

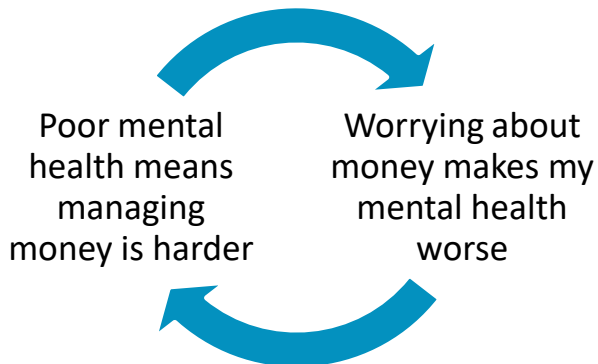


Budgeting

Occupational Therapy Health Promotion Groups

Money and mental health are often linked. Poor mental health can make managing money harder and worrying about money can make your mental health worse.

Like a vicious cycle...



Think

How do mental health and money worries affect each other?



Here are some examples of how your mental health and your money worries might affect each other:

- If you can't work or you have to take time off work, your income may be affected
- If you feel very 'high' during a period of mania or hypomania, this can lead to impulsive decisions about money that make sense at the time but leave you in lots of debt
- You may spend money to make yourself feel better. Spending can give you a temporary high
- You might feel anxious about doing things like talking on the phone, going to the bank or opening envelopes
- You may feel forced to do a job you don't like in order to pay the bills or pay off your debt

- You may lose the motivation to keep control of your finances
- You might find that spending any money at all or being in debt can make you feel very anxious- even if you actually have enough money
- Dealing with the benefits system or being in debt may make you feel stressed, anxious and worried about the future
- You may not have enough money to spend on essentials or things to keep you well like housing, food, heating or medication
- Money problems can affect relationships and your social life, which can have a knock-on effect on your mental health.



What can I do to help myself?

Understand your behaviour

Your mental health can affect how you manage money in lots of different ways. Recognising those patterns can help you find solutions that work for you (e.g. keep a diary of your spending/mood; try giving your cards to someone else or put them somewhere difficult to access; do something else that makes you feel good).

Plan ahead

Make it more difficult to spend money online. Don't save your card details into websites.

Talk to friends and family about your triggers and warning signs so they can help you.

Talk things through with someone you trust. Sharing your worries and talking things through can be a relief. Try and choose a quiet moment when the other person isn't distracted. It can sometimes help to make notes first or even write everything in a letter. Or talk to Samaritans; if you are finding it difficult to see a way forward you could talk to Samaritans for free on 116 123 or jo@samaritans.org

Get Organised

Choose a regular time to look at your money and bills each week so that things don't pile up. Put all important records and documents in one place so that you can find them easily. Look into bank accounts that allow you to put money aside for essentials in separate sub-accounts. Try just taking as much money out as you want to spend each week.

Look after yourself

Money worries can have a big impact on your general wellbeing, which can sometimes make it even harder to take positive steps. It can help to try and notice when your mood and behaviour start to change and think about what you can do to help yourself. This can help you feel more in control and prevent money problems getting worse.

Who can help?

Citizens Advice: citizensadvice.org.uk

Provides advice for any legal or money question, including: benefits, work, discrimination and healthcare. You can contact them via webchat or visit one of their local centres and speak to an advisor.



Money Advice Service: moneyadvice.service.org.uk

Provides free and impartial money advice. They can help you with debt and borrowing, budgeting and managing money, benefits, insurance, savings and houses and mortgages.

Money for Life: moneyforlife.org.uk

Supports young people to develop the knowledge and skills to manage their money. They provide a helpline, one to one chat and a range of helpful online information.

Samaritans: Helpline: 116 123 (freecall) jo@samaritans.org samaritans.org

Provides emotional support for anyone in distress.

The Trussell Trust: trusselltrust.org

Helps give emergency food and support to people in need. Use their website to find your local food-bank .

Turn 2 Us: turn2us.org.uk

National charity that helps people gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and support services. You can use their website to find a local advisor. They have a benefits calculator and a tool to help you search for grants. You can also search for benefits and grants based on your situation.

Step Change: stepchange.org

A charity which provides free advice on problem debt and includes a free debt management plan. They also have an online tool called Debt Remedy which can give you recommendations and solutions based on the financial information you provide.

National Debtline: nationaldebtline.org

A freephone helpline and email advice service. They also provide online advice and sample letters that you can use when you are writing to your creditors.

Shelter: shelter.org.uk

Information about housing and homelessness. Shelter has a housing advice helpline and provides advice by email. They also have a number of local advice centres where you can speak to an expert face to face.

Money Saving Expert: moneysavingexpert.com

Information and advice to help you choose the best bank and savings account and save on bills and daily purchases.

A bit of practice...

Identify and write your monthly expenses in the left column and write down the amount in the right column

Category	Amount
Example: Mobile phone bill	£7.99

You are not alone

