

Connect BREAKING FREE OF THE VICIOUS CYCLE

Having identified the five areas of the vicious cycle, how will you help your friend or colleague break free? That's where the **Connect 5 Wheel of Intervention** comes in.



1. Use the problem solving tool

To help solve complex problems, we break them down and tackle them one chunk at a time. Think of all the possible ways to solve a problem, explore the pros and cons of each, then choose one solution to work on. Help the other person set a 'SMART' target then check in with them every so often.

2. Scheduling wellbeing activities

Encourage the other person to commit to activities that bring



a sense of achievement, are pleasurable, physical, and social. Aim for an even spread across the week.

3. Check your thoughts

We're all prone to automatic unhelpful thoughts (AUTs). Most of the time we quickly dismiss these. But some-times they can be a bit more tricky to identify and shift. Use tools such as the *Thought Awareness* to identify and challenge pesky AUTs.

4. Develop self compassion

Self compassion has many proven benefits. And yet, many people find it difficult to be kind to themselves. Self compassion chooses self-kindness over self-judgement; it remembers that suffering is common to all humanity; and it chooses to *notice* what's happening, rather than *identifying oneself* by what's happening to them.



5. Flip the Rest & Restore switch

Psychological stress has a direct impact on our bodies. Our *fight or flight* response (sympathetic nervous system) serves us well when we face threats to our physical safety; it prepares us to 'fight the tiger' or 'run away from the tiger'. But this physical response is less helpful when faced with the stresses of modern living—pressures at work, social media, finances, relationship worries, etc. Making time to switch on our recovery system (the parasympathetic nervous system) reduces those unpleasant body sensations. Breathing exercises, yoga, and mindfulness are all good.

