

A person with long dark hair, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and dark pants, is sitting on a concrete ledge. They are facing away from the camera, looking out over a large body of water towards a sunset. The sky is filled with soft, golden light from the setting sun, with some clouds. In the distance, there are dark silhouettes of mountains or hills. The foreground shows some dry grass and rocks.

Mental Health Wellbeing in Online Communities

The Student Room



Background



In the past 12 months, we have had 1.4 million views of the discussions of our mental health forum, an increase of 20% YoY. The welfare of students/young people is our only concern, as young people rarely feel confident in discussing their mental health concerns in person. They don't always ask their questions, with only 17.7k posts from users compared to pageviews this year.

We try and encourage an open, honest conversation in a safe space about mental health with peer to peer support. There is the anonymous posting option for those who do not wish to disclose their online identity when talking about sensitive issues. We choose not to prohibit these conversations, which could drive them underground.



Book a uni open day

Ask a question



StrawberryDrea...

Search The Student Room...



How to spot a fake news story

Threads in Forum

Last Post

Sticky: PSV: Who we are and what we do by ParadoxSocks	by 04MR17 16-10-2018	replies: 2 views: 630	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sticky: We're the Peer Support Volunteers, ask us anything! (Pgs: 1 2 3) by Paracosm	by Rigel 15-05-2018	replies: 46 views: 9,779	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sticky: Mental Health Information and Experiences by username861942	by Tillybop 17-07-2014	replies: 10 views: 22,972	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel like I'm going to begin something dark by Anonymous	by Anonymous 2 hours ago	replies: 0 views: 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mind full or mindful?: TLG's mindfulness blog! (Pgs: 1 2 3 4 5 ...) by The_Lonely_Goatherd	by laurawatt 3 hours ago	replies: 2,537 views: 95,351	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental Health Support Society XIX (Pgs: 1 2 3 4 5 ...) by Sabertooth	by Anonymous 3 hours ago	replies: 9,685 views: 255,050	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can't even take a passport photo because of my BDD by YasudaSayo	by Pachuco 9 hours ago	replies: 3 views: 60	<input type="checkbox"/>
Porn Addiction by Anonymous	by Anonymous 14 hours ago	replies: 1 views: 30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Study Abroad with Depression by ericchau	by ericchau 14 hours ago	replies: 4 views: 20	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need help by Unknown-99	by _WOLF_ 15 hours ago	replies: 1 views: 20	<input type="checkbox"/>
My partner was admitted to a mental health ward yesterday, ask us both anything! (Pgs: 1 2 3 4) by Deyesy	by Baza2002 16 hours ago	replies: 71 views: 2,230	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exhausted/burned out over job search - mentally unwell by Anonymous	by Sammylou40 19 hours ago	replies: 1 views: 70	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feel unable to cope? by Anonymous	by Anonymous 1 day ago	replies: 4 views: 50	<input type="checkbox"/>

Teaching

Learn more

Panic attacks?? by Anonymous	by Pathway 1 day ago	replies: 3 views: 60	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loneliness is slowly killing me by Anonymous	by dylan-s-obrien 1 day ago	replies: 3 views: 50	<input type="checkbox"/>
NEVER had a job and I'm 20 by Anonymous	by jesscamp 1 day ago	replies: 5 views: 50	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schizophrenic and not sure about working by Anonymous	by Sabertooth 1 day ago	replies: 4 views: 170	<input type="checkbox"/>
Depression in halls by Anonymous	by Hannah987654 1 day ago	replies: 10 views: 4,002	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Weight loss tips?
- What uni to choose
- The I-SOC (Islamic Society) XVI
- UCL Medicine 2019 Entry Applicants official thread
- Best and Worst Part-Time Student Jobs
- Change in the way Pearson/Edexcel will mark A level maths?
- Leeds accommodation life
- Parents don't support my career choice
- "Leave means Leave" march sets off from Sunderland
- I caught my boyfriend masterbating and it hurt how can I get over it
- Dentistry applicants - 2019 entry

