



**TO PRISON  
WELLBEING**

**PLAN 'B'**

# PLAN 'B'

Prison life can be tough and there are times when we all need a **PLAN B**.

Do you sometimes wonder how to make the best use of your time when you're locked in your cell? Would you like to know some simple ways to increase your wellbeing?

**PLAN B** offers **5 ways to prison wellbeing**.

Five areas of prison life where you can find a bit of ease, calm, hope and even your smile. Remember it's the small things you do that can add up to make a big difference.



**BREATHE**  
**LOOK AFTER YOUR BODY**  
**EXERCISE YOUR BRAIN**  
**BEFRIEND YOURSELF**  
**BE POSITIVE**



# BREATHE

We all know how to breathe. But when we are feeling a bit tense or angry we lose touch with our breath.

Taking **3 DEEP BREATHS** can help us let go of tension and find a moment of calm.

Try it now.

A deep slow breath in. And then as you breathe out, letting go of any tension in the body. Repeat 2 more times.

Breathing in calm, breathing out letting go of tension.

Having a healthier body makes us feel better.

It's not always easy to be active in prison but with a little effort and creativity it is possible. For example, gentle stretching can be very beneficial. Regular simple exercises are good for us too.

Create a plan for yourself for stretching and exercising regularly for  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour, 3 or 4 times a week. Why not start, by trying the simple exercises on the next page?\*

\*If you have any existing injuries or long-term health problems, please take medical advice before starting any exercises. If the exercises hurt, or cause any sort of strain, then stop!



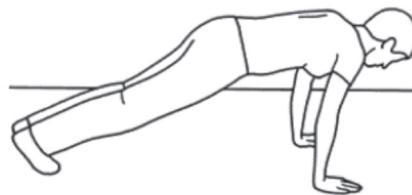
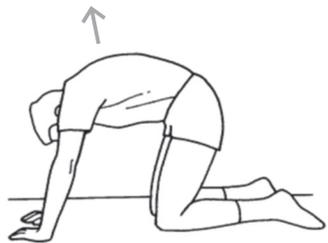
## Standing tall

Standing upright, legs shoulder width apart, begin with your arms by your side and slowly raise your arms as you breathe in and count to 8. Hold the posture for a few seconds and then slowly lower your arms and breathing out counting down from 8. Repeat 6 to 10 times.



## Cat stretch

Get on all fours. Place your hands beneath your shoulders and your knees beneath your hips. Allow your back to assume its natural position (neutral spine) and look straight ahead. Inhale and as you exhale allow your head to slowly drop forward and create a C shape with your spine. Keep your abdominals pulled in. As you inhale in return to neutral spine, then go further into the arch, sticking your tail and head upward. Repeat 6 to 10 times.



## Plank

Place hands directly under shoulders and balance weight between your hands and the balls of the feet. Your body should remain in a straight line and your abs should be pulled in tight. Don't lift or droop the hips - keep them in line with the body. Make it easier by dropping to your elbows or to your knees. Breathe steadily throughout the exercise. Hold for a count of 20 to 30. Then rest.

## Table top

Lay flat on your back. Slowly lift your knees toward your chest until they are directly above your hips and your knees are bent at 90 degrees. Breathe in and out focusing on relaxing your whole body. Pull your abs in and toward the ground while keeping the thighs relaxed. Remain in this posture as long as the body is relaxed and abs are pulled in. Lower the legs slowly to end the exercise.



# MY EXERCISE PLAN

## My progress

Having an exercise plan is helpful too. It is important to have a balanced plan (stretch, stamina, strengthen, rest). So get some advice from someone from the gym if you can. And set yourself some goals and keep a record of your progress.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1 Activities							
Time spent							
Week 2 Activities							
Time spent							
Week 3 Activities							
Time spent							
Week 4 Activities							
Time spent							

# EAT WELL

## Look after your **BODY** inside & out

Eating a healthy, balanced diet in prison is not always easy. But knowing what is good for us can help us make choices wherever we can. Here are a few tips.

Watch the carbs. Potatoes, cereals, pasta, rice and bread should make up around one third of the foods you eat.

