

# MIND YOUR HEALTH

Lajes Field ABS  
Mental Health  
Toolkit

Est. 2023

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# Lajes Field Mental Health Roadmap

Where do I turn for help?

1

## CHAPLAIN

Chaplain's Main Office DSN: 535-6770  
Chaplain's 24/7 Number: +314 964 335 471

- 100% Confidential
- No reporting requirements
- No referral needed
- No medical documentation
- Offers more than spiritual counseling

2

## MILITARY & FAMILY LIFE COUNSELING (MFLC)

Local Cellphone: +351 925-717-854  
DSN: 535-4213

WhatsApp: +1 (314) 913-1868

- Non- medical counseling
  - Flexible counseling locations
  - No medical documentation
  - No referral needed
  - Minimal reporting requirements
- If no answer, please leave a voicemail

4

## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

Direct Line: +1 (866) 580-9078

[www.afpc.af.mil/EAP](http://www.afpc.af.mil/EAP)

Click "OCONUS" and use code USAirForce  
Select language preference

- No referral needed
- Counseling for...
  - Family & Relationships
  - Grief & Stress
  - Anxiety & Depression
- Can see all local nationals

3

## MILITARY ONE SOURCE

Commercial: +351 295-574-138

DSN: 535-4138

- Non-medical counseling
- No medical documentation
- No referral needed
- Life Skills Counseling (i.e. financial, stress, coping skills, couples counseling)

5

## MENTAL HEALTH

\*Please see the IDMTs for a referral off-base

- Evaluate and treat mental disorders with therapy and medications
- Duty determinations made with consultation with Flight Surgeon
- Medically documented
- IDMTs and Flight Surgeon may communicate with CC/CCF and/or other medical providers to determine duty impact status

## Helpful Numbers for Lajes Field

### IDMT

DSN: 535-4233/DSN: 535-1086

### Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

988/+1 (800) 273-8255



# 5 FAQs

**Lajes Field**  
**IDMT Medical Aid Station**  
**Bldg T-333 (2nd floor)**  
**DSN 535-4233**

## How do I talk to someone? Options include the following:

Chaplain  
 Military and Family Life Counselor (MFLC)  
 Military One Source  
 Employee Assistance Program (EAP)\*\*  
 Off-base mental health care\*

*\*to establish off-base care, please speak to your IDMT*

*\*\*EAP is available to all civilian and LN employees.*

# 1



## Will seeing MH effect my career?

Our goal is to ensure a fit/ready force and help our service members be worldwide qualified. There are some conditions that may interfere with your career and ability to PCS/Deploy/TDY. The majority of the time, treatment does not impact your career.

# 2



## Will leadership be informed of my seeking of Mental Health services?

Only when there is a risk of harm to self or others, or a member is in need of a higher level of care (i.e. inpatient, intensive outpatient, partial hospitalization).

# 3



## If someone is at risk to self or others, what do we do?

ACE (Ask, Care, Escort)!

Ask the member are they thinking of harming themselves.  
 Care for the member by ensuring they are safe and not leaving them alone and showing compassion.  
 Escort the member to the IDMT office if during duty hours or call the IDMT on call phone (+351 927 15 6485); also contact the Shirt and the Chaplain.

# 4



## How do I know if I or someone else needs Mental Health Services?

If you or someone else experiences: personality change  
 agitation  
 withdrawal or isolation  
 poor self-care  
 hopelessness  
 thoughts of wanting to harm self/others  
 thoughts of suicide

# 5



For any additional questions, please contact the IDMT Medical Aid Station.



# THIS IS YOUR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Helping you Achieve your Well-Being

► **Work-Life Services**

- Childcare
- Elder care
- School and education
- Home improvement
- Relocation
- Health and Wellness

► **Finances**

- Estate Planning
- Budgeting
- Taxes

► **Legal**

- Elder Law
- Landlord/Tenant Disputes
- Family and Divorce

► **Counseling Services**

- Family and relationships
- Grief and stress
- Anxiety and depression

► **Work**

- Career Development
- Workplace Diversity
- Productivity

## AND MORE!

► **Call Direct 866-580-9078**

► **Call Collect 314-387-4800**

► **Visit your EAP website at [www.afpc.af.mil/EAP](http://www.afpc.af.mil/EAP). Click OCONUS. Use code USAirForce. Select Portuguese as your language**



# 866-580-9078 | [WWW.AFPC.AF.MIL/EAP](http://WWW.AFPC.AF.MIL/EAP)

Choose OCONUS. Use code USAirForce. Select Portuguese.

# WHY MENTAL HEALTH IS AS IMPORTANT AS PHYSICAL HEALTH

## To create and maintain healthy relationships



Meeting people and conversing stimulates your mind to do better!

## To cope with stress



This becomes easier when you have a stable mind. You can analyze problems and work on solutions in a better way.

## To increase retentivity



The better your mental health, the more powerful your memory is. If you want a sharp memory, work on your mental health first!

## To enhance productivity



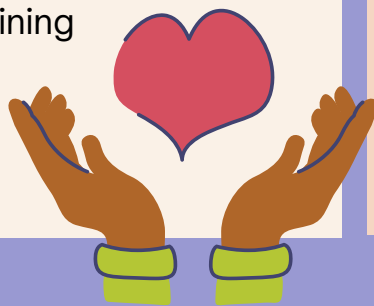
Productivity and concentration are directly related to mental health. The more you work on your mental health, the more focused you become.

## To live life to the fullest

Life is well lived if you are happy and fulfilling your potential!

## To attain a positive self-image

Gain confidence and positivity by maintaining your mental health



## To attain a better physical health



Mind and body have a deep connection. Keep your mind in a good state to live healthily!

## The Signs of *Silent* Suffering: "I'm Fine"

Before we can recognize the Five Signs of Emotional Suffering, we must first learn how to open up to ourselves and learn how to speak about our feelings to others. When our defense or coping mechanisms are activated, it can be a challenge to recognize how we are feeling.



I'm Fine

### MAY MASK FEELINGS TO AVOID EMOTIONS AND WORRYING OTHERS

You may notice that you or someone else says they are fine when everything is far from fine. Sometimes people who are struggling, feeling sad, depressed, anxious, or hopeless, will say "I'm fine" because they do not want to acknowledge their feelings and burden or worry others with their emotions. Additionally, they may be afraid of being stigmatized by talking about their emotions and so it is easier to say nothing.

The more that we are able to acknowledge our emotional suffering to ourselves and our loved ones, the more likely our feelings of suffering will diminish. And it makes sense. The more stifled a feeling, the greater its intensity. Ask yourself:

- How am I feeling?
- What is the most prominent feeling? Push past answers like "I'm fine".
- Consider what may be activating or triggering the prominent feeling.

These questions will lead to others and can help you to "decode" your emotions.

# The Signs of *Silent* Suffering: Toxic Positivity

Emotional pain and suffering show up in a number of ways. Sometimes it's very apparent that someone is hurting and other times it's hidden. In fact, these silent signs can often go unnoticed and ignored far longer than more outward Signs of Suffering. Learning the silent signs, recognizing when they are happening, and intercepting them is critical in creating healthy emotional reactions and habits.



## TOXIC POSITIVITY

Toxic positivity is when "negative" feelings and experiences are covered up with layers of "positive" words, feelings, and reactions. All feelings are authentic, whether happy or hurtful. Allowing ourselves to feel is positive, no matter the emotion. Toxic positivity may be used to mask emotional suffering by deflecting emotional struggles and are used as a distraction from what a person is really feeling.

Have you ever felt like your emotions were being dismissed or belittled by someone telling you to "just be positive"? There are numerous phrases, like "just smile", that are common responses that perpetuate toxic positivity. These words deny, minimize, and invalidate human emotional experiences, even if they are said with good intent.

Toxic positivity thrives in places when people try to cover up negative emotions with excessive positivity. We're all under the microscope, and it's easier than ever to feel pressure to present the perfect lifestyle.

## TOXIC POSITIVITY LOOKS LIKE:

- Hiding/Masking your true feelings
- Using platitudes, like "it could be worse", to dismiss "negative" emotions and reframe them as "positive"
- Trying to "just get on with it" by stuffing/dismissing an emotion(s)
- Feeling guilty for feeling what you feel
- Minimizing other people's experiences with "feel good" quotes or statements to provide false reassurance
- Giving unsolicited advice or your perspective instead of listening and validating other emotional experiences
- Shaming or chastising others for expressing frustration or anything other than positivity
- Brushing off things that are bothering you with an "it is what it is" or "fake it till you make it"

# SELF CARE

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# SELF CARE

## Tips for a healthy mind



### STAY ACTIVE

Staying active is as good for the brain as it is for the body. Regular exercise or activity can have a major impact on your mental and emotional health, relieve stress, improve memory, and help you sleep better.

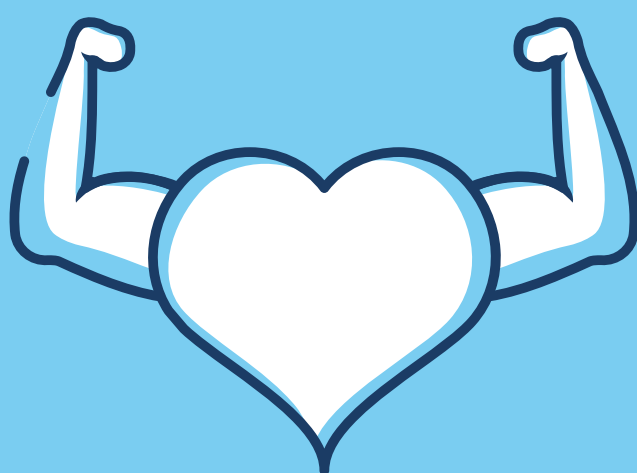


### MAKE LEISURE AND CONTEMPLATION A PRIORITY

Be intentional with your leisure time. We can all be guilty of being "too busy" to take some down time, but leisure time is a necessity for emotional and mental health. Take some time to relax, contemplate, and pay attention to the positive things as you go about your day — even the small things.