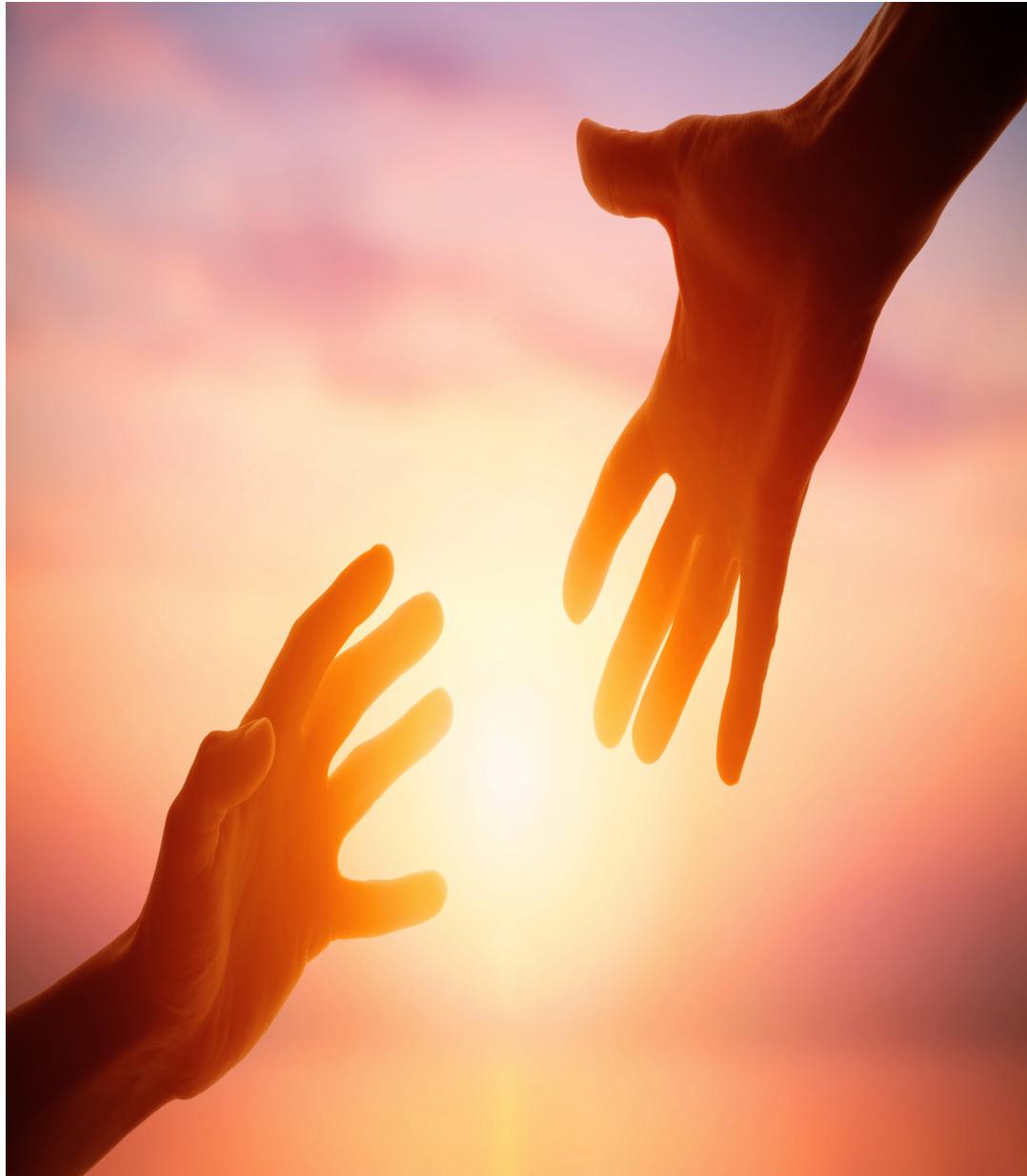
see more



Today on TSR



- [Join our all day revision thread!](#)
- [Is this cheating?](#)
- [I missed my exam!](#)
- [Parents don't support my career choice](#)



