**Routine and change Strategies:**

Below are some ideas of strategies relating to routine and change. They are not written in any particular order. We will add to this strategy sheet over time, of discussion points that come out of our hub sessions .

If you move house or job it can be stressful and therefore having strategies you can put in place to plan as much of this as possible beforehand may be helpful. Also visualising the space is useful. Taking photos and planning where things will go can also be helpful.

Starting a new activity may be difficult and therefore steps you could take may include getting someone you know to come with you; gathering as much information about the activity beforehand; visiting the place for a trial run; arranging to meet the leader outside 10 minutes before.

If there is a Cancellation of an appointment or a friend cancels an arrangement, it can be helpful to have a plan in place of strategies you can use when dealing with this and other sudden unexpected change. Some people find they need time to process the information. Some people would use something they are very familiar with and find calming, as a distraction technique. Often things on our phone are helpful at times like this - a familiar song, familiar game, website etc, and do this while sitting somewhere quiet. Then make a plan as to how you will get your day back on track. Mindful techniques can be helpful, and also being aware of the impact that the change may have on the rest of your day.

In terms of a change in work, having some notice of these is very helpful, so make sure your line manager knows you need notice of any changes. Discuss with your line manager how much notice is preferable. If you are moving to a new office or a new desk space, or if there is a change in your shift pattern, to have time to become familiar with this. There may be reasonable adjustments that can be put in place to make things easier.

If getting a new car or decorating the house - strategies you can use to prepare for this change are planning in advance, visualise what it will look like. Have photos of your new car in prominent places so you look at them regularly; think about the positives; plan what will happen on the day etc. for decorating the house, again plan for this, and it can be helpful to put some of the new colour on the wall beforehand in a small area.

In relationships it is helpful for others to understand why you need notice for any change, and how you will react and what is helpful to you when there is a sudden change. It is helpful if they understand this so they are aware of how much notice you may need and what strategies to put in place if there is a sudden change.

Routines can be helpful for remembering things we often forget about, such as personal care tasks. Building these into a routine which is written down, put somewhere visible, and backed up with reminders to learn and reinforce this routine can be helpful.

Having a routine and a plan is really important at times of increased stress and uncertainty. This helps prevent being too overwhelmed with choices. Choices over meals in advance, or activities during an unstructured time can be really helpful.

There are many apps available to aid routines, and different types of alarms as well such as Alexa devices that can be used to set Reminders.

Some people will find that a to do list, or a list of daily tasks is helpful for them, but other people will see this as an endless list that they never get to the bottom of, so never really build a routine around these. Having set blocks of time to allocate to tasks can be helpful. It will mean the task can be completed, in a predictable part of the routine, but it isn’t too overwhelming. One suggestion is using a diary with blocks of task time; another suggestion is a calendar with just two spaces on it for things that are outside of the usual routine.