

Mental Health

Mental health refers to our emotional, mental, and social well-being. People with good mental health feel good about themselves.

Traits of People with Good Mental Health

- **Positive self-image:** They say positive things about themselves. They believe they can do the things they need to do.
- **Participate in outside activities:** They are active in things that renew their bodies and spirits.
- **Able to deal with stress:** They can identify problems and find ways to solve them.
- **Positive, fulfilling relations with others:** They can share feelings and ideas, hopes and dreams.
- **Self-direction:** They make decisions, plan their education, excel at work, and enjoy hobbies. They follow through and do the things they want and need to do.
- **Accurate self-perception:** Their feelings match their behavior. What they believe about themselves is a true picture of who they are.

What You Can Do for Your Mental Health

Positive Self-Image

- Believe in yourself.
- List what you do well.
- Remind yourself you are important.
- Accept helpful criticism but ignore insults to your character.
- Set goals. Break them down into small parts so you can reach slowly.
- Stop negative self-talk. Tell yourself positive things.

Outside Activities

- List what you may like to do.
- Take up a hobby.
- Exercise three times a week for 20 minutes. Do something you enjoy.
- Develop your spiritual self through church or non-church related activities.

Stress Relief

- Practice mindfulness meditation. Find a relaxed, quiet spot and focus on your breathing.
- Keep a gratitude journal. Each night write down 4 or 5 things that you are grateful for.
- Think of tense situations as tests. You can use your positive attitude and problem-solving abilities.
- Laugh.
- Take yourself less seriously.

Positive Relations

- Join groups where you can be yourself.
- Join groups that help you grow as a person.
- Read books about good ways to connect. Practice what you learn with friends.
- Work on your relationships with people close to you.
- Learn to care for a pet if being close to people is hard right now.

Self-Direction

- Be proud of your work.
- Make your own decisions.
- Identify your needs. Make a list and work to meet those needs.

Self-Perception

- Listen to advice from people you respect.
- Be honest in your relations with others.

Remember, you can be your own best friend. Seek professional help if you feel down and need help in making your life better. You are important. It is vital that you care for you.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 5/2024 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#4385.