

Mental Health specific books:

The below resources are books that the Care Team have and can recommend, as well as links to local or national organizations that we can recommend.

Children:

The Invisible String

A mother tells her two children that they're all connected by an invisible string, an invisible string made of love. Even though you can't see it with your eyes, you can feel it deep in your heart, and know that you are always connected to the ones you love. This picture book for all ages explores questions about the intangible yet unbreakable connections between us, and opens up deeper conversations about love. It is a great tool for helping children understand all kinds of separation anxiety, loss, and grief.

The Invisible String workbook

The Invisible String Workbook is a companion allows readers of all ages who have experienced any kind of separation or loss to delve deeper into their relationships, to engage in healing conversations, and to build stronger attachments. It is a companion to the picture book.

The Huge Bag of Worries

Wherever Jenny goes, her worries follow her - in a big blue bag. They are with her all the time - at school, at home, when she is watching TV and even in the bathroom! Jenny decides they have to go, but who will help her get rid of them? A funny and reassuring look at dealing with worries and anxiety, to be used as a spring board into important conversations with your child.

Don't Worry, Be Happy

Does your child appear to worry a lot? Perhaps they have frequent tummy upsets, or are irritable, tearful, angry or withdrawn? Do they have problems concentrating or show a loss of enthusiasm for their usual interests? These could all be signs that your child is struggling with feeling anxious.

This practical guide combines cognitive-behavioural therapy methods used by child psychologists in schools with simple activities to help your child to deal with feeling anxious. It's aimed at children aged 7–11 because a lot happens in these years that can impact a child's emotional well-being, not just now but for years to come. Your child will be guided, with the help of Fiz – a friendly and supportive character they can identify with – through fun and engaging activities which are interspersed with useful tips, inspirational statements and practical information for parents.

Youth:

A mind of their Own by Katherine Hill

Ours is a worried world. Children are growing up with anxiety, uncertainty and low self-esteem, and the Covid-19 pandemic, bringing lockdown and yet more life online, has intensified these things. Many parents feel helpless as their happy, easy-going children are overwhelmed by a tsunami of pressure and anxiety. How can we enable them to flourish in the infamously 'unprecedented' times? In *A Mind of Their Own*, Katharine Hill, UK Director of Care for the Family, throws us a lifeline. Backed by solid, up-to-the minute research and grounded in real life experience, she tackles everything from body confidence, dealing with disappointment to strong emotions, and gives steps to take when challenges come. Packed with encouragement and creative activities it will help families form good practices like listening well, setting consistent boundaries and establishing a growth mindset. Celebrating and affirming the family, *A Mind of Their Own* equips parents to build resilience and care well for their children's mental wellbeing, from toddlerhood to teenage years.

Anxious for Nothing (Young Readers Edition): Living Above Anxiety and Loneliness

In this chaotic age of social media, packed schedules, and an increasing awareness of the world's problems, it's normal for kids to feel overwhelmed sometimes. Our kids are under tremendous stress and pressure, with a rapidly changing culture demanding more and more from them. More attention, more screens, more intensity, more fear. But the good news of the gospel has not changed. This encouraging book will help tweens and teens take control of their feelings, develop emotional understanding, and choose to focus on God's truth. "Anxious for Nothing" helps young people overcome the anxiety and pressures of today's world and come to a deeper understanding of God's loving presence as promised in Philippians 4:6-7.

The Stuff of life by Dr Rob Waller

The Stuff of Life is the sort of stuff that affects all of us to a greater or lesser extent. It's stuff that already impacts our relationships and outlook on life. Stuff that, if not faced, can diminish our freedom and enjoyment of day to day living. This book is primarily aimed at students and 20 somethings. However it will also be of enormous benefit to parents in understanding the pressures their children face, to youth workers in suggesting pathways and help for common 'stuff' and to teenagers in helping them better understand themselves and their friends.

Depression:

Learning to breathe by Rachael Newham

Rachael was aged just six when she had her first suicidal thought. Over the next decade, life would become increasingly fraught with depression and self-harm, and her outlook only bleaker. Before her eighteenth birthday, Rachael would twice try to take her own life.

And yet amidst this darkness, a flicker of faith lived on. This is Rachael's story of her journey into, and out of, the darkness of depression. With unflinching realism and complete honesty, she shows us what it looks like to live with mental illness, and how God can find us and rescue us even in the most desperate of places.

