



# The impact of food on mental health

BAKING  
IS MY  
THERAPY



"Cooking and baking  
is both physical and  
mental therapy"  
Mary Berry



## What is Bread Therapy?



bake  
someone  
happy



Cupcakes  
are  
MUFFINS  
THAT  
believed in  
MIRACLES

"Bread therapy is a way of making bread mindfully, learning life lessons from the process and growing to understand ourselves better: it is a form of self-help, an approach we can use to provide therapy for ourselves"

Pauline Beaumont



## The impact of food on mental health



**Eat** when you're hungry.  
**Rest** when you're tired.  
**Relax** when you're stressed.  
**Step back** when you're overwhelmed.  
**Listen** to your body.

**This is a great challenge that doesn't actually have to involve any eating!**

**Design or make a dish that contains as many different coloured fruits and vegetables.**

Challenge objectives:

- To increase awareness of the wide range of fruits and vegetables available to us
- To encourage everyone to try new foods
- To increase awareness of the nutritional values of different foods
- To encourage everyone to replace high-fat, high sugar snacks with fruit and vegetables.





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# Have you eaten breakfast this morning?

...If yes - Well done you have taken an important step in looking after not just your physical health but your mental health too.



Research has shown that good nutritional intake is linked to academic success. In particular, several studies have shown that providing children with breakfast improves their daily and long-term academic performance and their behaviour.

Just like the heart, stomach and liver, the brain is an organ that is acutely sensitive to what we eat and drink. To remain healthy, it needs different amounts of complex carbohydrates, essential fatty acids, amino acids, vitamins and minerals, and water

**Relax your mind at breakfast**

Try to eat breakfast outside if the weather is nice

Instead of your morning status update or checking your mobile for messages (which demand answers or thought reactions) you can contemplate the weather, the sky, the plants or even just what you are eating.

**FOCUS**

–

**SLOW DOWN**

–

**DE-STRESS**





# The impact of food on mental health

## Make time to eat when you're hungry!



**STRESSED**  
spelled backwards is  
**DESSERTS** 



One of the most important things you can do to promote positive mental health is to eat when you are hungry.

Hunger is not just a physical experience. Hunger takes a toll on our mood, our focus, and our sense of physical well-being.

If you have not eaten properly your body can lack the energy it needs to work productively; it is likely that you will feel more irritable and have difficulty concentrating.

It is also important not to skip meals! You need food to fuel your minds.

Can you think of any healthy desserts? How can we adapt dessert recipes to make them healthier?

Can you find any interesting snack ideas?

**FOCUS – DON'T SKIP MEALS – MAKE TIME TO EAT**



## The impact of food on mental health

# Are you hydrated?



If we become dehydrated it can affect our mood. The government advise drinking 6-8 glasses of water a day, which is about 1.5 – 2 litres. Many fruits and vegetables have a high water content and can also contribute to fluid intake. As can milk, juice and low sugar soft drinks. But remember that too much caffeine can cause symptoms, such as anxiety, nervousness and depression.

Unfortunately, energy drinks, which are marketed to appeal to teenagers, have a high caffeine content. Energy drinks can cause a number of unwanted side effects for teenagers. The caffeine in energy drinks can lead to jitters, nervousness, upset stomach, headaches, difficulty concentrating, and frequent urination.

Any caffeinated drink can cause these side effects. The difference with energy drinks is that some contain excessive amounts of caffeine. An energy drink such as red bull contains about 80 mg of caffeine. Caffeine also disrupts sleep which can have a major impact on mood.

We can't currently meet a friend for 'coffee and a chat', however your can make a drink and give them a call

**Can you find any interesting smoothie or milkshake recipes?**

**MOTIVATE – HYDRATE – FEEL GREAT**



# The impact of food on mental health

We are constantly bombarded with healthy eating messages which can be confusing. If you eat a balanced diet and have treats in moderation then you are doing your best to have a healthy lifestyle.



*Here are some top tips for eating for good mental health.*

- Eat mindfully - Eating with the attention necessary for noticing and enjoying your food and its effects on your body
- Eat breakfast everyday
- Eat regularly and avoid skipping meals
- Stay well hydrated
- Aim to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day
- Have caffeine in moderation – avoid over consumption of energy drinks
- Eat complex carbohydrates such as pasta, rice and bread
- Have processed foods in moderation – avoid overconsumption of foods high in sugar and saturated fats
- Consume omega 3 oils

