on your own;</li> <li>• If you're a referee, be proactive in contacting your coach or mentor;</li> <li>• Form networks with other match officials, particularly those at similar stages of development;</li> <li>• If you have access to HIVE, contribute and be active;</li> <li>• Connect away from refereeing, e.g. make sure you spend time with your family, walk the dog, socialise with friends etc.</li> </ul>
<b>BE ACTIVE</b>	Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety across all age groups. Exercise is essential for slowing age-related cognitive decline and for promoting wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete fitness training regularly;</li> <li>• Officiate as much as you are able, ensuring balance with other commitments;</li> <li>• If feasible, continue to play (this will also help your refereeing);</li> <li>• Be active away from football, e.g. play other sports that absorb and relax you.</li> </ul>
<b>TAKE NOTICE</b>	Reminding yourself to 'take notice' can strengthen and broaden awareness. Studies show that being aware of what is taking place in the present directly enhances your wellbeing and savouring 'the moment' can help to reaffirm your life priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare properly for matches (e.g. ensure you have the necessary kit and equipment);</li> <li>• Set yourself realistic goals for each match and training session;</li> <li>• 'Do your homework' on the teams you will be refereeing (e.g. check out positions in table);</li> <li>• Treat every match as your most important of the season;</li> <li>• Provide leadership on match day to other match officials in your team (e.g. assistant referees);</li> <li>• Don't allow yourself to be distracted from the job in hand when training or on matchday;</li> <li>• Check in with how you're feeling. Focus on your breathing.</li> </ul>



<p><b>KEEP LEARNING</b></p>	<p>Continued learning through life enhances self-esteem and encourages social interaction and a more active life. The practice of setting goals, which is related to adult learning in particular, has been strongly associated with higher levels of wellbeing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend County FA, Referees' Association and (if applicable) FA training events;</li> <li>• Learn from others through HIVE (if applicable);</li> <li>• Continuously self-reflect on and analyse your own performances;</li> <li>• Be proactive in seeking advice from other match officials, including mentors and coaches;</li> <li>• Engage in post-match feedback sessions with observers, mentors and coaches;</li> <li>• Push and prepare yourself to attain the next level through the promotion system;</li> <li>• Take up a hobby or interest away from refereeing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GIVE</b></p>	<p>Research shows that giving makes you happier. People with a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank the other members of the match officials' team post-match;</li> <li>• If refereeing youth football, encourage the players during matches;</li> <li>• Give some time to help develop other match officials (e.g. through mentoring or tutoring).</li> </ul>

**Day-to-day, try to:**

- Take a break when you need it to put football and refereeing into context. It's a game which should be fun and enjoyable.
- Talk to someone you trust if you're not feeling well.
- Set limits and be realistic about what you do.