And Yet by Rachael Newham

In the depths of depression and plagued with suicidal thoughts, Rachael Newham never thought she'd find herself writing a book on joy. And yet, if her journey with mental health illness has taught her anything it is that true, deep, lasting joy can only be experienced when we allow ourselves to enter into lament and be honest about our pain before God.

With warm understanding, Rachael traces how Biblical writers used 'and yet' to bring together joy and lament and invites us to see them not as opposites, but two sides of the same coin. Drawing on her experiences with mental illness, she shows us how we can build a rhythm of both joy and lament into our lives both through the season of Lent and the rest of the church's year.

Anxiety:

Hope in an anxious World by Helen Thorne

Whether mildly, moderately or severely, feeling anxious is something most of us experience at some point in our lives. It drags us down and it leaves us unequipped for the day ahead.

This short, sympathetic and warm book will help both Christian and non-Christian readers understand anxiety better, learn some useful techniques to cope with it and, most importantly, show how the living God can liberate us from its grip. Whether you are used to reading about God or not even sure if he really exists (or if he cares about your anxiety in any meaningful way), this book has precious words of encouragement for you.

Honesty over Silence by Patrick Regan and Liza Hoeksma

Honesty Over Silence seeks to open up conversations around topics that many find difficult, such as trusting God when life is painful, dealing with anxiety and depression, learning to look after ourselves, developing our character, and living with thankful hearts even in tough seasons. It examines our strength in letting go of our need to be in control, as well as looking at how we can stop comparing ourselves to others, and instead live authentically and honestly as we grow into the people God has created us to be.

Bouncing Forward by Patrick Regan and Liza Hoeksma

In Bouncing Forwards Patrick draws on his own journey of making peace with his on-going anxiety, to look honestly and vulnerably at the temptation to wait for the day when all will be well whilst missing out on what's happening in the here and now. Exploring resilience, acceptance and emotional agility, Patrick shows how we can find meaning in some of life's toughest moments and the hope to journey on.

Eating disorders:

A New Name by Emma Scrivener

The face of anorexia is not a glossy model in a perfume ad. It's a starving animal, circling the empty cupboards, blank-eyed and vacant. It's a face frozen in a rictus grin, mouthing lies. 'I'm fine,' it says. 'Everything is under control.'

Rescued from a disorder that nearly killed her, Emma is now passionate about warning others about the dark and hidden world she inhabited for too long.

A New Day by Emma Scrivener

There are lots of how-to books out there. In terms of the practicalities of recovery, they're brilliant. What they don't address is the spiritual dimension. However, even when writing about 'spiritual recovery', the author confesses that it's tempting to offer some sort of programme or strategy. 'But I don't think I've got one,' she says. What she does offer are practical suggestions for how to apply gospel truths to practical circumstances.

With honesty, examples from real life (including her own), Emma connects with her reader. She shows how the gospel can speak to every heart and every addiction, equipping readers with confidence in Christ's sufficiency and the power of his Word and Spirit to bring change where change seems impossible.

Eating disorders by Emma Scrivener

More than 1.6 million people in the UK suffer from diagnosed or undiagnosed eating disorders - and 14-25 year olds are most affected. What does the Bible say about this issue? If we're struggling ourselves, how can we move forward? If we're caring for others, how can we help? In this short booklet aimed at both sufferers and carers, Emma Scrivener looks at how eating disorders work - and how Jesus offers hope

Burn out:

INSIGHT into Burnout by Chris Ledger and Claire Musters

In today's often fast-paced and demanding culture, many people can find themselves experiencing or coming close to burnout. It can be debilitating, affecting a person physically, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually. As we learn what burnout is, how it can be avoided and effective ways of overcoming it, we can maintain a more balanced approach to living, while involving God in every area of our lives.

Refuel by Kate Middleton

Stress is a massive issue in our 21st century culture, and the Church is by no means exempt. There is some evidence that people involved with the church might be at particular risk of stress related illness and burn out. How do we get the balance right when there's so much more than work and life to juggle? How do we manage the tension between our passion for God and our other responsibilities? How do we manage to reach our full potential without burning out? Good stress management isn't about living a half-life - it is possible to remain motivated, passionate and on fire, without constantly being on the brink of burnout. Kate Middleton's biblical self-help book will help readers to identify understand the dangers of stress and offers practical tips to reduce and manage stress in a biblical way.

