



Speaking Up, Speaking Out  
Welcome



[mind.org.uk/bluelight](https://mind.org.uk/bluelight)

# Today we'll be talking about

- Blue Light services and mental health
- The Blue Light Champion role
- Mental health and stigma
- Reflection and storytelling
- Boundaries
- Confidentiality and safeguarding
- Looking after your wellbeing







Group agreement





Ice breaker



You may want to embed the video you are using here.





# Blue Light research

- **7 out of 10** think their organisation does not encourage them to talk about mental health.
- **Over half** were not aware of the mental health support their organisation offers.
- **44%** thought colleagues would be treated differently in a negative way if they disclosed a mental health problem at work.



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# Blue Light research

I was going to work almost crying because I was that depressed. But I loved my job and that was the frustrating thing; I couldn't tell anyone because of the stigma at work.

Zoe, police service



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# What is good mental health?

"Mental wellbeing describes your mental state – how you are feeling and how well you can cope with day-to-day life.

Our mental wellbeing can change, from day to day, month to month or year to year."

Mind



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# Good mental health and wellbeing

- Feel relatively confident in yourself
- Feel and express a range of emotions
- Feel engaged with the world around you
- Live and work productively
- Cope with the stresses of daily life and manage times of change and uncertainty



# Mental health continuum



We all have mental health, some of us have mental health problems.





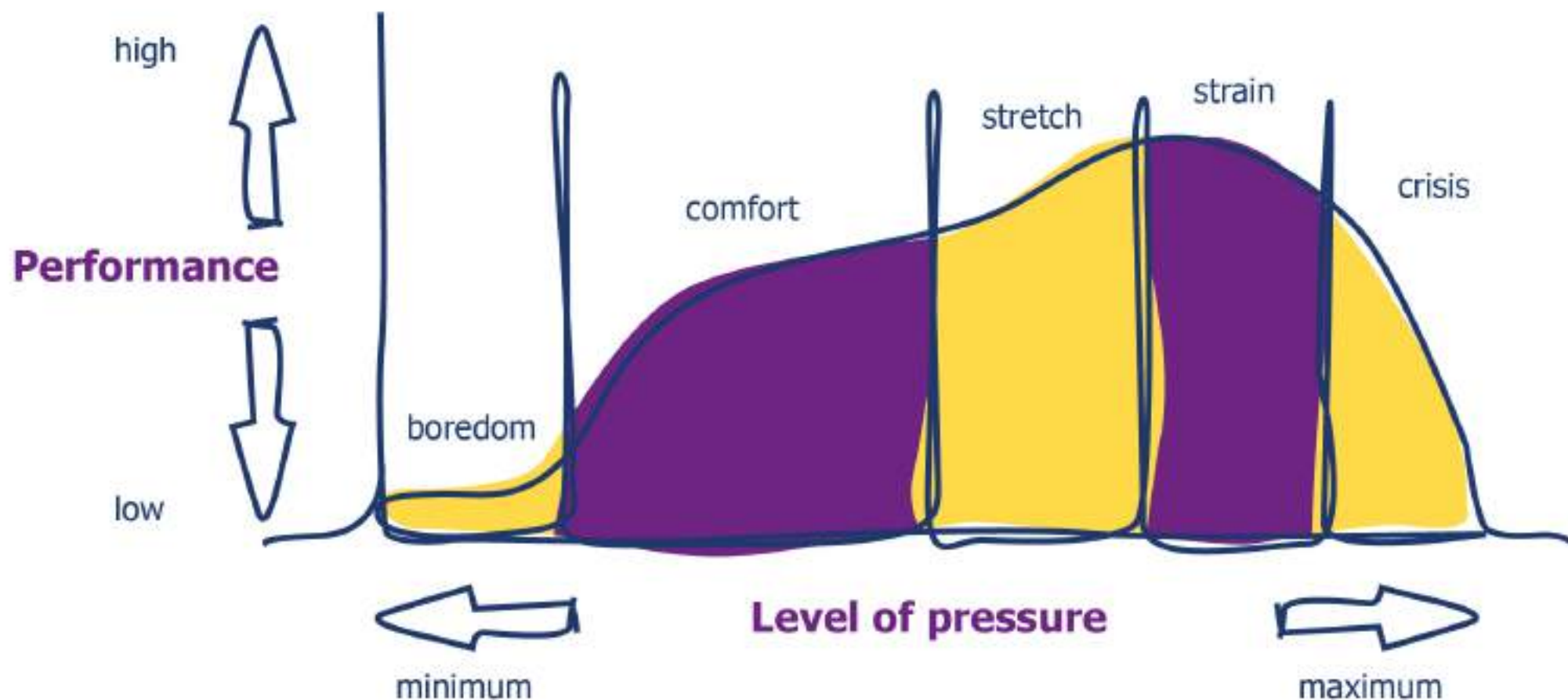
# What are mental health problems?