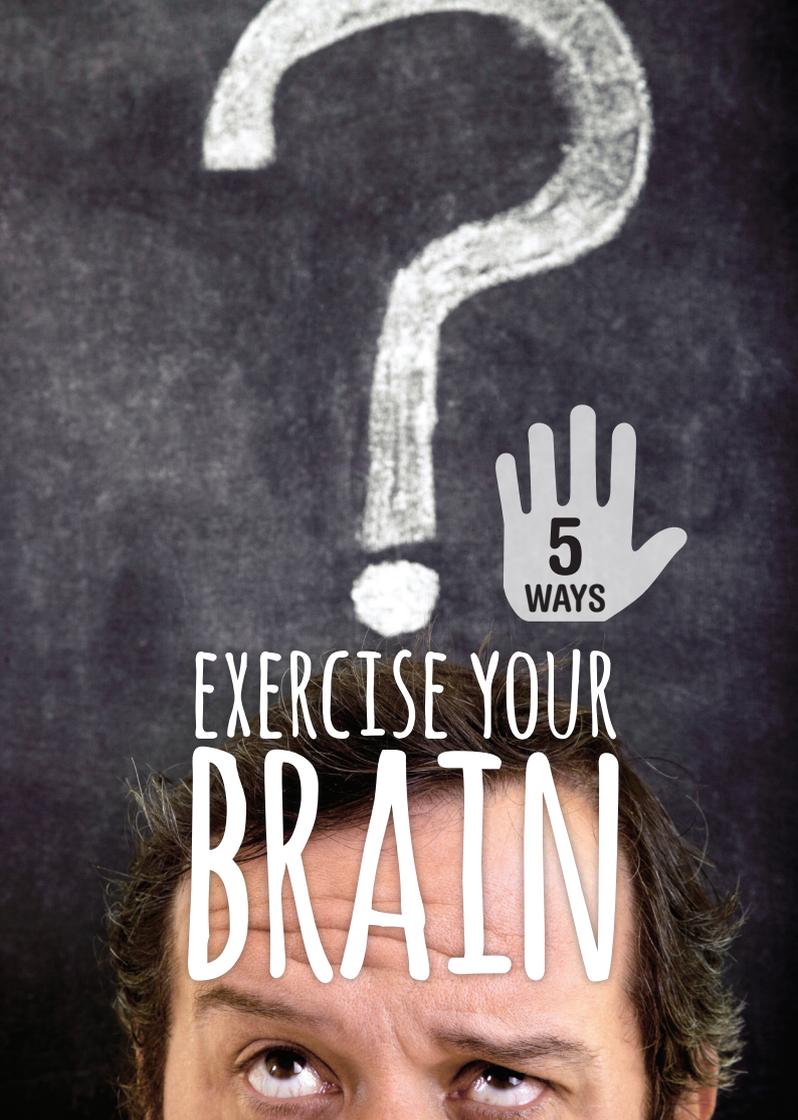
Fruit and veg can boost the immune system, eat them whenever you can.

If you eat meat, add fish to your diet. It's great for wellbeing.

Cut down your salt, too much can be harmful.

And drink plenty of water so you don't get thirsty. It helps maintain healthy kidneys, major organs, muscles and skin.





# EXERCISE YOUR BRAIN

Keeping our minds active is good for us.  
Very good.

The great news is that there is a way  
to exercise the brain to suit everyone.  
Here are a few examples:

**Read a book, newspaper or magazine**

**Learn a new skill**

**Do a puzzle**

**Do some drawing, write some poetry**

**Share and discuss your ideas**

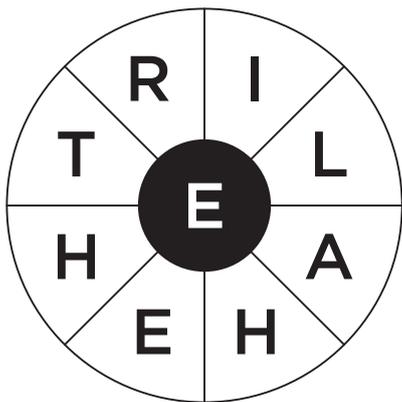
**Play a game**

What other ways can keep your  
mind active? Try out some of the  
puzzles on the next pages and find  
something that suits you. Spend some  
time exercising your brain every day.

## Wordwheel

How many words of 3 letters or more can you make using the word wheel?

All of the words need to include the letter in the centre circle, and there's one 9-letter word which uses all of the letters in the wheel.



## Sudoku

Can you solve this tricky Sudoku?

The object of Sudoku is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once.