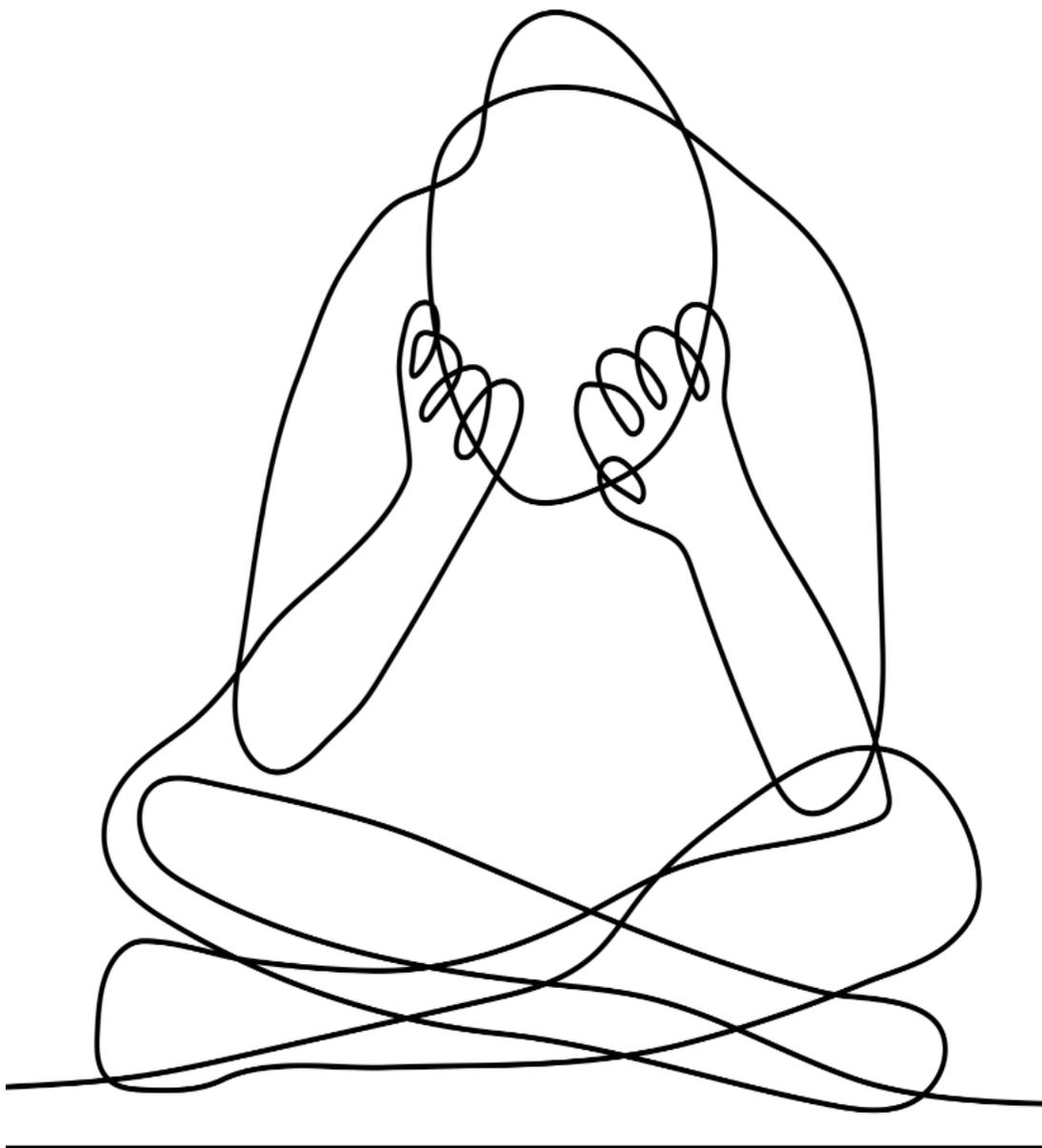
How we support users



- We try to ensure any content romanticising mental ill-health is removed or reported. Automated features on our website ensure posts containing certain words (eg. 'suicide') are put into our moderation queue immediately, and brought to the attention of our fully trained moderation staff as top priority
- TSR is a community-moderated site, and all guests and members are able to report concerning posts, threads and private messages using the button in the top right hand corner of each. Volunteers also have the ability to 'urgent report' concerning posts, which removes the content from the public facing site until it has been reviewed.

Dealing with posts about suicide

- Our moderation policy helps to keep our users as safe as we can. We don't permit the discussion of suicide or self harm on site, including speculative discussions.
- Our Peer Support Volunteer (PSV) team are a team of young people themselves who help to support users who are in distress, and have posted a thread/mentioned that they wish to serious self-harm/commit suicide.
- The PSV team was founded by one of our previous senior volunteers, who is also a GP, and all volunteers that work in this team have been trained by the Samaritans and/or PAPYRUS and DBS checked.