### EAT HEALTHY FOOD

Food and drink affect our bodies, brains and mood - for good or bad. Sugary snacks and drinks can give us a temporary "high" or sense of comfort that can feel irresistible. But they soon leave us feeling exhausted or jittery. Caffeine in coffee, tea, or so-called energy drinks can also have this effect. A balanced diet is essential for good physical and mental health.



### DON'T SKIMP ON SLEEP

It matters more than you think. Sleep is our body and mind's best way to recharge and rejuvenate. One way to get sleep better is to take a break from the stimulation of screens — TV, phones, tablets or computers — in the hours before bedtime. Consider reading or listening to relaxing music instead.

IDMT MEDICAL AID STATION  
BLDG T-333 LAJES AIR FIELD



# CREATING A **HEALTHIER LIFE**

*A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO WELLNESS*





## **CREATING A HEALTHIER LIFE:** *A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO WELLNESS*

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Wellness Initiative envisions a future in which people with mental or substance use problems pursue health, happiness, recovery, and a full and satisfying life in the community.

Each individual's path will be a bit different.

Every aspect of wellness can affect a person's life. Working toward all of them in one way or another is a great goal, because wellness relates directly to the quality of a person's life.

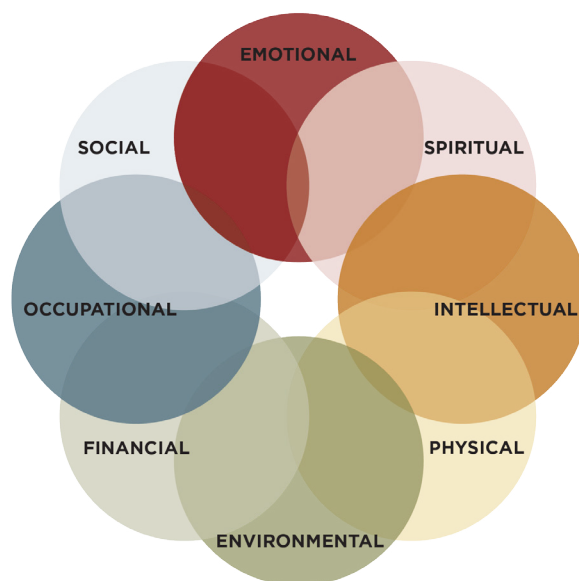
This guide offers a broad approach for things we can do—at our own pace, in our own time, and within our own abilities—that can help us feel better and live longer.



## WHAT IS WELLNESS?

Wellness is a broad concept. In this guide, we attempt to provide a broad, yet specific sense of what it means. We invite you to think of wellness as meaning being healthy in many dimensions of our lives. That includes the emotional, physical, occupational, intellectual, financial, social, environmental, and spiritual parts. These dimensions are interconnected, one dimension building on another.

We also recognize that we live in a multicultural world, and wellness encompasses areas that may not be specified in this brief discussion. We believe, for example, that trauma is a universal human experience, and that our culture and spiritual beliefs impact our perceptions and everything we do. In summary, wellness is about how we live our lives and the joy and fulfillment and health we experience.



**EIGHT DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS\***

When we worry about money (for example, debt or being able to afford what we need), we sometimes experience anxiety (emotional). This can lead to medical problems (physical), and trouble at work (occupational). When this happens, we may even question our own sense of meaning and purpose (spiritual).

At the same time, when we are not working (occupational), we may lose opportunities to interact with others (social), and may not be able to afford the good food and medical care we need to stay well (physical). We may even need to move our home to a place that feels less safe and secure (environmental).

\*Source: Adapted from Swarbrick, M. (2006). A Wellness Approach. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 29(4), 311-314.



## CREATING BALANCE

Creating balance in our lives is an important part of wellness. Overall, a balanced life can mean many things, depending on culture, circumstances, resources, and other factors. Balance means making sure we have time to do the things that make us feel happy and fulfilled. This includes working (paid or unpaid), having fun, spending time with family and friends, participating in the community, being physically active—including sexually—praying, and relaxing and sleeping.

Because we each have individual needs, preferences, and capabilities, what we consider “balance” will also look different. And it’s important for us to re-balance from time to time, to adjust to what is going on in our lives.

When we’re trying to get through a tough time—whether it is stress, an illness, trauma, or an emotional challenge—balance is especially important. In these times, our habits and routines can help us get that feeling of control back. This means focusing on ourselves as well as the roles we play in the lives of others—like being students, friends, parents, spouses, coworkers, congregants, hobbyists, community members, and citizens.

Our roles and relationships help define who we are, what gives us a sense of purpose, and how our lives are interdependent on other people, animals, and the environment.

Being engaged in life and relationships provides a measure of balance and overall wellness. For example, swimming has physical benefits (building strength, improving circulation), as well as social (meeting other people) and emotional benefits (relieving stress). But we don’t have to swim laps every week to be well; getting into the pool even occasionally is a great step.

Having a safe and clean living environment helps us feel organized and in control. It can be a way to get physical activity in as well, and offers the chance for partners and families to work together.

On the flip side, simply finding time to relax can go a long way toward finding balance in our lives. “Down time” can provide the space we need to think through a situation or work through our feelings, or just let us rest.



## EMBRACING SUPPORT FROM OTHERS

Most of us know something that we do that makes us feel good about ourselves, or in balance. It could be as different as taking our dog for a walk, or balancing our checkbook. And any step in that direction, such as finding a new walking route or gathering receipts from a purse, is positive.

However, sometimes we may want advice from family and friends. That's OK, too, and is where support from others comes in.

Talking with someone who has been through similar things—whether it is a mental health issue, addiction, trauma, pain issues, smoking, diabetes, bullying, or abuse—makes us feel less alone. When we realize others have had similar feelings and experiences and have been able to move forward and grow, it can give us the confidence to move forward, too.

With a support group, we can expect:

- Supportive input from people with a range of backgrounds who have experiences similar to ours;
- A chance to support others by our presence, compassion, our ideas, and empathy; and
- People who can suggest services or resources we might not have considered.

We can find supportive people in many places—a community or church/synagogue/mosque/temple group, at work, or through volunteering efforts, to name a few.

## VALUING ROUTINES AND HABITS

Having self-defined routines and habits can offer personal balance and satisfaction.

Routine and habit is generally determined by our basic needs (nutrition/food, shelter, social affiliation, safety, etc.), and the various roles we occupy in society. Our habits affect what we eat, what we wear, how we relate to others, how we go to work, how we spend or save money, and more.

Habits become ingrained in us—and are often tough to change. For example, we might put ourselves down or feel we need a particular thing or person to get us through a tough spot. We can learn otherwise.

Life demands, stress, crisis, or trauma can impact or alter our routines and habits. This can lead to emotional (anxiety, depression), social (cranky, isolated, angry), or physical (tired, agitated) imbalances.

Establishing new, better habits that support our wellness goals and values can be challenging, but worth it. Developing healthier routines and habits in our lives can lead to positive feelings (emotional), relationship satisfaction (social), increased energy (physical), inspiration (emotional), and a feeling that we are using our creative talents, skills, and abilities to engage in activities (occupational, intellectual, spiritual).



We may already have regular practices that make us feel better, such as mindfulness exercises, meditation or yoga, or calls to friends. It could even be avoiding the news at night, or spending less time online. You, as the expert on yourself, will know what works and what doesn't in all the dimensions. When you are not sure, you can ask someone and think together about what makes sense and what next steps might work best.

We can also consider:

- Being active in activities that have purpose. If our daily routine lacks meaning, we can feel distressed or powerless.
- Increasing activities that contribute to our wellness. Talking with a friend at the start of the day may help set a good intention or plan for the day.
- Getting a good night's rest. Insomnia can noticeably impact social relationships, physical and emotional reactions, productivity, and our ability to concentrate and accomplish tasks.
- Being aware of the right amount of social interaction. It's important to know our limits.
- Remembering that time zone changes or daylight saving time can impact our mood and our routines; readjusting is normal.
- Using a routine that works for us. Calendars help us remember when or how often we want to get things done, such as get an oil change, clean the refrigerator, celebrate an accomplishment, call a friend or family member, check our financial records, and schedule an annual physical.
- Repeating a behavior until it becomes automatic, such as taking medication. Checklists help us make sure that important tasks are not being forgotten.
- Creating a wellness lifestyle can be challenging, but finding the right information, supports, and resources and tracking our progress can help us get there.



## IMPROVING OUR PHYSICAL WELLNESS

A healthy body. Good physical health habits. Nutrition, exercise, and appropriate health care. These make up the physical dimension of wellness. A few ways we can get there might be choosing things that make our body feel good and trimming back the things that bring us down. We can also feel better by creating a routine that balances activity with inactivity, and that is manageable within our obligations and needs. Our body is intelligent, and learning to listen to it more deeply may be very important and empowering.