- Mental health problems can affect any of us irrespective of age, personality or background.
- They include a wide range of experiences and can affect the way people think, feel or behave.
- They can appear as a result of experiences in both our personal and working lives – or they can come about without any easily identifiable cause.
- Some problems may be mild or moderate while others may take on a more severe form, affecting a person's ability to cope with day-to-day living.



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# Stress versus 'good' pressure



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Too many people with  
mental health problems  
are made to feel isolated,  
ashamed and worthless.



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What does stigma  
feel like?





Comfort break



A Blue Light Champion is an employee or volunteer in the emergency services who takes action to change the way we all think and act about mental health.



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# What do Blue Light Champions do?

- Raising awareness and encouraging people to talk about mental health
- Signposting to support
- Organising and attending events, meetings and training
- Speaking out about your experience of mental health problems
- Creating Champion networks
- Getting organisational buy-in





Welcome to the day!



What are Champions doing?



Quick break



# Blue Light Champion Guest Speaker



# Tips for talking

- Talk about why you became a Blue Light Champion.
- Ask someone how they are doing, and take time to listen and engage with their response.
- Talk about what helps you maintain wellbeing, relax or de-stress. Ask your colleagues what helps them.
- Use news stories related to mental health to start a discussion.





# Key messages

We're all human and we all have mental health.

Mental health problems are common and can be treated.

We all need support sometimes.



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# Reflection exercise

Ten  
minutes

Write, draw  
or reflect

What you  
create is just  
for you



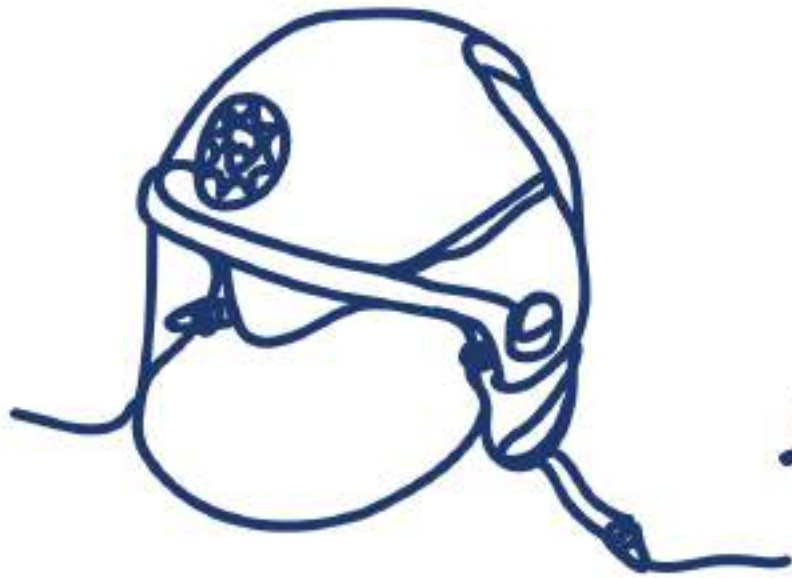
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End of exercise

In pairs



Take a minute to  
discuss how you  
found the activity.