Peer Support Volunteer Process



- The thread/post in question will be removed from the public site and into a private forum where that user can have a one to one conversation with one of our trained Peer Support Volunteers.
- We remove content from the public site under the best-practice guidance from Samaritans, both to protect other users from potentially triggering content, and to protect the member from unhelpful medical advice, or unkind comments from others
- When the content is moved from the site, the user will automatically receive a private message explaining the Peer Support process, and including essential information regarding the best support services for that person
- The PSV team will provide a tailored response to the user
- If possible, a post may be edited by the team and returned to the public site, or it may remain in the private forum



Peer Support
Volunteers

Badges: 21
Rep:

Community Record
Add Card
Notes (0)
IP Address

Report 1 day ago #2

“ ”

(Original post by [redacted])

I wrote a whole thing, explaining why, but I lost it and can't be bothered to type it all again. Basically, I simply can't go on any longer how things are. I'm walking out of school and throwing myself in front of a train on the last week of term before easter, unless anything suddenly changes. I'm so lonely and scared. I really don't know what to do. Even when I tell myself I have to stay alive, I uncontrollably think of what I'm gonna do anyway. The only thing I have left is listening to + playing music, but I feel like I'm constantly terrible at it, which leaves me nothing. I just needed to write this out somewhere...

...show less ^

Dear [redacted]

I'm contacting you about your recent post. It sounds like you are going through a tough time at the moment and I'm sorry things have been so hard for you. You mentioned that you have been feeling lonely and scared and that you feel you have been left with nothing. I'm sorry things seem so bleak at the moment. You spoke about feeling that you can't go on any longer and that you intend to throw yourself in front of a train if nothing changes, I can't imagine how hard that is for you.

Would you be willing to consider speaking to a GP, family member or even a close friend about how you are feeling? There are also lots of support services available such as Samaritans who would be happy to listen. You can contact them by calling 116 123 or emailing jo@samaritans.com (they usually reply within a few hours). You can also contact the charity, Papyrus on HOPELINE by calling 0800 068 4141, texting 07786209697 or email: pat@papyrus-uk.org. Their opening hours are 10am – 10pm on weekdays and 2pm – 10pm on weekends and bank holidays. If you do feel that you are in crisis or at risk of hurting yourself, please call 999 for an ambulance.

I'm sorry but we've had to move your post to a private part of the forum - not because we don't care or don't want to listen, but because we are not the best people to advise you, and unfortunately people sometimes offer dangerous advice or post insensitive comments. The best people to help you are Samaritans or Papyrus, please get in touch with them.

I really hope things improve for you.



Peer Support Volunteer



start new discussion > closed Page 1 of 1

mod tools inline moderation

This discussion is closed.

★ Thread starter Report 5 years ago #1

Mental Health Information

username861942
Badges: 3
Rep: ████████

Community Record
Add Card
Notes (0)
IP Address

Mental health problems are more common than you may think. 1 in 4 of us will experience mental health problems at some point in our life. They can affect anyone regardless of sex, religion, ethnicity, sexuality. Mental illness does not discriminate. Mental health problems are not a sign of weakness.

Mental health problems affect the way we think, feel and behave. There is no one cause for mental health problems. Some of the causes include trauma, stress, social issues (e.g. unemployment, homelessness) and genetic factors. Despite the challenges, people with mental health problems face, it is possible to recover from a mental health problem and live a productive and fulfilling life.

This guide will give you an overview of common mental health problems, how they are treated, how you can get help yourself and dispute some of the misconceptions of mental health.

- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- [Common Mental Health Problems](#)
- [Suicide & Self Harm](#)
- [How to get help](#)
- [Role of Professionals](#)
- [Treatment Options](#)
- [Hospital Admission](#)
- [Misconceptions](#)
- [Other resources and information](#)
- [Getting Help for Mental Health Issues at University](#)