AREA	THINK ABOUT...	RESOURCES
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you have access to fresh, healthy food?</li> <li>Are you in a position to eat at home so you can better track what you are putting into your body?</li> <li>Are you improving your diet by setting small goals for small changes each day, week, or month?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check out local food co-ops if one is in your area for good, affordable food.</li> <li>Visit USDA's Choose My Plate (<a href="http://www.choosemyplate.gov">http://www.choosemyplate.gov</a>) or Food Pyramid.com (<a href="http://www.foodpyramid.com">http://www.foodpyramid.com</a>).</li> <li>Meet with dietitians and nutritionists if you need help, or try programs like Weight Watchers.</li> <li>Explore self-help support groups and organizations, like TOPS or Overeaters Anonymous.</li> </ul>
Physical Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are you getting regular physical activity whenever you can, and making it fun?</li> <li>Have you been taking "shortcuts" to exercise, like parking further away from the store and taking the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator?</li> <li>Have you identified your healthy Body Mass Index and begun working toward it, one day at a time?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Join and visit local gyms, YMCAs, and fitness clubs, or join a neighborhood pool.</li> <li>Look through fitness and other magazines for exercises you can do at home.</li> <li>Check out free resources, such as YouTube, to learn how to do yoga or other exercises.</li> <li>Search for tracking tools like <a href="http://www.myfitnesspal.com">http://www.myfitnesspal.com</a> that will show how far you've come.</li> </ul>
Sleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are you getting 7 to 8 hours of sleep a night whenever possible?</li> <li>Are you avoiding exercise within a few hours of bedtime, as well as "screen time"?</li> <li>Are you avoiding large meals before going to bed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try managing your routine to carve out time to rest and sleep, and cut back on caffeine.</li> <li>Explore the tips found on Healthy People. gov (<a href="http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/overview.aspx?topicid=38">http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/overview.aspx?topicid=38</a>), Mayo Clinic (<a href="http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/sleep/HQ01387">http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/sleep/HQ01387</a>), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/sleep">http://www.cdc.gov/sleep</a>).</li> </ul>
Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you tried tools that can help you cut down or quit using tobacco products, alcohol, or other drugs?</li> <li>Are you reaching out to family or friends instead of using substances when you are going through a tough time?</li> <li>Are you being mindful of triggers that make you want to use substances and do you have a plan that can help you avoid them?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find support groups and 12-step groups, like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA), in your community and attend meetings.</li> <li>Consider engaging in hypnosis, acupuncture, or nicotine replacement therapy to curb the smoking habit (<a href="http://health.howstuffworks.com/wellness/smokingcessation/tools-to-help-successfully-quit-smoking.htm">http://health.howstuffworks.com/wellness/smokingcessation/tools-to-help-successfully-quit-smoking.htm</a>).</li> </ul>
Medication Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you wear medical alert jewelry to help others help you?</li> <li>Are you storing medications properly and reviewing the expiration dates?</li> <li>Do you carry a list of your medications with you in case of emergency?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk to your doctor, using a process of shared decision-making when you are unsure about a prescription or need guidance. (<a href="http://media.samhsa.gov/consumersurvivor/sdm/StartHere.html">http://media.samhsa.gov/consumersurvivor/sdm/StartHere.html</a>)</li> <li>Learn more about potential side effects from Consumer Med Safety.org (<a href="http://www.consumermedsafety.org">http://www.consumermedsafety.org</a>) and Consumer Reports (<a href="http://www.consumerreports.org">http://www.consumerreports.org</a>).</li> </ul>
Preventive Medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you visit your doctor, dentist, or other health care provider for routine care and monitoring?</li> <li>Do you know how to check your blood pressure, waist circumference, and blood sugar to prevent chronic conditions like diabetes?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss preventive health care with your doctor, dentist, or other health care provider.</li> <li>Visit your local public health center and use HRSA Find A HelpCenter (<a href="http://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/">http://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/</a>) to find the closest location to you.</li> <li>Consider seeing a holistic health provider or attending community health fairs.</li> </ul>



## WAYS TO IMPROVE MY PHYSICAL WELLNESS

WHAT I WILL DO	WHAT I NEED



## IMPROVING OUR INTELLECTUAL WELLNESS

The Intellectual Wellness Dimension involves many things that keep our brains active and our intellect expanding. In a broad sense, this dimension can involve looking at different perspectives of an issue and taking them into consideration. Through a number of activities—from learning about current events to organizing game nights in your home or community center—you can broaden your perspective and understand diverse points of view.

AREA	THINK ABOUT...	RESOURCES
Personal Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you considered teaching a class or leading a workshop based on skills, knowledge, or experience you have?</li> <li>• Do you enjoy reading? Might you be interested in books, magazines, blogs, Facebook, etc.?</li> <li>• What would you like to do or learn? Have you considered creative arts such as drawing, pottery, or photography? How about martial arts or learning about nature or about improving your computer skills?</li> <li>• Have you considered inviting a friend, family member, or coworker to attend a lecture, musical performance, or play?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find a community group or organization where you could teach a class or a workshop, or lead a discussion.</li> <li>• Consider becoming a member at the local public library to gain access to books, book readings, and other events.</li> <li>• Explore public events in your community by checking out the events section in the newspaper.</li> <li>• Flip through travel books or go online to find places you might enjoy reading about or visiting.</li> <li>• Sign up for a computer class.</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are interested in continuing education, are there available classes near you that might lead you to getting a volunteer or paid job or to performing better at a job?</li> <li>• Are you interested in improving your language skills or learning a new language, whether one-on-one, through a group class, or via CDs or online resources?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check out local college websites for information on classes they offer to the public.</li> <li>• See what kind of skills training—such as writing, sign language, or blogging— might be available at the public library, local congregations, local colleges, or other community organizations.</li> </ul>
Brain Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you explored thrift shops, libraries, or bookstores for books or DVDs that interest you?</li> <li>• Are you keeping your mind sharp by playing brain games, mind teasers, or fun memory-enhancing games?</li> <li>• Have you read up on current affairs locally, nationally, and internationally lately?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subscribe to your local newspaper or pick up a free edition. Many offer sections on subjects that are local, national, and international.</li> <li>• Play crossword puzzles and other games like Sudoku.</li> <li>• Become familiar with websites like Games for the Brain (<a href="http://www.gamesforthebrain.com/">http://www.gamesforthebrain.com/</a>).</li> </ul>
Conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you enjoy taking part in discussions, intellectual conversations, debates, or other ways of gaining an enhanced understanding of issues?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Befriend people who can stimulate your mind, and get into a discussion with them about topics that interest you.</li> </ul>





## WAYS TO IMPROVE MY INTELLECTUAL WELLNESS

WHAT I WILL DO	WHAT I NEED



## IMPROVING OUR FINANCIAL WELLNESS

There are many definitions of what constitutes being financially well, but overall, the Financial Wellness Dimension involves things such as income, debt, and savings, as well as a person's understanding of financial processes and resources. A person's satisfaction with their current financial situation and future prospects also comes into play.

AREA	THINK ABOUT...	RESOURCES
Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the domain of financial wellness impact your life? How it is related to your wellness?</li> <li>• Does your current job allow you to meet your obligations and have resources to do things you enjoy?</li> <li>• Are you working in a field that you are passionate about or do well? Or are you looking at doing something differently, perhaps more personally gratifying?</li> <li>• Are you looking for paid or volunteer work?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check out the classified ads— particularly on Sunday. Search them online any day of the week.</li> <li>• Explore sites like <a href="http://Careerbuilder.com">Careerbuilder.com</a> or <a href="http://Monster.com">Monster.com</a>, and consider establishing a profile on <a href="http://LinkedIn.com">LinkedIn</a>.</li> <li>• Visit the unemployment office in your state or county to find classes that could train you for a job.</li> <li>• Have your résumé updated so you can promptly submit it when you see an opportunity.</li> <li>• If you receive disability benefits, explore your work options without losing SSI/SSDI benefits until you can support yourself. For a guide to working without affecting your benefits, go to: <a href="http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/EN-05-10069.pdf">http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/EN-05-10069.pdf</a></li> </ul>
Checking/ Savings Accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you balance your checkbook often enough, ensuring that you don't overextend yourself?</li> <li>• Are your savings in line with your life goals, such as taking a vacation, home ownership, or retirement?</li> <li>• Do you have a weekly or monthly budget so you can plan for expenses such as rent and groceries and have a little left over to enjoy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask the bank about the types of accounts available— such as checking and savings accounts—so you are using them to your advantage and gaining interest where available.</li> <li>• Find out if the bank offers tools you can use to keep track of your money.</li> <li>• If you're receiving disability benefits, there's a limit on how much you can save without affecting your benefits. Read more about allowable savings at: <a href="http://www.ehow.com/info_8247348_can-receive-ssi-social-security.html">http://www.ehow.com/info_8247348_can-receive-ssi-social-security.html</a></li> </ul>
Debt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would it be helpful to figure out your total debt and make a plan to pay it down in a manageable way?</li> <li>• Have you thought about getting help from a person who specializes in money management or personal finances?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look in your classifieds or search online for organizations that can help you pay down debt.</li> <li>• Make sure you use a company that is credible.</li> <li>• Consider asking your bank to help you with financial planning and other areas where you may want assistance.</li> </ul>
Retirement/ Other Accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you opened a savings account or another kind of account that works for you?</li> <li>• However, if you're receiving disability benefits, there's a limit on how much you can save without affecting your benefits. SSI requires that your resources are under \$2,000 for an individual or \$3,000 for a couple. This includes bank accounts, cash, stocks, bonds. However, your home, household furnishings, car, burial plots, and insurance under \$1,500 are not included.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are free or low-cost services that can help you plan for the future. The local library can often direct you to affordable financial planning resources.</li> <li>• If you are receiving disability benefits, read more about allowable savings at: <a href="http://www.ehow.com/info_8247348_can-receive-ssi-social-security.html">http://www.ehow.com/info_8247348_can-receive-ssi-social-security.html</a></li> <li>• The Social Security Administration (SSA) has a toll-free number that can answer your questions Monday through Friday: 1-800-772-1213</li> </ul>



## WAYS TO IMPROVE MY FINANCIAL WELLNESS

WHAT I WILL DO	WHAT I NEED



## IMPROVING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS

The Environmental Wellness Dimension involves being able to be safe and feel safe. This can include:

- Accessing clean air, food, and water;
- Preserving the areas where we live, learn, and work;
- Occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support our well-being; and
- Promoting learning, contemplation, and relaxation in natural places and spaces.