Burned out? Trusting God with your "To-Do" List by Winston T. Smith

Often, in our busy world, our lives feel like one long "to-do" list. It's easy to get so busy that we don't even notice how exhausted and anxious we are. Do you find yourself saying yes to activities you don't have time for? Have you ever said, "If I don't do it, who will?" An overloaded schedule and an inability to rest are signs of approaching "burnout."

Instead of giving you organizational tips (and thus more to do!), Winston T. Smith helps you to look at what drives your busyness and points you to the rest and peace that comes for a deeper trust in God. You will learn how to build into your life and break free from the things that keep you from peace.

The Art of Rest by Adam Mabry

For some of us, resting seems like a waste of time—it means we're missing out on other things. For others, rest seems like a luxury—there's simply too much to do. And for almost all of us, we crave rest, but don't always know how to.

This warm, realistic, humorous book shows us the huge spiritual, emotional and physical rewards of rest. It shows us how rest gives us time to spend with God and remember his grace. Discover how rest fuels our joy and confidence in God's sovereignty as we learn to depend on him, and not our own efforts, and are refreshed by the power of the Holy Spirit. The world never stops. But we need to. And as Christians we can by having faith to hit pause and experience the rich rewards of God-given rest.

Wellbeing:

A-Z of Wellbeing by Ruth Rice

A-Z of Wellbeing is an accessible introduction to help you attend to your own wellbeing and live out your own alphabet of peace. It presents twenty-six words of wellness to help you discover new practices, connect with God, and share wellbeing with others. With each topic, using the nationally recognized framework of the five ways of wellbeing, Ruth guides you to connect the word to a biblical theme, learn a new habit to practise, get active sharing the habit with others, take notice of a personal story and give back with questions and further resources, leaving you with your own toolkit of words and habits that will help you maintain your own wellbeing.

Slow Down, Show up and Pray by Ruth Rice

Looking after our mental health has never been so important. Many of us want to find simple ways to help our wellbeing that we can fit into our everyday life. After suffering her own mental health crisis, Ruth Rice set up the Renew Wellbeing charity, which helps churches open safe spaces to help all attend to their mental and emotional health. Packed full of personal stories, reflective resources and practical guidance, this book will enable you to maintain your own wellbeing and encourage

churches to provide Renew spaces that help local communities journey alongside each other to renew wellbeing. Be present. Be prayerful. Be in partnership.

Overcoming series

Approved by the NHS: The Overcoming Series

These books use clinically proven techniques to treat longstanding and disabling conditions. They adopt cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), which is complementary with Christian beliefs. The books are recommended by the national Reading Well Books on Prescription scheme for England delivered by the Reading Agency and are available in the Exeter City Library. The books provide worksheets for you to complete. These books are a long term investment in your health. See the website at www.overcoming.co.uk. Here are some of the recent titles – there are many more addressing all kinds of mental health problems:

Davies, W. (2016). *Overcoming anger and irritability: A self-help guide using Cognitive Behavioural Techniques*. Robinson Fennell, M. (2016)

Overcoming Low Self-Esteem: A self- help guide using Cognitive Behavioural Techniques. (Second Edition). Robinson Gilbert, P. (2009)

Overcoming Depression: A self- help guide using Cognitive Behavioural Techniques. (Third Edition). Robinson Kennerley, H. (2014)

Overcoming Anxiety: A self- help guide using Cognitive Behavioural Techniques. (Second Edition). Robinson.

Veale, D., & Willson, R. (2009). *Overcoming Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: A Books on Prescription Title*. Robinson

General:

Mental Health and your church by Helen Thorne and Dr Steve Midgley

Many people are struggling with mental-health conditions, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and life in our image-conscious culture. Statistics tell us that, worldwide, one in six of us will have experienced a mental-health struggle in the past week, and serious depression is the second-leading cause of disability (Mental Health Foundation). That means there are brothers and sisters in our church families battling with thoughts, feelings, impulses and even voices that distract, drag down and nudge them towards despair. But when it comes to helping, it can be tricky to know where to begin, especially if we have very little knowledge of mental illnesses and are afraid of making things worse by saying and doing the wrong things.

This wise, compassionate and practical book will help readers understand and respond with biblical wisdom to people who are struggling with their mental health. While acknowledging the importance of liaising responsibly with medics and counsellors, this book focuses on equipping readers to play their part in making churches places where those who struggle with mental-health conditions are welcomed, understood, nurtured and supported: a foretaste of the new creation. This is a useful book for anyone who cares for others pastorally: pastors, elders, small-group leaders and congregation members.