		3	1		4			
6		1		7		9		
	8				2		5	
3					1		9	
9			4		5			7
	4		7					6
	1		5				2	
		6		9		8		5
			8		7	4		

## Play a game: Dots and Boxes

**Object of the game:** To close as many boxes as you can.

**Set up:** (2 players) Lay out a grid of dots. You can play with as few or as many dots as you like.

### Instructions

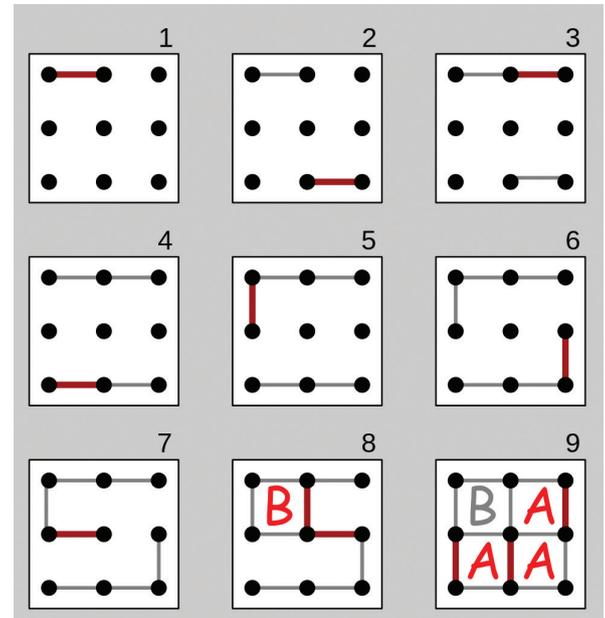
Each player chooses a different colour pencil or pen.

The first player draws a straight line between two adjacent dots. You cannot draw diagonal lines.

The second player draws a line between two dots.

Play continues in this way until a player can close a box. After closing a box, player puts his initial inside to 'claim' it. He then gets another turn. If he is able to close an additional box, he gets yet another turn, until he cannot close any more boxes. Play then continues with the other player.

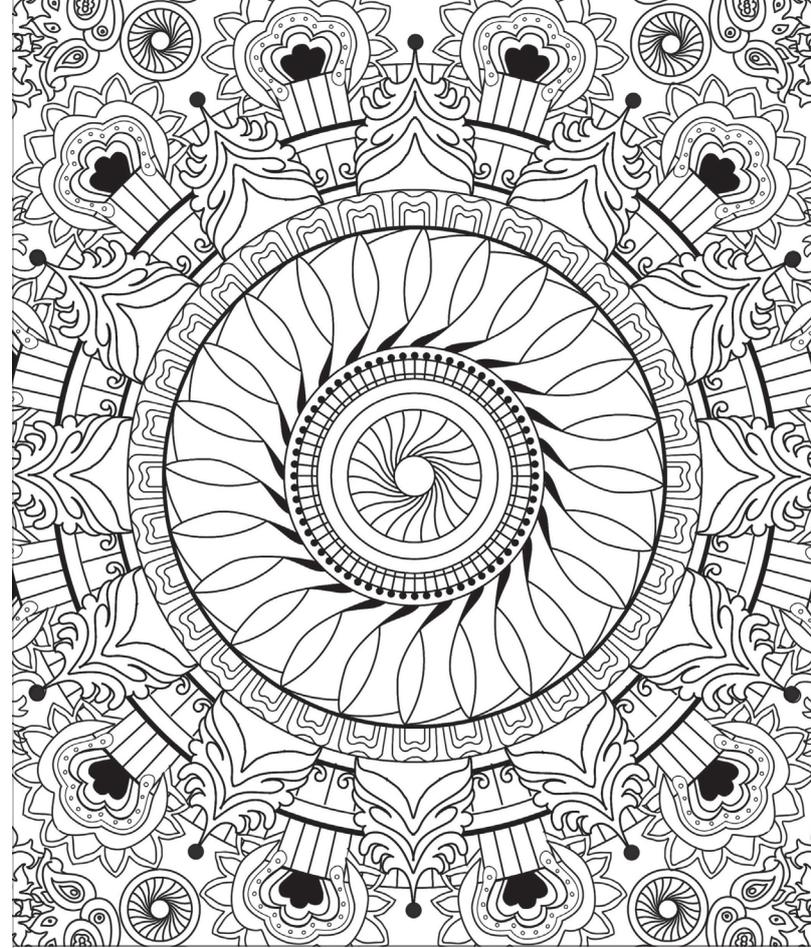
Use the space here to try it out.



## Doodle

Doodling has been shown to be good for us too. It helps us to concentrate, be creative and calms the mind too.