AREA	THINK ABOUT...	RESOURCES
Green Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you recycling whenever possible, and buying recycled products?</li> <li>• Do you limit the power and water you use at home?</li> <li>• Are you taking public transportation?</li> <li>• Do you check your car's emissions every year, even if not required by law?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get recycling bins for your home—they may be free from your town.</li> <li>• Look for cleanup volunteer efforts, such as collecting trash from roadways or parks.</li> <li>• Explore the “green” aisles at home improvement stores; they often have energy-efficient light bulbs and other products</li> </ul>
Change of Scenery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you spending as much time outdoors as possible?</li> <li>• Have you visited a public park to either play a sport like tennis or basketball or just take a walk?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Figure out what outdoor activities make you feel good, and then find a few options that make it easy to do that.</li> <li>• During work hours, take a break to walk around the block or buy bottled water from a nearby store.</li> </ul>
Home and Work Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you going through mail and other paperwork frequently to get rid of clutter?</li> <li>• Do you organize your work space from time to time and add things that make you happy?</li> <li>• Is your living space filled with styles and textures you enjoy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a schedule to clean up your home or living space. It could be by room or activity (bathrooms on Sunday, dusting and sweeping every Wednesday, etc.).</li> <li>• Look in magazines or online and find styles you like best so that you're comfortable in your living space</li> </ul>



## WAYS TO IMPROVE MY ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS

WHAT I WILL DO	WHAT I NEED



## IMPROVING OUR SPIRITUAL WELLNESS

The Spiritual Wellness Dimension is a broad concept that represents one's personal beliefs and values and involves having meaning, purpose, and a sense of balance and peace. It includes:

- Recognizing our search for meaning and purpose in human existence; and
- Developing an appreciation for life and the natural forces that exist in the universe.

AREA	THINK ABOUT...	RESOURCES
Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you taking the time to determine what values, principles, and beliefs are important to you? Have you considered talking about them with others?</li> <li>• Have you learned about other religions and beliefs, and are you respectful of them?</li> <li>• Are you using your spirituality to drive your actions and thoughts and give a better meaning to life?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read about other types of beliefs to help you become more understanding, accepting, and open-minded.</li> <li>• Keep your beliefs in your thoughts to use them in your everyday life.</li> <li>• Share your beliefs, values, and principles with others, as appropriate, as a means of deepening relationships and expanding your world view.</li> </ul>
Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you looked for a group in your community that deepens your spiritual practice and helps you connect with others who share your beliefs?</li> <li>• Are you being social with the people in your organization?</li> <li>• Do you reach out and help others when they are in need?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn about different organizations or groups in your community and decide which ones are the best fit for you.</li> <li>• Find out about the many groups offered within your organization and get involved.</li> </ul>
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you take the time each day to meditate or reflect on your spirituality?</li> <li>• Are you open to exploring different belief systems?</li> <li>• Are you receptive to your own spirituality even in times of pain and grief? This is when we find how our spirituality can help us most.</li> <li>• Do you take the time to appreciate the beauty of nature when possible?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As often as possible, find a peaceful location to reflect and meditate.</li> <li>• Learn other religions through books or conversation.</li> </ul>



## WAYS TO IMPROVE MY SPIRITUAL WELLNESS

WHAT I WILL DO	WHAT I NEED



## IMPROVING OUR SOCIAL WELLNESS

The Social Wellness Dimension involves having healthy relationships with friends, family, and the community, and having an interest in and concern for the needs of others and humankind.

AREA	THINK ABOUT...	RESOURCES
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you found support groups in your area to connect on important issues?</li> <li>• Have you made a date with friends for a movie, dinner, coffee, or other social activities?</li> <li>• Are you keeping in touch with family or friends? You can pick up the phone and catch up if they are too far away—even a phone call can lift your spirits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask your doctor, a friend or family member, someone from your congregation, or others in your community about support groups.</li> <li>• Look online or in the local paper for groups that share your interests—whether it's knitting or playing softball.</li> <li>• Pick up the phone and connect with others.</li> </ul>
New People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you getting out and meeting people with your same interests? If you like art, try a gallery; if you enjoy history, visit historic sites.</li> <li>• Are you open to meeting people from different backgrounds?</li> <li>• Have you found a place to volunteer? You never know who you might meet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look in the newspaper to find out what is happening in your area that could be an opportunity to make friends.</li> <li>• Keep an open mind and exercise your curious inquiry when meeting new people.</li> <li>• Ask in your spiritual community or any other community about volunteer opportunities.</li> <li>• Join meet-up groups online.</li> </ul>
Social Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you set aside quality time to spend with family and friends?</li> <li>• Are you making time to go to places where you can meet new people, or visiting a new location?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep track of when you need to catch up with someone or when a friend or family member is due for a visit.</li> <li>• Organize a calendar of events that would be good ways to connect, or reconnect, to friends, like a public concert or a class reunion.</li> </ul>





## WAYS TO IMPROVE MY SOCIAL WELLNESS

WHAT I WILL DO	WHAT I NEED



## IMPROVING OUR OCCUPATIONAL WELLNESS

The Occupational Wellness Dimension involves participating in activities that provide meaning and purpose and reflect personal values, interests, and beliefs, including employment.

AREA	THINK ABOUT...	RESOURCES
Work Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you involved in a career or volunteer work that fits your values? If retired, are you planning to do something every day?</li> <li>• Do you have an open line of communication with your employer/ coworkers?</li> <li>• Does your work offer personal satisfaction and stimulation, and allow you to contribute your talents, gifts, and knowledge?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about where you are in your career and life and pursue jobs that will work well within that framework.</li> <li>• Explore all of your career options but review jobs on <a href="http://Careerbuilder.com">Careerbuilder.com</a> or <a href="http://Monster.com">Monster.com</a>.</li> <li>• If you receive disability benefits, explore your work options without losing SSI/SSDI benefits until you can support yourself. To calculate the amount you can earn, go to: <a href="http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/EN-05-10069.pdf">http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/EN-05-10069.pdf</a></li> <li>• Talk to your employer/ coworkers about how they like to communicate so everyone can be responsive to individual needs and work styles.</li> <li>• When something is not working at work, let people know what would help.</li> </ul>
Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you schedule time for leisure? Are you spending time with friends, taking nature walks, scheduling massages, or doing whatever it takes to relax?</li> <li>• Are you thinking about how you spend time each day and considering volunteer work in the community?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research careers/employment that involve the activities you enjoy most yet provide the flexibility for a balanced life.</li> <li>• Keep a calendar. Be sure to look it over and schedule time for activities that you enjoy.</li> <li>• Use tracking tools to balance your workload. Ask for help if your workload becomes overwhelming.</li> </ul>
Accomplishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you in a career that you look forward to and that gives you a sense of accomplishment and pride?</li> <li>• Are you patting yourself on the back for your accomplishments?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the time to think of what you enjoy most, and research careers/ employment in that area.</li> </ul>



## WAYS TO IMPROVE MY OCCUPATIONAL WELLNESS

WHAT I WILL DO	WHAT I NEED



## IMPROVING OUR EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

The Emotional Wellness Dimension involves the ability to express feelings, adjust to emotional challenges, cope with life's stressors, and enjoy life. It includes knowing our strengths as well as what we want to get better at, and living and working on our own but letting others help us from time to time.

AREA	THINK ABOUT...	RESOURCES
Feelings/ Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you allow yourself to be open to and acknowledge your feelings without judgment?</li> <li>• Have you found and developed safe relationships with people or groups where you can express your feelings and thoughts?</li> <li>• Do you see challenges as opportunities for growth?</li> <li>• Do you recognize your limitations and learn from your mistakes?</li> <li>• Are you taking responsibility for your actions?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect each day on your emotions, what can they teach you, and how you can express them.</li> <li>• Consider using a journal to record feelings and thoughts.</li> <li>• Develop regular habits that help you process and deal with your feelings effectively so you move forward in fulfilling your emotional needs.</li> <li>• Find a place where you feel the most comfortable and go there when you feel a need for comfort, quiet space, or safety.</li> </ul>
Self-Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you joined support groups, or thought about starting one?</li> <li>• Do you write your thoughts in a journal, listen to music, or talk to family or friends when you are in need?</li> <li>• Have you tried yoga, breathing, or meditation to remain calm and centered?</li> <li>• Are you maintaining a daily routine?</li> <li>• Do you leave yourself plenty of time to get to work and other obligations?</li> <li>• Are you eating some meals without distractions, like checking your phone or watching TV?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discover what you like to do best, and do it often. It will help keep your spirits and emotions up.</li> <li>• Find an outlet for physical activity, such as a sports league or a gym/fitness center.</li> <li>• Take some time to yourself regularly.</li> <li>• Identify resources that can help you with a sleep schedule or ideas for meal planning.</li> <li>• Practice positive self-affirmations. Develop a positive statement to repeat to yourself daily. When you change your thoughts, you can change your mood and attitude.</li> </ul>
Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you learning to manage stress in ways that work for your lifestyle?</li> <li>• Do you recognize stress triggers and appreciate that you are not your feelings? Feelings are fleeting and will pass.</li> <li>• Do you welcome and cultivate positive, empowering thoughts and emotions?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a step back when in a stressful situation.</li> <li>• Practice deep breathing or other relaxation techniques.</li> <li>• Try out different coping exercises or strategies when not in a stressful situation. When challenges arise, you will be better prepared to deal with them.</li> <li>• Practice finding positives (a silver lining) in something that you feel is negative. Support others in doing this, as well.</li> </ul>



## WAYS TO IMPROVE MY EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

WHAT I WILL DO	WHAT I NEED

Learn more about the Eight Dimensions of Wellness.  
VISIT [WWW.SAMHSA.GOV/WELLNESS-INITIATIVE](http://WWW.SAMHSA.GOV/WELLNESS-INITIATIVE)



