

Words of Wellness



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MENTAL WELLNESS

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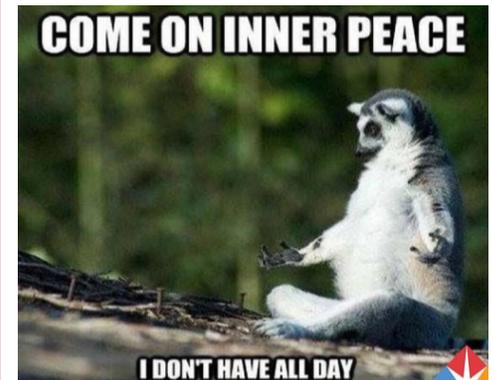
Good Coping Skills for Maintaining Good Mental Health -

<http://www.mhww.org/strategies.html>

- **Meditation and Relaxation Techniques:** Practicing deep breathing techniques, the relaxation response, or progressive muscle relaxation are ways to help reduce stress and induce relaxation.
- **Time to Yourself:** It is important to set aside time everyday to allow yourself to relax and escape the stress of life. Give yourself a private, mini vacation from everything going on around you.
- **Physical Activity:** Moving around and getting the heart rate up causes the body to release endorphins (the body's feel good hormones). Exercising provides some stress relief.
- **Reading:** Escape from reality completely by reading. Reading can help you to de-stress by taking your mind off everyday life.
- **Friendship:** Having friends who are willing to listen and support one through good and bad times is essential.
- **Humor:** Adding humor to a stressful situation can help to lighten the mood.
- **Hobbies:** Having creative outlets such as listening to music, drawing or gardening are great ways to relax and relieve everyday stress.
- **Spirituality:** Actively believing in a higher power or divine being can have many health benefits. In recent studies, it has been found that people who pray have better mental health than those who do not.
- **Pets:** Taking care of a pet helps distract the mind from stressful thoughts. Studies show that pets are a calming influence in people's lives.
- **Sleeping:** The human body needs a chance to rest and repair itself after a long and stressful day. Sleeping gives the body this chance so that it is ready to perform another day.
- **Nutrition:** Eating foods that are good for you not only improve your physical health, but they play a major role in your mental health. When your body gets the proper nutrients, it is better able to function in every capacity.

Promoting mental health in the workplace for employers includes the following:

- Be clear about tasks and work responsibilities.
- Assign manageable workloads.
- Provide opportunities to learn and grow professionally.
- Have conflict and dispute resolution practices in place.
- Involve employees in decision-making.
- Recognize employee work achievements in a fair and timely manner.



YouTube video on mental wellness: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohpEsitFkDY>

Creating a Mindfulness Habit

"The hard must become habit. The habit must become easy. The easy must become beautiful." Doug Henning

It isn't necessary to be mindful in all your waking hours, but unless you make a concerted effort to be mindful on a daily basis it's easy to get distracted by myriad things that divert your attention through the day.

Occasional attempts at 'being in the moment' or to 'notice the little things more' and 'live in the now' are well meaning, but distractions and preoccupations take over and resolutions to be more mindful fall by the wayside.

What to do? You need to make mindfulness a habit, something that you do on a regular basis until it becomes your normal, everyday practice.

Your mind is able to do this!

Establishing new ways of thinking and doing is not difficult, provided the new ways are constantly repeated. How come? When you think or do something in a new way, you create new connections or neural pathways, in your brain. Then, every time you repeat that thought or action, every time you continue using these new pathways they become stronger and more established.

It's like walking through a field of long grass, each step helps to create a new path and every time you walk that new path you establish a clear route which becomes easier to use each time. It becomes a habit to use that route.

Since your distracted and preoccupied mind isn't going to remind you to be mindful, you need something else to remind you.

In Practice:

- Set a timer on your phone
- Put a note on your bathroom mirror saying: "Be mindful."
- Decide to do things differently to experience different results.
- Make a mindfulness date with yourself.
- Commit to being mindful every time you open a door.

(Taken from: Mindfulness Pocketbook, Little Exercises for a Calmer Life, Gill Hasson 2015)