

Mental Wellness Tips to maintain a healthy mind and body:

Staying mentally and physically fit, takes work and requires an investment of time. One way to ensure that you maintain a balance between your emotional and physical wellness is to set goals for yourself. Below are ten tips which are also utilized by many as methods to manage and reduce stress. In fact, taking control of your life is the foundation for stress management and a healthier you.

- 1. Get Plenty of Sleep.** Besides exercising and eating well, it's important to get a good night's sleep, preferably eight hours of un-interrupted sleep. Sleep is a universal prerequisite to health and happiness. If you are experiencing problems with sleeping, you should seek help. There are all kinds of simple strategies to help you sleep better.
- 2. Learn to relax.** Make yourself take a break. Sometimes it is hard for people to do that when they are constantly on the go, but your body needs time to relax. Yoga is a great form of relaxation as well as incorporating naps into your day.
- 3. Laugh.** Nothing makes you feel better about yourself or the world around you than a good laugh. It's great medicine, especially if you can learn to laugh at yourself. Laughter can be very therapeutic so try to incorporate laughter into your day.
- 4. Do Something for others.** Doing things for others is a great tonic when you're feeling down. Helping a friend, family or a community organization can make you feel included and empowered.
- 5. Nurture Friendships.** Particularly during the winter months, it's easy to stay inside and not interact or communicate with others. Email and texting is no substitute for a real live visit with a friend. Make a deal with yourself to stay in touch with friends and family. Schedule short coffee or lunch dates, movies or shopping excursions. By making yourself schedule times to get out of the house, you will be rewarded with the company and conversation of others.
- 6. Avoid unnecessary Stress.** It's easy to become overwhelmed at times due to various expectations of a household, family, friends and employer. Making realistic lists of to do's each week will allow you a feeling of accomplishment when you tackle those priorities and cross them off as completed. Your accomplishments will serve as encouragement to carry you into your next list. Learn how to say no, and realize your limits. Understand your stressors and make the appropriate changes to your lifestyle and your time.
- 7. Make Time for Fun.** Make time for leisure activities that bring you joy, whether it be reading, watching a movie, connecting with others or taking a bath. Your body needs time to take a break from your responsibilities and recharge.
- 8. Incorporate Physical Activity.** Keeping your body active and physically strong, provide benefits for your mental well-being as it plays a role in reducing and preventing stress. A win-win. Exercise does not have to consist of a workout at the gym. Alternatives may include: go for a walk, take a bike ride, work in the garden, dance to some music, do stretching and yoga, life weights. Remember to make time for yourself. Shoot for 30 minutes of exercise three times a week.
- 9. Eat Healthy.** Well nourished bodies are better prepared to cope with stress. Start each day with breakfast, preferably whole grain cereals and fruit and maintain balanced, nutritious meals throughout the day. Limit caffeine and sugars in your diet.
- 10. Avoid alcohol, cigarettes and drugs.** Self medicating with alcohol, cigarettes and drugs may provide easy escapes from mood swings and stressors, but the relief is temporary. Don't avoid the issues at hand. If you're having emotional problems and you need support, ask for it. Seek help.