# Healthy Habits of Emotional Wellbeing

TAKE CARE  
OF YOU



ENGAGE &  
CONNECT WISELY



KNOW THE FIVE  
SIGNS OF SUFFERING



CHECK IN &  
GET CHECK UPS



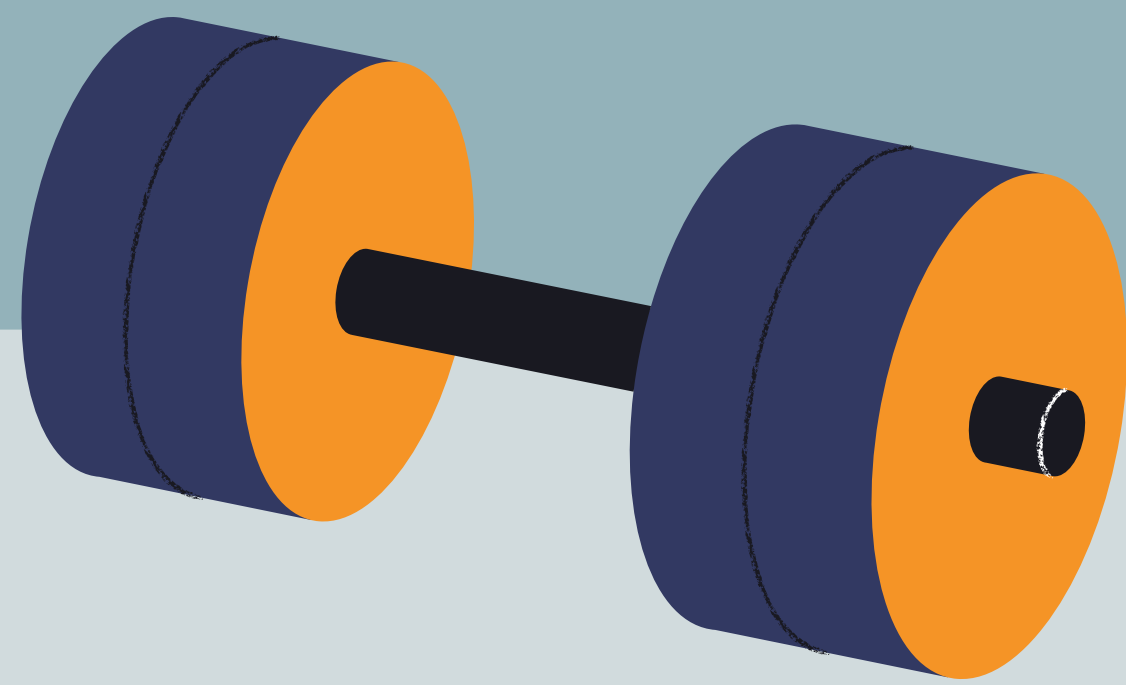
RELAX





# Self-Care Assessment

ASK YOURSELF THE BELOW QUESTIONS TO  
DISCOVER AREAS TO IMPROVE YOUR SELF-CARE



## Physical

Are you getting adequate sleep?  
Is your diet fueling your body well?  
Are you taking charge of your health?  
Are you getting enough exercise?

There is a strong connection between your body and your mind. When it comes to good physical self-care, ensure you are attending all medical appointments, taking your medications as prescribed, and managing your health.

01



## Social

Are you getting enough face-to-face times with your friends?  
What are you doing to nurture your relationships with family and friends?

Socialization is key to self-care. Often, it is hard to make time for friends. The best way to cultivate and maintain those close relationships is to put time and energy into building your relationship with others.

02

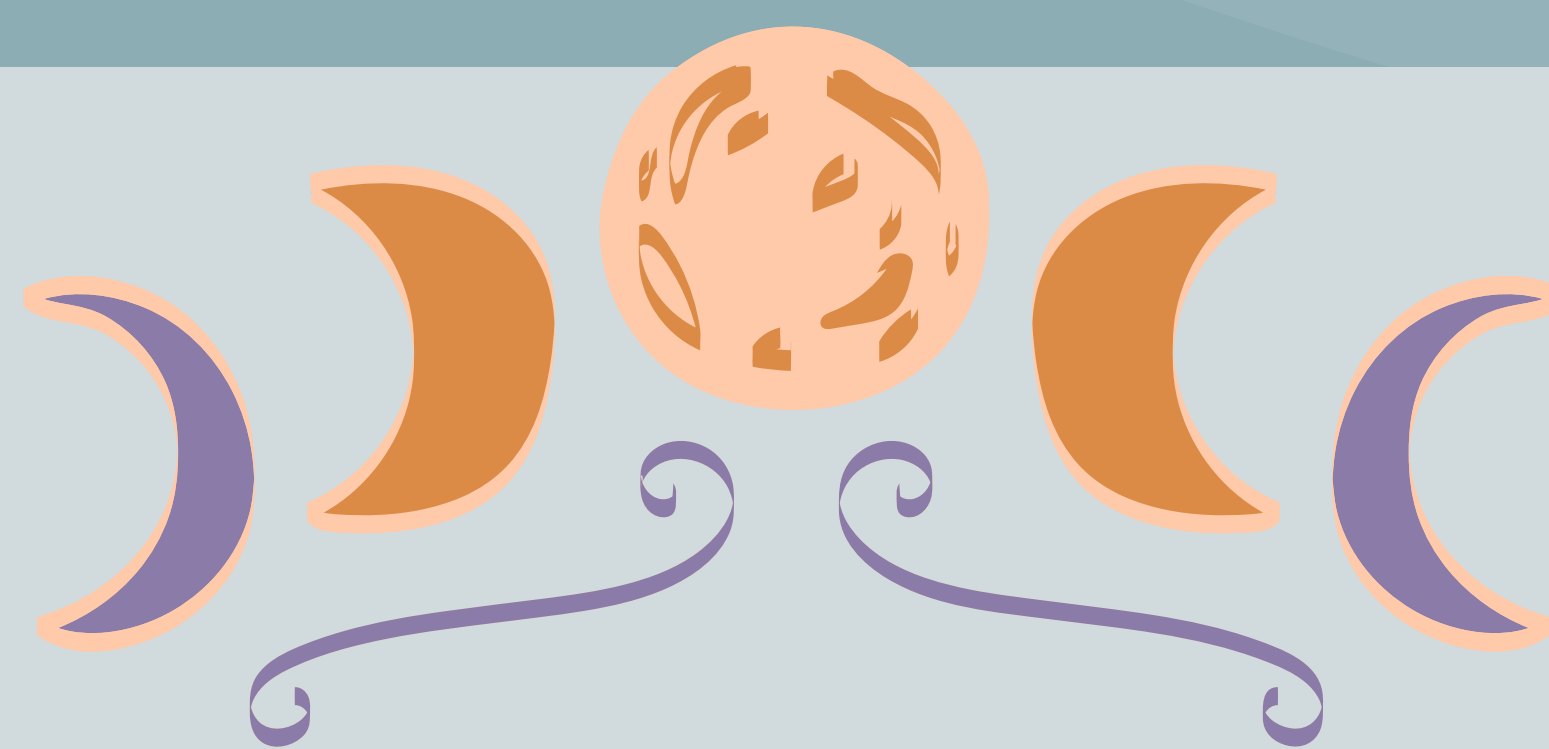


## Mental

Are you making enough time for activities that mental stimulate you?  
Are you doing proactive things to help you stay mentally fit?

The way you think and the things that you are filling your mind with greatly influence your psychological well-being. Some ways to practice mental health self-care are practicing self-compassion and acceptance.

03



## Spiritual

What questions do you ask yourself about your life and experiences?

Nurturing our spirit can involve anything that helps you develop a deeper sense of meaning, understanding, or connection with the universe.

04



## Emotional

Do you have healthy ways to process your emotions?  
Do you incorporate activities into your life that help you feel recharged?

It is important to have healthy coping skills to deal with uncomfortable emotions. Emotional self-care may include activities that help you acknowledge and express your feelings regularly and safely.

05

An effective self-care routine has been shown to improve happiness, increase energy, reduce burnout, reduce anxiety and depression, and reduce stress and improve resilience!

# COPING SKILLS

- I Coping with Emotions in the Workplace 35
- II Coping Strategies 36



# COPING WITH *Emotions* IN THE WORKPLACE



## Strategies for Building Emotional Intelligence and a Supportive Work Environment

Emotions are an integral part of our everyday lives, including our work experiences. Coping with emotions in the workplace can lead to better decision-making, improved communication, and higher job satisfaction. This one-pager offers practical strategies to help employees and organizations manage emotions and foster a supportive work environment.

### Tips for Employees

#### Be Self Aware:

- Reflect on your emotions, activators, and reactions.
- Practice mindfulness to stay present and aware of your feelings

#### Self Regulate:

- Use deep breathing, grounding techniques, or short breaks to help regulate emotions
- Develop healthy coping mechanisms, such as exercise or journaling

#### Communicate Effectively:

- Share your feelings with trusted colleagues in a professional manner
- Use "I" statements to express your emotions without blaming others

#### Show Empathy:

- Be understanding and compassionate towards coworkers' emotions
- Listen actively and offer support when needed

#### Build Resilience:

- Embrace challenges and setbacks as opportunities for growth
- Cultivate a positive mindset and focus on what you can control

### Tips for Employers

#### Foster A Safe Space:

- Encourage open communication and create a non-judgmental environment
- Address conflicts and toxic behaviors promptly

#### Promote Emotional Intelligence:

- Offer training programs or workshops on emotional intelligence and mental health
- Encourage team-building activities to enhance interpersonal relationships

#### Provide Support:

- Implement Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) to help employees cope with stress and mental health challenges
- Create a mental health policy that prioritizes well-being and reduces stigma

#### Offer Flexibility:


- Offer remote work or flexible hours to help employees maintain work-life balance
- Encourage employees to take breaks and time off to recharge

#### Recognize and Reward:

- Acknowledge employees' hard work and accomplishments
- Create a culture of gratitude and appreciation

# MENTAL HEALTH

COPING STRATEGIES



HOPE  
THROUGH  
ACTION

# BREATHING EXERCISES

WHEN FEELING ANXIOUS, TRY USING  
EASY BREATHING TECHNIQUES LIKE  
INHALING SLOWLY THROUGH THE NOSE  
AND EXHALING THROUGH THE MOUTH.  
PRACTICING THIS TECHNIQUE CAN  
HELP SOOTHE YOUR MIND AND  
ALLEVIATE ANXIETY.





# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

ENGAGING IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS PLAYING SPORTS, RIDING A BIKE, DANCING, OR TAKING A WALK CAN DO WONDERS FOR YOUR WELL-BEING. EXERCISE HELPS THE BODY RELEASE ENDORPHINS, WHICH CAN ELEVATE YOUR MOOD AND DECREASE STRESS LEVELS.



# EXPRESSIVE ARTS

BOOST CREATIVITY AND EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION WITH DRAWING, PAINTING, COLORING, AND WRITING. ENGAGE IN CREATIVE ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS DRAWING, PAINTING, COLORING, OR WRITING IN A JOURNAL, TO HELP EXPRESS EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS. THESE ACTIVITIES CAN SERVE AS AN EFFECTIVE OUTLET FOR EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION AND PROMOTE CREATIVITY.



# MINDFULNESS

THE ADVANTAGES OF MINDFULNESS EXERCISES ARE NUMEROUS. ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS IS THE ABILITY TO CONCENTRATE ON THE PRESENT MOMENT. ENGAGE IN MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES BY OBSERVING YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS WITHOUT JUDGMENT.



# POSITIVE SELF-TALK

IMPROVE YOUR THINKING PATTERNS.  
FIRST, IDENTIFY AND CHALLENGE  
NEGATIVE THOUGHTS. SECONDLY, MAKE  
A CONSCIOUS EFFORT TO REPLACE  
NEGATIVE SELF-TALK WITH POSITIVE  
AND SUPPORTIVE STATEMENTS.





# ESTABLISH ROUTINES

ESTABLISHING PREDICTABLE ROUTINES  
CAN PROVIDE A SENSE OF STABILITY  
AND REDUCE ANXIETY. CREATE A DAILY  
ROUTINE THAT INCLUDES REGULAR  
SLEEP, MEALS, HOMEWORK, PLAYTIME,  
AND RELAXATION.





# SOCIAL SUPPORT

SPEND TIME WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS WHO ARE SUPPORTIVE AND UNDERSTANDING. CONNECTING WITH OTHERS CAN PROVIDE COMFORT AND A SENSE OF BELONGING.



# TIME IN NATURE

SPENDING TIME IN NATURE, WHETHER IT'S GOING FOR A HIKE, PLAYING IN A PARK, OR SIMPLY TAKING A WALK OUTDOORS. BEING IN NATURE HAS BEEN SHOWN TO REDUCE STRESS AND IMPROVE WELL-BEING.



# REMEMBER!

DON'T HESITATE TO ASK FOR HELP  
IF YOU'RE STRUGGLING, IT'S  
IMPORTANT TO SEEK SUPPORT. DON'T BE  
AFRAID TO REACH OUT TO A FRIEND,  
ADULT, OR TEACHER FOR ASSISTANCE.

# STRESS MANAGEMENT

I	18 Effective Strategies	47
II	Fast Acting Stress Relief Strategies	48
III	Long-Term Stress Relief Strategies	50
IV	Problem-Focused Coping Stress Relief	53
V	I'm SO Stressed Out	54

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18

## EFFECTIVE STRESS RELIEF STRATEGIES

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> GUIDED IMAGERY                   | <input type="checkbox"/> MEDITATION                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE<br>RELAXATION | <input type="checkbox"/> DEEP BREATHING               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOING FOR A WALK                 | <input type="checkbox"/> HUGS                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AROMATHERAPY                     | <input type="checkbox"/> CREATIVITY                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HEALTHY DIET                     | <input type="checkbox"/> STRESS RELIEF<br>SUPPLEMENTS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LEISURE ACTIVITIES               | <input type="checkbox"/> POSITIVE SELF-TALK           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> YOGA                             | <input type="checkbox"/> GRATITUDE                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXERCISE                         | <input type="checkbox"/> EVALUATING PRIORITIES        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ELIMINATING STRESSORS            | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL SUPPORT               |



# FAST ACTING STRESS RELIEF STRATEGIES

## GUIDED IMAGERY

- PICTURE YOURSELF IN YOUR "HAPPY PLACE."
- CLOSE YOUR EYES FOR A MINUTE AND WALK YOURSELF THROUGH A PEACEFUL SCENE.
- THINK ABOUT ALL THE SENSORY EXPERIENCES YOU ENGAGE IN AND ALLOW YOURSELF TO FEEL AS THOUGH YOU ARE REALLY THERE.

## MEDITATE

- FOCUS ON THE HERE AND NOW, TAKING IN YOUR SURROUNDINGS UTILIZING THE 5-4-3-2-1 METHOD:
  - 5 THINGS YOU SEE
  - 4 THINGS YOU FEEL
  - 3 THINGS YOU HEAR
  - 2 THINGS YOU SMELL
  - 1 THING YOU TASTE

## PRACTICE PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

- TAKE A DEEP BREATH.
- PRACTICE TIGHTENING AND RELAXING EACH MUSCLE GROUP, STARTING WITH YOUR FOREHEAD AND MOVING DOWN TO YOUR TOES.
- WITH PRACTICE YOU WILL LEARN TO RECOGNIZE TENSION AND TIGHTNESS IN YOUR MUSCLES AND RELAXING WILL BECOME EASIER.

## FOCUS ON BREATHING

- BREATHE IN THROUGH YOUR NOSE AND WATCH YOUR BELLY FILL WITH AIR. COUNT SLOWLY TO 3 AS YOU INHALE. HOLD FOR 1 SECOND, AND THEN SLOWLY BREATHE OUT THROUGH YOUR NOSE AS YOU COUNT TO 3 AGAIN.
- BREATHE IN THROUGH YOUR NOSE AND IMAGINE THAT YOU'RE INHALING PEACEFUL, CALM AIR. IMAGINE THAT AIR SPREADING THROUGHOUT YOUR BODY. AS YOU EXHALE, IMAGINE THAT YOU ARE BREATHING OUT STRESS AND TENSION.

## TAKE A WALK

- ENJOY A CHANGE OF SCENERY, WHICH WILL REFRAME YOUR MIND.

## GET A HUG FROM A LOVED ONE

- WHEN YOU HUG SOMEONE, OXYTOCIN (KNOWN AS THE "CUDDLE HORMONE") IS RELEASED. OXYTOCIN IS ASSOCIATED WITH HIGHER LEVELS OF HAPPINESS AND LOWER STRESS LEVELS.

## ENJOY AROMATHERAPY

- CERTAIN SCENTS CAN ALTER BRAIN WAVE ACTIVITY AND DECREASE STRESS HORMONES IN THE BODY.
- ENJOY CANDLES, DIFFUSERS, OR BODY PRODUCTS, ETC.

## CREATE ARTWORK

- COLORING CAN HAVE A MEDITATIVE EFFECT.
- ANXIETY LEVELS CAN DECLINE IN PEOPLE WHO COLOR COMPLEX GEOMETRIC PATTERNS.

# LONG-TERM STRESS RELIEF STRATEGIES

## EAT A BALANCED DIET

- A POOR DIET CAN BRING GREATER REACTIVITY TOWARD STRESS. EMOTIONAL EATING AND REACHING FOR HIGH-FAT, HIGH-SUGAR FOODS CAN PROVIDE A TEMPORARY SENSE OF RELIEF THAT ADDS TO YOUR LONG-TERM STRESS.
- REFINED CARBS, LIKE COOKIES AND POTATO CHIPS, CAN CAUSE A SPIKE IN BLOOD SUGAR. WHEN YOUR BLOOD SUGAR CRASHES, YOU MIGHT EXPERIENCE MORE STRESS AND ANXIETY.
- CONSUMING A HEALTHY DIET CAN HELP YOU COMBAT STRESS OVER THE LONG HAUL. FOODS LIKE EGGS, AVOCADO, AND WALNUTS SUPPORT MOOD REGULATION AND ENERGY BALANCE.

## TRY STRESS RELIEF SUPPLEMENTS

- MELATONIN: THIS NATURAL HORMONE CAN HELP REGULATE YOUR BODY'S CIRCADIAN RHYTHM. IMPROVING SLEEP CAN HELP YOU FEEL LESS STRESSED.
- ASHWAGANDHA: THIS ADAPTOGENIC HERB IS THOUGHT TO HELP IMPROVE THE BODY'S RESILIENCE TO MENTAL AND PHYSICAL STRESS.
- L-THEANINE: THIS AMINO ACID HAS BEEN SHOWN TO HELP REDUCE STRESS, PROMOTE RELAXATION, AND IMPROVE SLEEP QUALITY.
- B VITAMINS: SOME RESEARCH INDICATES THAT B VITAMINS MAY HELP LOWER HOMOCYSTEINE LEVELS, REDUCE STRESS, AND IMPROVE MOOD.



## MAKE TIME FOR LEISURE ACTIVITIES

- BUILDING TIME FOR LEISURE INTO YOUR SCHEDULE COULD BE KEY TO HELPING YOU FEEL BEST.
- WHEN YOU FEEL BETTER, YOU WILL PERFORM BETTER, WHICH MEANS LEISURE TIME MAY MAKE YOUR WORK TIME MORE EFFICIENT, THUS, LESS STRESS.

## DEVELOP A POSITIVE SELF-TALK

- THE WAY YOU TALK TO YOURSELF MATTERS. HARSH CRITICISM, SELF-DOUBT, AND CATASTROPHIC PREDICTIONS AREN'T HELPFUL.
- TALK TO YOURSELF IN A MORE REALISTIC, COMPASSIONATE MANNER.
- POSITIVE SELF-TALK CAN HELP YOU DEVELOP A HEALTHIER OUTLOOK. AN OPTIMISTIC AND COMPASSIONATE CONVERSATION CAN HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR EMOTIONS AND TAKE POSITIVE ACTION.