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Break

“Always remember  
your story is a gift  
so keep it precious.”

Unknown



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# Thinking about sharing your story?

- What would you feel comfortable sharing with others?
- What is the impact of sharing your story on yourself and those around you?
- What are your motivations and the message you want to get across?



“Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. Truth and courage aren’t always comfortable, but they’re never weakness.”

Brené Brown, research professor, University of Houston



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# Preparing to Speak Out – Five questions

- Why are you telling this story?
- What do you feel comfortable sharing?
- Based on your experience, how do you think positive change around mental health can be achieved within your organisation?
- Who needs to hear your story?
- In your experience, did someone help you in a memorable way?



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# Managing your experience when Speaking Out

- Prepare an outline of what to include about your personal experience.
- Be clear about the key messages of the Blue Light Programme.
- Know your strengths as a communicator – is this public speaking, one on one, the written word, painting etc.
- Who needs to hear your story?
- Identify ways you can best prepare and protect yourself. Looking after your wellbeing is the most important thing.



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# Managing your experience when Speaking Out

- Consider presentation tools.
- Give information about where to find resources, further information and how to access support.
- You are not expected to be an expert, but you might want to educate yourself about mental health and be ready for questions.
- Practise beforehand by role-playing what you will say.



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# Blue Light Champion Guest Speaker