Mental Health links:

Suicide focused charities

[Staying Safe](#)

This is a very helpful website for those who are having suicidal thoughts or for their family or friends. It guides you in how to make a safety plan, a document that helps you identify people to contact and what to do when you are having suicidal thoughts.

[Andy's Man Club](#)

Andy's Man Club is a men's suicide prevention charity, offering free-to-attend peer-to-peer support groups across the United Kingdom and online. They want to end the stigma surrounding men's mental health and help men through the power of conversation. #ITSOKAYTOTALK
They meet Mondays at 7pm at St.James Park, Stadium Way, Exeter. EX4 6PX

[Papyrus UK Suicide Prevention](#)

PAPYRUS Prevention of Young Suicide is a UK charity dedicated to the prevention of suicide and the promotion of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in young people. They provide confidential support and advice to young people struggling with thoughts of suicide, and anyone worried about a young person through their helpline, HOPELINE247.

[Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide \(SOBS\)](#)

SOBS is the only UK-based organisation offering peer-led support to adults impacted by suicide loss. They help individuals support each other, at the time of their loss and in the months and years that follow. They aim to provide safe, confidential environments where people can share their experiences and feelings, giving and gaining support from each other.

SOBS has a local support group that meets on the second Tuesday of every month. For more information, email exeter@uksobs.org.

[Pete's Dragons](#)

Pete's Dragons has a passion for making sure those impacted by suicide are supported. The Dragons are a team that have experienced the aftermath first-hand and worked together to ensure that all those impacted by suicide in Devon and N. Somerset have access to timely and appropriate support.

Support for parents of children who struggle with their mental health

[Parental Minds](#)

Parental Minds gives support to families who are struggling with their mental health. The [Parent+ Support Hub](#) is for Caregivers who support family, friends or colleagues with mental health issues. This meets **John Lewis Community Room**, 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month, 10.00 – 12.00.

General mental health support charities

[The Mind and Soul Foundation](#)

A Christian charity providing training and resources about mental health.

[Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries](#)

Sanctuary provide resources that meaningfully engage the topics of faith and mental health. Their content is developed in collaboration with theologians, mental health professionals, and people with lived experience of mental health challenges. These resources prepare communities of faith around the world to raise awareness, reduce stigma, support mental health, and promote mental wellbeing.

[Kintsugi Hope](#)

"Kintsugi" is a Japanese technique for repairing pottery with seams of gold, repairing the brokenness in a way that makes the object more beautiful, and even more unique than it was prior to being broken. Instead of hiding the scars it makes a feature of them. Kintsugi Hope want to see a world where mental and emotional health is understood and accepted, with safe and supportive communities for everyone to grow and flourish.

[Wellbeing Exeter](#)

Community life and social connections are vital to all our health and wellbeing. Wellbeing Exeter works alongside people to discover and develop opportunities and ideas on how to live and feel better and get connected to what matters to them.

[Links to helpful talks from the Belmont talk library:](#)

We have run two talk series called Living with Thorns about mental health and wellbeing. All of the talks are available on the website, series hyperlinks are listed below.

[Living with Thorns 2018](#) – Click here for the audio of this series

[Living with Thorns – Stigma and Sting](#)

2 Corinthians 12 v 1-10

[Living with Thorns – Follow me when you are Depressed](#)

Psalms 38 v 1-11

[Living with Thorns – Follow me when you are Anxious](#)

Matthew 6 v 25-34

[Living with Thorns – Follow me when you are Burned Out](#)

Exodus 18 v 14-23

[Living with Thorns – Follow me in Compassion.](#)

2 Corinthians 1 vs 2-11

[Living with Thorns 2022](#) – Click here for the audio of this series

[Living with Thorns – Jehovah Jireh](#)

1 Kings 17 v 1-16

[10am Online Gathering | Sunday 27th February - YouTube](#)

[Living with Thorns – El Shaddai](#)

Daniel 1

[10am Online Gathering | Sunday 6th March - YouTube](#)

[Living with Thorns – Elohim Machaceh](#)

Psalms 91 v 1-2

[10am Online Gathering | Sunday 13th March - YouTube](#)

[Living with Thorns – Jehovah Nissi](#)

Exodus 17 v 8-16

[10am Online Gathering | Sunday 20th March - YouTube](#)