2

Edit

FAQ Sticky thread

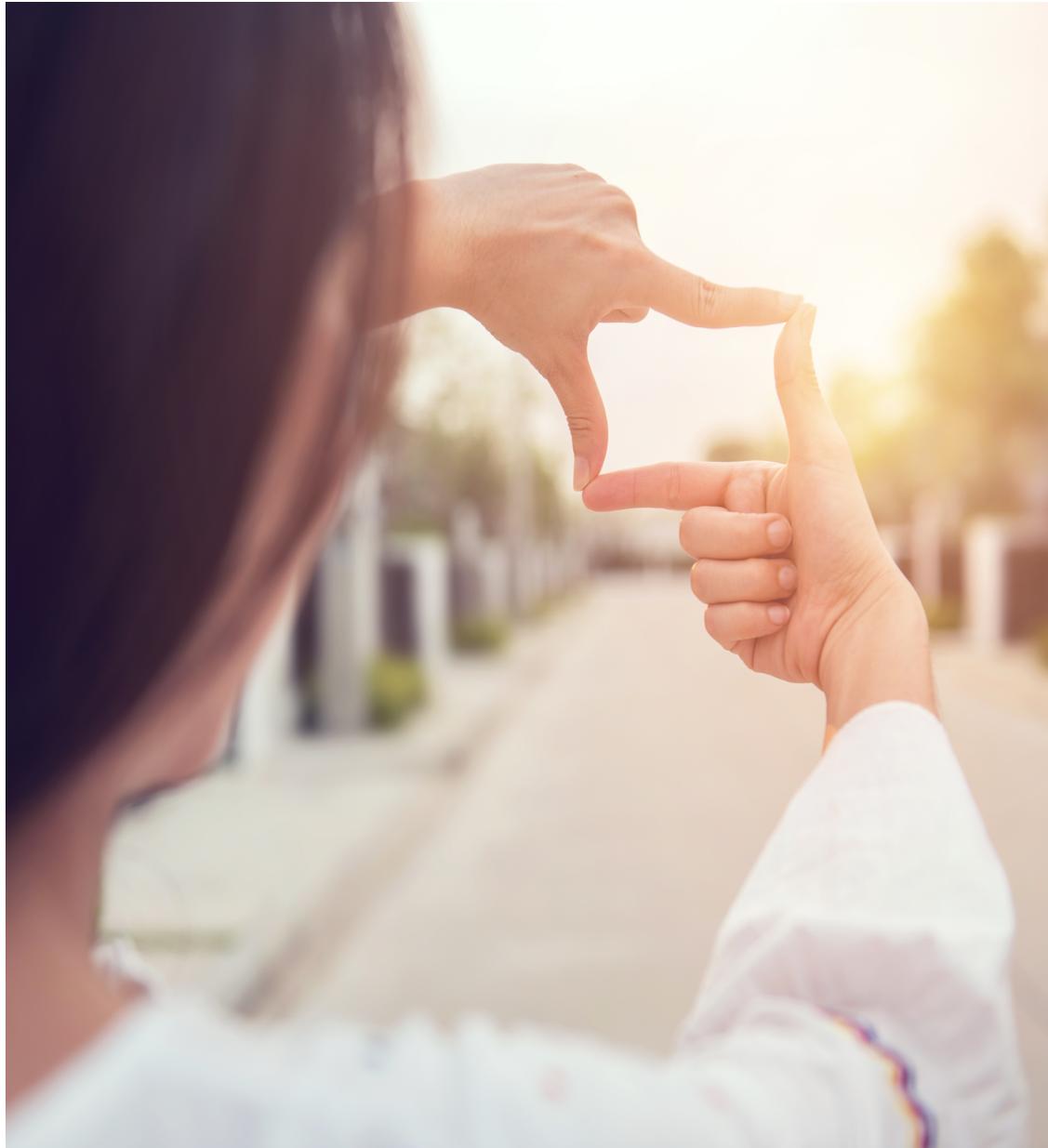
This sticky FAQ thread has information on a variety of mental health concerns for users to read through if they feel they don't know where to start. We also have article content written by our in-house team on various mental health issues that students may face.



Key Challenges



- Moderating a large community of vulnerable users, with a large portion of those users being under 18 years old with a variety of safeguarding issues
- Encouraging members to provide sensitive and useful advice, and steer clear of any unhelpful or wrong medical advice or debates in this particular forum is difficult
- Current wait time for a response from the PSV team is around 24 hours. We can't make a commitment about timings due to being short staffed. Ideal scenario would be having someone on call in a shift pattern, but we're unable to commit to that at the moment.



Future goals

There is always room to improve. A [research piece](#) from 2018 mentioned The Student Room as one of places where people would benefit from expert advice, as peer to peer isn't always helpful or right.

We are currently working with POPYRUS to trial rolling banner ads on the bottom of our Mental Health forum that will take users to their website for further information on how to get help and support. We also hope to work with them further to see how a having their official presence could work on the site.

Summary



More young people than ever are turning to online communities to look for support and answers about mental health issues.

Here at TSR, we take a proactive approach to ensure we try to support as many people as possible, whether they are members posting content or guests viewing it.

Our PSV process is a well-established presence on the site that helps countless young people who feel they are not being heard, or are too scared to ask for help. We want our forum to be a safe space for young people, and work hard to achieve this.