

Messaging Guidelines...

Our goal is to create a positive, inspirational and motivational space to share thoughts, reflections and experiences. With this in mind, if you are thinking of submitting a blog, please check the following points to ensure that readers are not negatively affected. Remember that a member of the editorial team will always check your blog before publishing, so don't worry if you are unsure about any of the following information.

- **Focus on feelings, not descriptions of behaviours, methods or trauma:** Try to write about your feelings and what the experience meant to you. Sharing your emotions might be helpful for other students feeling a similar way. Please avoid mentioning specific self-harm, weight loss or suicide methods. This may be triggering for those experiencing mental health difficulties, providing ideas or an unhealthy point of comparison.
- **Avoid 'glamorising' mental health difficulties or treatment:** Try to avoid portraying certain mental health difficulties as desirable, or certain treatments as preferable.
- **No numbers:** Avoid using any kinds of numbers such as BMIs, calories and mortality rates. These may be distressing or unhelpful for readers affected by certain mental health difficulties, or cause unhealthy comparisons.
- **Positive and inclusive language:** We keep the language we use when talking about mental health positive and inclusive. We try to keep a recovery model in mind, recognising that recovery and/or effective management is possible for everyone.
- **Talking about suicide:** Please be mindful when talking about suicide. Some examples of appropriate phrases are 'died by suicide/took their own life' or 'carried out actions to take/end their life'. We do not use the phrase 'committed suicide', as this implies judgement or persecution.
- **Take care with the adjectives you use:** We encourage the use of person-first language (e.g. a person with bipolar disorder rather than a bipolar person). Please avoid using adjectives associated with mental illness inappropriately. Examples include 'crazy, psychotic, maniac,' etc.
- **Images:** You can use photos in your blog post if you think this would support your story. However, we will not publish any photographs or images that reflect stereotypes or difficult behaviours, including self-harm and those that depict physical symptoms of disordered eating.
- **Try to encourage people to seek support if they need it:** We are aware that services for mental health vary across the country and, at times, can be far from ideal. When talking about the limitations of services or difficult experiences with services, we try to keep the variety of the system in mind and want to always encourage people who are experiencing difficulties to seek support.
- **Share your experience of receiving support, rather than that of a specific service:** This helps your blog remain accessible to students across the UK, since the support available at your university or in your local area may not be representative of the whole country.

If you are still unsure about blogging or have any questions, please check our [FAQs](#) or get in touch with the student editorial team (blog@studentminds.org.uk). We look forward to publishing your blog soon!