## PRACTICE YOGA

- COMBINES PHYSICAL MOVEMENT, MEDITATION, LIGHT EXERCISE, AND CONTROLLED BREATHING.
- WHILE YOU ARE LIKELY TO REAP IMMEDIATE BENEFITS FROM A SINGLE YOGA SESSION, YOU ARE LIKELY TO RECEIVE LONG-TERM BENEFITS IF YOU INCORPORATE IT INTO YOUR LIFE IN A CONSISTANT WAY.
- OFFERS A VARIETY OF PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND SPIRITUAL BENEFITS.

## EXPRESS GRATITUDE

- GRATITUDE REMINDS YOU OF ALL THE RESOURCES YOU HAVE TO COPE WITH STRESS, WHICH CAN BE EMPOWERING.

## <sup>52</sup> PRIORITIZE EXERCISE

- PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS KEY TO MANAGING STRESS AND IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH
- JOIN A GYM, TAKE A CLASS, OR EXERCISE OUTSIDE
- THERE ARE MANY OTHER WAYS TO GET MORE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN YOUR DAY, SUCH AS:
  - WALKING
  - STRENGTH TRAINING
  - KAYAKING
  - HIKING
  - SPIN CLASS
  - YOGA

# PROBLEM-FOCUSED COPING STRESS RELIEF

*MOST STRESS RELIEVERS FOCUS ON CHANGING YOUR EMOTIONS, BUT SOMETIMES, YOU WON'T NECESSARILY GET RELIEF UNTIL YOU CHANGE THE ENVIRONMENT.*

*THIS IS REFERRED TO AS PROBLEM-FOCUSED COPING, WHICH INVOLVES TAKING STEPS TO REMOVE THE STRESSOR FROM YOUR LIFE.*

## REASSESS YOUR TO-DO LISTS

- IF YOU ARE TRYING TO SQUEEZE 20 HOURS WORTH OF WORK INTO 16 HOURS, YOU ARE GOING TO FEEL STRESSED. REDUCING YOUR WORKLOAD COULD BE KEY TO HELPING YOU GET THROUGH THE DAY.
- HONING YOUR TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS CAN ALLOW YOU TO MINIMIZE THE STRESSORS YOU EXPERIENCE AND BETTER MANAGE THOSE YOU CANNOT AVOID.

## OBTAIN SOCIAL SUPPORT

- HAVING SUPPORTIVE PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE IS THE KEY TO STRESS MANAGEMENT.
- THAT MAY MEAN REACHING OUT TO YOUR EXISTING NETWORK, CONFIDING IN FAMILY OR EXPANDING YOUR NETWORK.
- JOIN AN ORGANIZATION, ATTEND A SUPPORT GROUP, OR GET PROFESSIONAL HELP IF YOU LACK SUPPORT IN YOUR LIFE.

## CUT OUT THINGS THAT ADD TO YOUR STRESS

- BEING CONNECTED TO DIGITAL SERVICES OR DRINKING ALCOHOL ARE A FEW THINGS THAT MAY ADD TO YOUR STRESS. MAKING CHANGES TO DAILY HABITS COULD BE KEY.



# I'M SO STRESSED OUT!

## Is it stress or anxiety?

### Stress

- Generally is a response to an *external* cause, such as taking a big test or arguing with a friend.
- Goes away once the situation is resolved.
- Can be positive or negative. For example, it may inspire you to meet a deadline, or it may cause you to lose sleep.

### Both Stress and Anxiety

Both stress and anxiety can affect your mind and body. You may experience symptoms such as:

- Excessive worry
- Uneasiness
- Tension
- Headaches or body pain
- High blood pressure
- Loss of sleep

### Anxiety

- Generally is *internal*, meaning it's your reaction to stress.
  - Usually involves a persistent feeling of apprehension or dread that doesn't go away, and that interferes with how you live your life.
- Is constant, even if there is no immediate threat.

## Ways to Cope

- Keep a journal.
- Download an app with relaxation exercises.
- Exercise and eat healthy.
- Get regular sleep.
- Avoid excess caffeine.
- Identify and challenge your negative thoughts.
- Reach out to your friends or family.

## Find Help

If you are struggling to cope, or the symptoms of your stress or anxiety begin to interfere with your everyday life, it may be time to talk to a professional. Find more information about getting help on the National Institute of Mental Health website at [www.nimh.nih.gov/findhelp](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/findhelp).



National Institute  
of Mental Health

[nimh.nih.gov/stressandanxiety](http://nimh.nih.gov/stressandanxiety)

NIMH Identifier No. OM 20-4319

# SLEEP

I	Get Your Sleep On	56
II	Sleep Well	57
III	Establishing Sleep Health	58

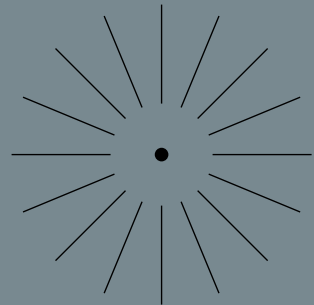
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# Get Your Sleep On

## Yes to Sunlight

01

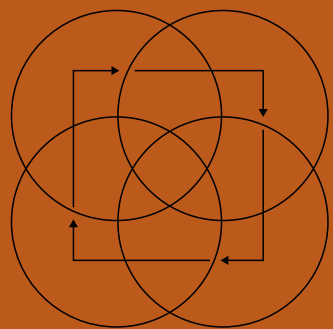
A little sun exposure during the day fixes your circadian rhythm, helping you sleep better at night.



## No to Blue Light

02

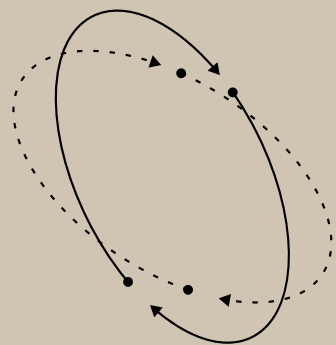
On the other hand, blue light exposure at night messes up your circadian rhythm, keeping you up.



## Stop Late Naps

03

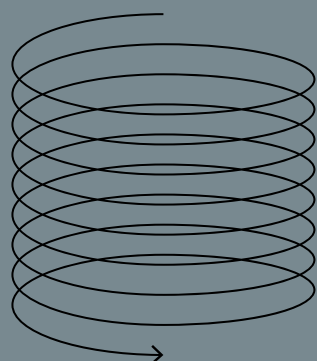
Napping late in the day can give you too much energy at night. Instead, try sleeping earlier or limiting your nap times.



## Take a Warm Bath

04

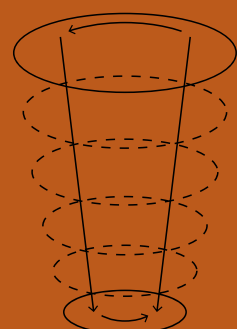
Studies show warm baths can improve sleep quality and help people fall asleep more quickly.



## Get Comfy

05

Quality sleep starts with comfortable bedding, a dark room, and cool temperatures.





57

American Heart Association®

Healthy for Good™

# Sleep Well



Do you feel drained of energy before you even leave the house? You're not alone. **More than one in three adults don't get the recommended 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night** — and that can take a toll on your body and mind.

Making some small changes in your daily habits could make a big difference in your overall health. Try these snooze-worthy tips and tricks with your family and friends for four weeks.



## Week 1

**Be active during the day to help reduce stress and sleep better.**

- Add physical activity into your daily routine. Walking counts! It can relieve stress, boost brain function (including your memory and attention) and help you sleep better at night.
- Try mindfulness, meditation or deep breathing to manage stress.
- If exercising too close to bedtime keeps you awake, try working out earlier in the day and doing some relaxing yoga in the evening.



## Week 3

**Create a morning routine with a positive activity.**

- Start your morning with a healthy activity like a walk around the block, meditation, gratitude journaling or yoga. Looking forward to a few moments of "me time" could make it easier to get up.
- Break the snooze button habit. Sleeping past your alarm can make you groggy in the morning.
- Try habit chaining. Connect the new habit to something you do automatically every morning. For example, do a few yoga moves right after you brush your teeth.



## Week 2

**Establish a nighttime routine including a bedtime alarm.**

- Go to bed and wake up at about the same time each day to sleep better.
- Set a daily bedtime alarm, counting backwards 7-10 hours (depending upon how much wind-down time you need) from your ideal waking time.
- Choose sleep over getting one more thing done. Good sleep can help you be more productive and accomplish more during the day.



## Week 4

**Wind down tech-free at bedtime.**

- Charge your phone and other devices away from your bed.
- Try reading, listening to music or catching up on a podcast instead of scrolling and swiping into the night. The bright blue light could be sabotaging your sleep cycle.
- Go low-tech. Try an old-school alarm clock and stash a pen and notepad by your bed so you don't reach for your phone when inspiration strikes.

If you've tried everything and still can't sleep well, you may have a sleep disorder. Talk to your doctor or health care provider.

Learn more about improving your sleep and health at [heart.org/HealthyForGood](https://heart.org/HealthyForGood)

# Establishing Sleep Health

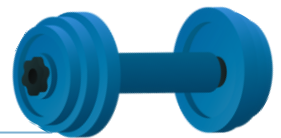
Sleep deprivation leads to poor performance & weakened cognitive abilities. Learning to sleep well in stressful environments and when anxiety is high, although challenging, is possible & can help maximize wellness. It is a skill worth developing and prioritizing.

## DEVELOP SLEEP READINESS

Train your circadian rhythm by implementing routines. Avoid electronic devices, find your favorite pillow, listen to music or take a shower before bed.