Image: Metropolitan Police

Lunch

# Afternoon activity





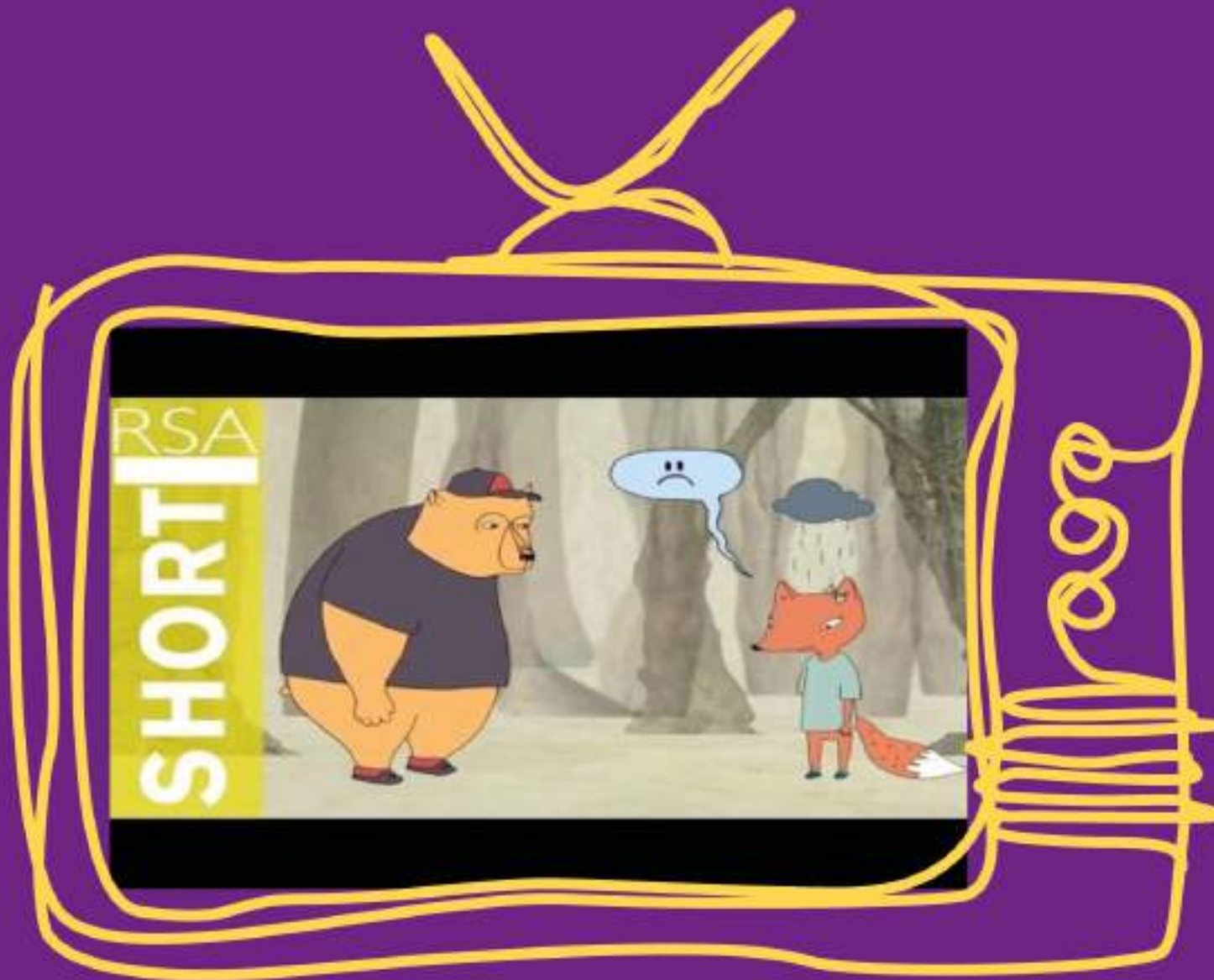
# Managing conversations

"This kind of sensitive, active listening is exceedingly rare in our lives. We think we listen, but rarely do we listen with real understanding, true empathy. Yet listening, of this very special kind, is one of the most potent forces of change that I know."

Carl Rogers, psychologist – 1902–1987



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# Managing conversations about mental wellbeing

**Top tip:** If someone is highly emotional, give them time to settle. It can be a bit disconcerting at first to watch a friend or colleague being in the throes of emotional distress. Stay calm, sit quietly and use expressions like:

- Whatever it is, we can beat it.
- You aren't on your own, I'm here with you.
- Take your time, only talk when you feel ready. If you don't want to talk that's okay too.



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# In groups of three

Choose a person in your group to take each of the below roles:

- A: Talk about an issue you are facing or have faced for three minutes.
- B: Actively listen.
- C: Observe – and be ready to give feedback.

After three minutes ask everyone to swap roles in their groups.

After a further three minutes ask participants to swap roles again so everyone will have had a go at each role.



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# Boundaries

- Boundaries need to be there to keep people safe.
- Having boundaries can help clarify your role as champion.
- You need to be aware of your organisation's policies and guidelines.



# Boundaries

Three groups – each work on one of the questions below and write answers on flip chart paper:

1. What are role boundaries?
2. What are organisational boundaries?
3. What are personal boundaries?





"Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect."

Care Quality Commission



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# Setting expectations

- When you introduce yourself as a Champion, what are the key things you need to get across?
- How might you say this?





# Limits to confidentiality

- **Find out what policies and guidance your employer has in place in case one of these issues arises.**
- **Look after yourself; consider making a Wellness Action Plan.**
- Don't forget the Blue Light Infoline – for yourself or for someone you are supporting.





Comfort break



# Dealing with difficult situations

On your tables, read the case study and work through the questions:

- How does it feel to be in this situation?
- What would you do?
- Would you involve anyone else?
- How would you support yourself after?

Turn over to part two of your case study when you are ready.



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# Knowing when to signpost elsewhere

- Your Employee Assistance Programme or Occupational Health
- Information available from unions and other membership bodies
- Disability support groups





# Knowing when to signpost elsewhere

- Details of external organisations that offer mental health support, such as your local Mind
- How to access counselling or therapy in your local area
- Local and national helplines
- Chaplains
- **Signposting to support – create your own**



# Take care of your wellbeing

- Talk about the way you feel.
- Identify your triggers.
- Do something you enjoy.
- Take time to relax.