Use this space to have a doodle right now. Use the dots and lines to help get you started.



## Colouring-in

Colouring-in is not just for kids. It's good for all of us.

We are social creatures. That's why prison can be a lonely place at times.

But we can also benefit from a better relationship with ourselves.

When things are not going well or you make a mistake, what do you tell yourself inside? Do you give yourself a hard time?

Often we treat ourselves harshly.

But imagine being a bit kinder to yourself. Being like a supportive and caring friend when you need some support. What would that be like? Probably more pleasant.



# BEFRIEND YOURSELF

## Befriend yourself exercise

Write down the things you might say to yourself inside if you make a mistake or things are not going well. (*You can use the space at the bottom of the page.*)

Notice how this feels.

Now write down the kind of things that you would find encouraging or reassuring – try and be a caring and supportive friend to yourself.

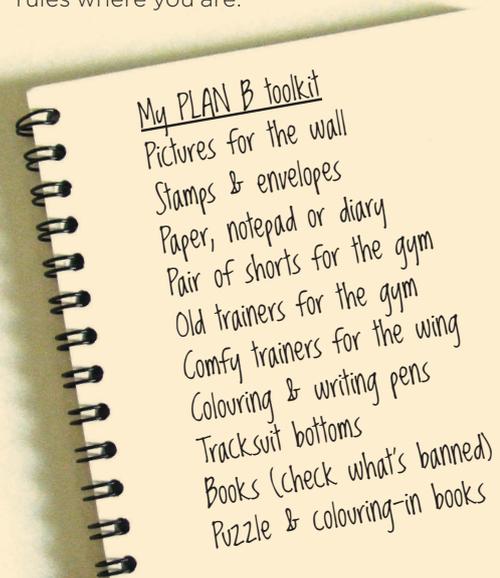
Notice how this feels.

If you find these encouraging words helpful then may be write them down somewhere to remind you next time when you start giving yourself a hard time, you can chose to be a caring supportive friend to yourself too.

# BUILD YOUR OWN PLAN B TOOLKIT

Why not ask a friend or family member to post or bring in some of the following things for you? You can use them to build your own PLAN B toolkit that you can dip into when you need it.

Unfortunately, the rules about what you are and aren't allowed to keep in prison change all the time, so you might like to double-check current rules where you are.



### My PLAN B toolkit

Pictures for the wall

Stamps & envelopes

Paper, notepad or diary

Pair of shorts for the gym

Old trainers for the gym

Comfy trainers for the wing

Colouring & writing pens

Tracksuit bottoms

Books (check what's banned)

Puzzle & colouring-in books



BE  
POSITIVE

Prison is no laughing matter.  
It's not designed for us to have fun.

But it's OK to find ways to make life a bit easier, to be grateful or happy about small acts of kindness or being reminded of the things we care about.

Being kind to others when we get a chance is good for us too.  
An encouraging word or gesture can mean a lot.

**Do you have a photo or memory that makes you smile?**

**Has someone been kind to you or done you a favour recently?**

**Have you encouraged or supported someone recently?**

You also might find happiness in poetry, reading, writing or staying connected through letters.

## Pause for Thought

I've spent my whole life running  
From myself or just my mind  
Am I running from my troubles?  
Knowing I can't rewind

In my early years in care homes  
I kept running from place to place  
Wearing the same fake little smile  
To mask a scared little face

I've spent years living on the streets  
From hostels, squats or outdoors  
Running from abuse and addiction  
Sleeping on cold, concrete floors

From home to foster care  
From streets to this cell  
Isn't it time I stopped running?  
To escape my own very hell

To give normal life another chance  
I hear my poor, tired mind say  
So now I've decided to slow down a bit  
To just walk from day to day

**J Vice**, *HMP Eastwood Park*  
First published at: [www.insidetime.org](http://www.insidetime.org)

## My Mind

My mind is like  
The colour of the night  
Void of emotion  
Flat lined and lifeless  
Yet the sight of your smile  
Brought something back  
An emotion not felt  
Since a heart became lost

**T Goodall**, *HMP Bullingdon*  
First published at: [www.insidetime.org](http://www.insidetime.org)

For one human being to love another: that is perhaps the most difficult of all our tasks, the ultimate, the last test and proof, the work for which all other work is but preparation.

## Rainer Maria Rilke

Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens.

## Khalil Gibran

## Writing a letter

Letter writing is a good way to stay connected to the people you care about outside. You can send one letter a week for free. Two if you are on remand. More if you have the stamps.

