

# Caring for Mental Health

**In 2020, many of us experienced stress, anxiety, and depression caused by the uncertainty of the future, financial instability, social isolation, change in work environment, home-schooling of children, lack of physical activities, or fear of illness.**

We know life can be hard, with or without the effects of the pandemic. And if you're feeling stressed, anxious, or depressed, you're not alone. So, we wanted to show you a few practical tips you can try in your day-to-day life to benefit your health mentally, emotionally, and even physically. We hope this helps.

If you have concerns or experience your symptoms worsening, make sure to get a doctor's help.

## **News & Social Media:**

There is no doubt staying informed of what's going on in your community and around the world, through timely news, is necessary. However, misinformation and information overload are often a cause of stress and anxiety.

We recommend creating a schedule for those trying to avoid spending too much time consuming the news. For example, you could set a timer to check the news once in the morning and once in the evening for 20 minutes each.

Try it out a few times and adjust the schedule to what works best for you. Do the same for social media, if you struggle with controlling your time browsing social media.

## **Physical Health:**

A healthy body is a critical factor in treating or caring for mental health issues. Sleep habits can be improved by going to sleep and waking up at the same times every day.

The same goes for eating; try eating your meals at the same time every day, making sure your diet involves various food groups. It is a no-brainer that exercising is good for your health.

According to the Mental Health Foundation<sup>1</sup> of the U.K., being physically active can lessen tension, stress, and mental fatigue, boost energy and moods, improve sleep, and cause a healthy appetite, all of which contribute to one's mental well-being.

Lastly, avoid excessive smoking, drinking, and using drugs to cope with stress, anxiety, or depression. Although it may improve how you feel temporarily, it can eventually worsen your condition.

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### **Create Routines:**

Our daily routines have been thrown off by the many changes the pandemic brought. You might be feeling unmotivated to get things done. But did you know having strong routines improves mental and physical health.

According to Mental Health America<sup>2</sup>, routines help us organize our days and turn our daily tasks into a pattern. As a result, getting things done becomes easier because you don't need as much planning and motivation.

Mental Health America also stated that people with more consistent, daily routines showed a lower level of distress when facing problems.

So why not give it a shot? Remember, creating a routine is a long-term goal. Be sure to stick to it for at least three weeks and see how your days change for the better!

## **Self-Care:**

What makes you feel relaxed? What makes you happy? Look for ways to take care of how you feel and give yourself a break, even if just for a short time.

Maybe you can turn on music and sing along. Or try a new baking recipe. Try reading your favorite book, meditating, or journaling. Or take a bubble bath.

Take a moment to purposefully focus on the positives of life and think about what you are thankful for. We understand it's sometimes easier said than done, but just keep on trying!

## **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

1-800-273-8255

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat)

1. Physical activity and mental health. (2018, December 19). Retrieved December 17, 2020, from <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/p/physical-activity-and-mental-health>

2. Creating Healthy Routines. (n.d.). Retrieved December 17, 2020, from <https://www.mhanational.org/creating-healthy-routines>