Support during Distressing World Events

By Student Services
Internal Support

The University of St Andrews has many internal support networks for students.

- **The ASC**, which is a part of Student Services.
- **Chaplaincy** - supports students and staff irrespective of their faith.
- **Student Services** for wellbeing, counselling, mental health support - *book an appointment here*
- **Out of Hours or Crisis support** information is available here.
- **A-Z Wellbeing** for self-help resources and advice.
Internal Support

There are also number of student-led support groups available for students.

- **Nightline St Andrews** is a student-run confidential, anonymous listening and information service at the University of St Andrews.

- **Peer Support**: If you are interested in being matched with a peer supporter, all you have to do is send an email with your name to peersupport@st-andrews.ac.uk.

- **Student Networks & Subcommittees** represent the diverse student community in St Andrews. This includes the Wellbeing Subcommittee, BAME Student Network, Disabled Student Network and Saints LGBT+.
News

Take breaks from News. As much as we are aware of the necessity and importance of watching the news, news stories can also often be mixed with a lot of opinion and speculation causing distress. Limit your time for news updates and follow the sources you trust. Below are some self-help resources;

5 ways to cope with the stressful news cycle

If you’re distressed about the news in Ukraine, follow these steps. This advice can also be useful for other distressing world events.
Tolerating Distress

Distress tolerance is a person's ability to manage actual or perceived emotional distress. It also involves being able to make it through an emotional incident without making you feel worse.

Distressing events around the world have, are and will continue to happen. We hope the self-help resources shared

Here is a self-guided resource on how you can tolerate distress. This has information sheets as well as worksheets which can be done at your own time and pace.
Anxiety & Uncertainty

Experiencing anxiety is natural at this time. Some ways to cope with anxiety:

- **What You Can Do to Cope With Anxiety.**
- **NHS Self-Help for Managing Anxiety.**
- **SilverCloud** is a psychoeducational tool based in CBT and has a Space from Anxiety programme.

Uncertainty is a major part of the current situation and can impact our mental health. Here are some resources which can help in coping with the feelings of uncertainty.

- **Strategies for Coping with Uncertainty.**
- **6 Strategies for Coping With Uncertainty (Video)**
Wellbeing & Self-Care

Often, when we feel distressed or anxious it can be tough to look after ourselves. We understand these will not "solve" these difficult feelings but they may make the day easier to manage.

Get some fresh air, a few minutes of walking outside your house will help. We recommend walking near blue or green spaces, like the beach, parks or the Botanic Gardens.

Stay hydrated and nourished - this might look like regular meals, increasing nutritional content or making time to prepare a favourite meal. The NHS offer some extra information and guidance here.
Focus on breathing mindfully for a few minutes daily. Mindfulness can be an immensely helpful way to do this. There are plenty of apps as well as YouTube resources to do this are.

Some of them are:
- [Healthy Minds Innovations Headspace](available on Netflix)
- [Insight Timer]
- [UCLA Mindful App].

Write your daily reflections down as you process some of the things happening around you. Breaking down thoughts/feelings/emotions can be a helpful way to understand your distress. While you do this, do not forget to also write the positive things which help you through a difficult day, or things that you are grateful for.
Five Ways to Wellbeing

Evidence suggests that incorporating the 5 Ways to Wellbeing into your daily routine helps maintain overall wellbeing and mental health. These five ways can be found here or click on one of the bubbles.

- **Connect**: Talk & listen, be there, feel connected
- **Be Active**: Do what you can, enjoy what you do, move your mood
- **Take Notice**: Remember the simple things that give you joy
- **Give**: Your time, your words, your presence
- **Keep Learning**: Embrace new experiences, see opportunities, surprise yourself
It is okay to grieve and cry. Give yourself the space to feel however it is that you are feeling. Some of these emotions may be difficult to sit with and this is where Resilience can play a key role. Resilience is a strength building exercise which will help you withstand adversity, crisis and uncertainty using your inner strengths in these times.

- **How to Cultivate the Resources for Resilience**
- **British Red Cross** wellbeing techniques, resilience development toolkit
- **SilverCloud** is a psychoeducational tool based in CBT which also offers resources on building resilience
- **Three invaluable tools to boost your resilience | BBC Ideas**
Study

We understand that studying at your usual pace can be difficult just now. Please be in touch with your School to let them know about your circumstances and check-in with them for further guidance as soon as possible.

If you are struggling to study, we would recommend:

- Taking breaks and studying for shorter periods can help. Using methods like the Pomodoro Method can be a helpful way to break things down just now into 20-25 minutes of doable work time with regular breaks.
- Break large tasks down into smaller, more manageable things. To climb a mountain, we must take it one step at a time.
The Current Ukraine Crisis

What is happening in the UK:

- [Home Office](#) action on Ukraine
- [Guidance on Support](#) for family members of British nationals in Ukraine, and Ukrainian nationals in Ukraine and the UK.
- [Contact your MP](#)

The University is offering practical and pastoral support to any students impacted by the conflict, contact Student Services on theasc@st-andrews.ac.uk

The Charity Mind have a good thread on Twitter for managing the stress of the current Ukraine Crisis.
External Support

**Breathing Space (Scotland):** Phone: 0800 83 8587 (open from 6pm to 2am Monday to Friday. Weekends: open Friday from 6pm till 6am Monday).

**Samaritans:** Phone: 08457 90 9090 or 116 123 free from any phone or 0330 094 5717 local call charges apply. Email: jo@samaritans.org

**Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM):** Phone: 0800 58 58 58. Webchat is open 5pm to midnight every night for free and confidential support.

**Andy’s Man Club:** online support groups for men over 18 years of age.

**The Mix:** essential support for under 25s