Tuesday 12th June

Dear Jenny,

It's been a while. How are you? How are the children?  
What's been going on in your life?

I've just started looking after myself. I've started doing a bit of exercise. I'm choosing to eat a bit more healthily. Keeping my brain active and I'm also trying to learn new things. I've even considered taking up meditation! I've noticed a few changes. I feel I've got a bit more energy and I am sleeping better. People don't wind me up so much (most of the time), and I've learnt to walk away from those who do. Strange. That's not normally like me.

When we  
thinking  
differer  
I hope  
togeth

to tell you how much I've been  
could be

Jenny Smith  
10 Nearby Street  
Mytown  
BS37 1QT



# WHAT NEXT?

PLAN B is a starter. If you find it helpful you might like to do more. Here are a few ideas.

If **BREATHING** techniques work for you find out a bit more about meditation or yoga.

To keep looking after your **BODY** consider an exercise plan, getting some advice or visiting the gym.

To exercise your **BRAIN** find new ways to learn and develop yourself.

Learn to **BEFRIEND** others as well as yourself.

Find ways to boost your wellbeing and resilience so you can **BE positive** whatever might be going on.

# MY PLAN B

Create your own PLAN B. Think about the 5 themes and note down on pieces of paper the things, no matter how small, you're doing already to **Breathe**, Look after your **Body**, Exercise your **Brain**, **Befriend** yourself and **Be** positive. Notice when these work best for you. Maybe even enjoy caring about your own wellbeing.

Now imagine as best you can anything else that might increase your wellbeing. Maybe write down some ideas on pieces of paper and arrange these alongside the 5 themes. Which ideas seem most appealing and workable? What's the next step to making them happen? - What things do I need? (pens, paper, advice, help).

And when you are ready, try out some of your ideas. It can be helpful to keep a note of how things turn out. Remember the great thing about *your* PLAN B, is that you can design it to suit your needs.

What works for me already?

My Ideas. Next steps?

Breathe

I breathe and count to 10 and I find that really helps to calm me down when I am feeling agitated and angry.

Learn how to meditate.  
I need to find out a bit more from someone who does it already.

Body

Sometimes I do a few press-ups and sit-ups in my cell.

Try out some stretching.  
I need to draw-up an exercise plan or I won't stick to it!

Brain

I like books about nature.

Take up drawing again.  
Get hold of some art stuff.

Befriend yourself

I remember what my old art teacher told me: "I have potential and I can make something of myself".

I'll start keeping a diary and note down when I've done something well.  
Get a diary!

Be positive

I keep in contact with my family by phone.

Write to nan.  
Get some paper and envelopes and some help with letter writing.

# USEFUL CONTACTS

## **Inside Time**

*Newspaper for prisoners*  
PO Box 251, Hedge End  
Hampshire SO30 4XJ  
01489 795 945  
[www.insidetime.org](http://www.insidetime.org)

## **Email a prisoner**

Unilink Technology  
Services Limited  
PO Box 1450  
Bristol BS39 7WD  
03333 70 65 50  
[www.emailaprisoner.com](http://www.emailaprisoner.com)

## **Prisoners Advice Service**

PO Box 46199  
London EC1M 4XA  
020 7253 3323

## **Prison Fellowship England & Wales**

*Letter-writing to prisoners*  
PO Box 68226  
London SW1P 9WR  
020 7799 2500

## **Prison Reform Trust**

15 Northburgh Street  
London EC1V 0JR  
0808 802 0060

## **Howard League for Penal Reform**

1 Ardleigh Road  
London N1 4HS  
0207 249 7373

## **Samaritans**

Freepost RSRB-KKBY-CYJK  
PO Box 9090  
Stirling FK8 2S  
08457 90 90 90

## **Narcotics Anonymous (NA)**

*Free helpline for people  
needing support and advice  
about drug addiction*  
0300 999 1212

## **Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)**

*Free helpline for anyone  
with a drinking problem*  
0800 9177 650

**Feedback** We welcome comments and feedback on PLAN B. You can do this either in writing to:  
Happy City, 1st Floor, Canningford House,  
38 Victoria Street, Bristol BS1 6BY  
or if you have access to the internet, email:  
[PlanB@happycity.org.uk](mailto:PlanB@happycity.org.uk)



# BACK-UP

# THANK YOU!

PLAN B was produced with thanks to the involvement of prisoners from Bristol Prison, and the work of the team at Happy City.



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