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# Take care of your wellbeing

- Make a plan to stay well – Wellness Action Plan.
- Think about what helps you if you start feeling overwhelmed.
- **Be kind to yourself – we are all human!**

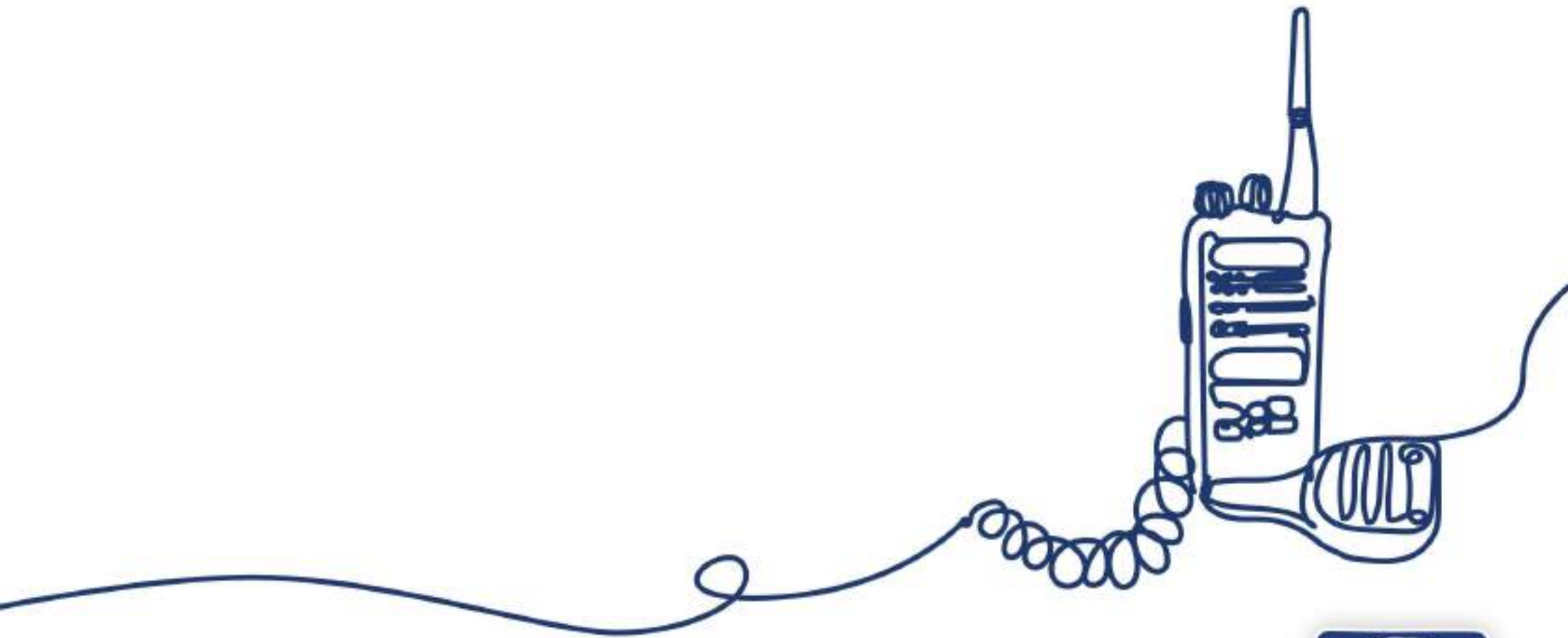


Have you had your  
five a day?





# What happens next and questions



# Share

- One thing you will take away from today.
- One thing you will leave here today.





Tonight do something  
just for you



**Need support?**

Blue Light Infoline:

0300 303 5999

Samaritans:

116 123



Image: West Midlands Police

Thank you

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