



SELF CARE

Mental Health Awareness Week

Considering your mental health on a daily basis is extremely important. Both work and social environments can make large demands on your mental health. It is important to balance these stresses with good mental health practice. Here we present a diverse set of self-care strategies for your mental health, to help it remain strong in times of stress.

MINDFULNESS

Many therapists recommend mindfulness in your daily routine to boost mental health through gratitude and awareness of our surroundings. Learn about the benefits of mindfulness and strategies to employ mindfulness here^{3,4}.

EXERCISE

Exercise releases endorphins and serotonin which improve your mood^{1,2}, and can help clear your head. 15 minutes per day can reduce the risk of major depression by 26%², and even 30-60 minutes of walking can make an impact.

SHARING THOUGHTS

Feel like you want to share your thoughts? Try:

- Facebook support groups
- App support groups like TalkLife or 7 Cups
- Close friends and family
- Journaling
- Writing a letter to yourself when you have a great day, which will be opened on a not-so-great day

SLEEPING

Sleep long and well; try not eating dinner too late and getting up with the sun.

BREATHING TECHNIQUES

If you're in a situation where work currently can't be put aside, try to employ some of these breathing exercises to aid with stress management⁵.

SHORT LISTS

Try making short lists to boost your sense of accomplishment. Break a task down into 15 to 1 hour portions, and cover all but the first three tasks with post it notes that have break times written on them. After completing three tasks, choose your next three tasks by choosing a post-it, taking that length of break, and then proceeding with the newly uncovered 3 tasks.

MEDIA RESOURCES

Use media to your advantage by watching documentaries which both soothe and inform you about cognition and mental health^{6,7}.

Alternatively, watch one of your favourite movies for a mood boost.

PHONE APPS

Many phone apps exist that can help identify depression, cope with several mental stresses, anxiety, disorders and more. In addition, many of these are free to use.

Taking a look at the following articles might help you to identify one which might be useful for you.

- <http://bit.ly/2XGEWV6>
- <http://bit.ly/2Xg5ubn>
- <http://bit.ly/2NnRwEL>

SELF- CARE DAY OFF

EATING HEALTHY

Sources:

1: <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/exercise-and-mental-health>

2: <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/the-mental-health-benefits-of-exercise.htm>

3: <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2012/07-08/ce-corner>

4: <https://www.mindful.org/mindfulness-how-to-do-it/>

5: <https://www.uofmhealth.org/health-library/uz2255>

6: <http://bit.ly/2LvW1dV>

7: <https://www.everydayhealth.com/emotional-health/movies-about-mental-health/>