## EXERCISE

Work out at least 30 minutes early in the day to fall asleep faster at night. This will help reduce night time awakenings.



## WATCH WHAT YOU EAT

Stop eating 2-3 hours before bed. Limit caffeine, sugar or other digestive stimulants.



## NAP STRATEGICALLY

When predictable nighttime sleep is unavailable, short 30 minute power naps have been found to increase alertness & performance.

## GET COMFORTABLE

You spend 1/3 of your life in bed, so you should be comfortable. Consider upgrading or replacing your mattress and/or pillows.

Good Night !!

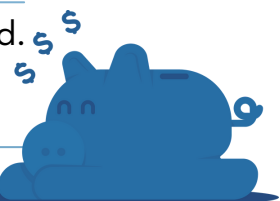


## GO TO BED SLEEPY

If you aren't asleep in 20-30 mins, get out of bed & do something else.

## MAKE SPACE

If thoughts keep you from sleeping, jot them down to relieve your mind.



## BANK YOUR SLEEP

If you're on night shift, plan to get 10 hours of sleep a night for week prior to expected sleepless nights.



# ALCOHOL EDUCATION

I	Types of ADAPT Referrals	60
II	Benefits of Cutting Down or Giving Up Alcohol	61
III	Tips for Drinking Less	62
IV	Avoiding Alcohol-Related Accidents & Injuries	63
V	How Alcohol Effects Sports Performance	64
VI	Avoiding Alcohol Tolerance	65

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### **ADAPT Self-Referrals**

- Member will contact the Ramstein ADAPT clinic requesting to self-refer
- Assessment will be conducted telephonically due to Lajes being a GSU
- Command will be informed if the member has met criteria for an Alcohol Use Disorder
  - Member will be placed on a 180 day mobility profile
- If member does not meet criteria for an Alcohol Use Disorder, they will receive at a minimum, two education sessions

*Note: A member cannot self-refer if an alcohol related incident (ARI) has occurred.*

### **ADAPT Medical Referrals**

- Medical provider emails the completed referral form to the ADAPT Program Manager and NCOIC
- Member is contacted, informed ADAPT has received a medical referral, and asked if they would agree to be seen for an ADAPT evaluation
- If member declines services, ADAPT will contact the referring provider to inform them of member's decision
- If member declines services, referring provider has the choice to inform command, to which command may opt to turn medical referral into a command referral.

### **ADAPT Command Referrals**

- Per AFI 44-121, CC and/or CCF will refer to ADAPT within 7 calendar days of the misconduct to initiate the assessment process. For any DUI/DWI, members will be referred within 24 hours
- CC and/or CCF will email the completed referral form to the ADAPT Program Manager and NCOIC
- CC and/or CCF will be emailed an appointment date/time for member's assessment
  - \*It is the command's responsibility to inform the member of their appointment.
- Member has option to defer assessment if under legal investigation
  - Assessment will be postponed until member is no longer under investigation, but will contact the ADAPT Clinic bi-weekly to check-in.
- Command will be informed of assessment results

# BENEFITS OF CUTTING DOWN OR GIVING UP ALCOHOL



## 1 No more hangovers

Spending time nursing a hangover? To wake up with a clear head and feeling energetic can be a welcome break! This will help you to make the most of your free time.

## 2 More money

Depending on how much you drink, you could save a lot by cutting back! An extra 150 Euros a month could give you a family vacation every year, dinners out or sports tickets!

## 3 Short-term health effects

- Lower blood sugar
- Lower blood pressure
- Less fatty build-up around the liver
- Improve depression
- Better sleep
- More energy
- Weight loss
- Better absorption of nutrients
- Fewer injuries

## 4 Long-term health effects

- Decrease chances of high blood-pressure and strokes
- Decrease depression and anxiety
- Decrease risk of cancer
- Decrease chances of liver disease

WANT TO READ MORE? CLICK THE LINKS BELOW!



1

Alcohol & Cancer

<https://www2.hse.ie/livingwell/alcohol/health/physical-health/cancer/>

2

Alcohol & Blood Pressure

<https://www2.hse.ie/livingwell/alcohol/health/effects-on-your-body/blood-pressure/>

3

Alcohol & Weight Loss

<https://www2.hse.ie/livingwell/alcohol/health/effects-on-your-body/weight-gain/>

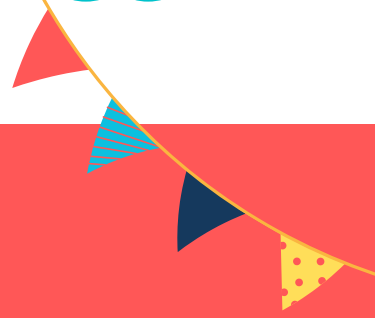
4

Alcohol & Sleep

<https://www2.hse.ie/mental-health/issues/sleep-problems/>



# TIPS FOR DRINKING LESS



## PREPARE FOR PEER PRESSURE

Try to tell the people you usually drink with about your plans to cut down, so they understand

Buy your own drinks or be the designated driver

Have some answers ready for if anyone asks:

- "I'm not drinking right now."
- "I am on a diet."
- "I am on medication."
- "I have to be up early tomorrow."
- "I am the designated driver."

## ON A NIGHT OUT

- Go out later
- Bring less money
- Order smaller drinks--a glass rather than a bottle or pint, a single measure rather than a double
- Pick lower strength drinks
- Alternate alcoholic and non-alcoholic or soft drinks
- Drink slowly-- sip your drinks and wait until you've finished one before you order another
- Avoid buying rounds, or buy yourself a non-alcoholic drink when it is your round
- If you are leaving, leave your drink unfinished

## AT HOME

- Stock up on low-alcohol or alcohol-free drinks
- Use a standard measure for spirits, rather than pouring 'freehand'
- Start drinking a bit later--go for a walk, have a shower or do some extra jobs or activity first
- Change your routine to find new things during your usual 'drinking times'
- If you're giving up or drinking less, do not keep alcohol at home
- Consider not buying alcohol in your weekly shopping
- Do not store alcohol in the fridge--keep it out of the way in a cupboard or cabinet in a room other than the kitchen or sitting room

## STAYING ON TRACK

Be prepared for danger times and places where staying on track may be more difficult!

Some of these places may include:

- After work
- Home alone
- Watching sports
- With a meal
- Celebrations



## MAKE A PLAN

Have plan for how you will cope before you get into a situation!

Some may include:

- Drink low-alcohol alternatives
- Suggest alcohol-free activities with friends
- Practice stress-management
- Change your route to avoid pubs/restaurants
- Avoid having alcohol in the house

Want to self-assess your alcohol use?

<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/alcohol/self-assessment-tool/>

# AVOIDING ALCOHOL-RELATED ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

## WHAT ARE ALCOHOL-RELATED ACCIDENTS?

Any accident, illness or injury that occurs while, or following alcohol consumption

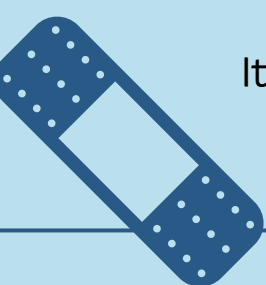
Alcohol-related accidents or injuries include, but are not limited to...

- Twisted ankle
- Concussion
- Road traffic collisions
- Downing
- Self-harm
- Suicide

## WHY SO MANY ACCIDENTS HAPPEN:

Alcohol lowers your inhibitions, meaning the more you drink, the more willing you are to take risks.

It also effects your judgement, so you may not recognize danger.



## RESPONSES AND COORDINATION WHEN YOU DRINK ALCOHOL:

After 1-2 alcoholic beverages, your reaction times slow. Your coordination and control also get worse

## THIS MAKES YOU MORE LIKELY TO...

- Drop things
- Fall over
- Bump into things
- Misjudge distances



## ...AND THESE INCREASE YOUR RISK WHEN DRINKING ALCOHOL

- Higher impulsivity
- Worse judgment
- Poor coordination
- Slower responses
- Impaired vision and hearing



## HOW DO I REDUCE MY RISK?

Know where you are going and how you are getting home.

Some other ways to reduce your risk include, but are not limited to...

- Avoid binge drinking
- Avoid risky places and activities
- Stay with people you know and trust
- Have a plan prior to alcohol consumption



# HOW ALCOHOL EFFECTS SPORTS PERFORMANCE

Alcohol reduces your liver's ability to produce sugar. Alcohol also effects how you absorb nutrients. Alcohol can effect the production of the energy source for your muscles. To perform at your best, don't consume alcohol within 48 hours prior to physical activity

1

ENDURANCE

REDUCED AEROBIC  
PERFORMANCE

2

Alcohol reduces you body's ability to convert food and energy. It also reduces carbohydrates and blood sugar levels. These, and lactic acid buiuld-up and dehydration, combine to reduce performance

Alcohol is a sedative. It can effect your sports performance for up to 72 hours after you complete drinking. Drinking alcohol will mean poorer and-eye coordination and slower responses

3

SLOWER  
REACTIONS

RECOVERY

4

Alcohol's effect on sleep can reduce the amount of human growth hormone in your body, which is part of normal muscle building and repair processes. Alcohol can also reduce testosterone, which you need for development and recovery.

During exercise, your muscles burn sugar, which produces lactic acid. Too much lactic acid leads to muscle fitigue and cramps. Drining alcohol 23 hours before training or competing increases lactic acid, which increases risk of muscle cramps.

5

MUSCLE CRAMPS

INJURIES &  
COMPLICATIONS

6

Alcohol makes the recover period longer. It increases the bleeding and swelling around soft tissue injuries, such as cuts, sprains, and bruises. Alcohol also masks pain, which may result in a delay in treatment due to not feeling the pain as soon.

Alcohol is a vasodilator. This means it causes the blood vessels near the surface of the skin to expand. This results in heat loss and lowers your body temperature.

7

BODY HEAT  
LOSS

DEHYDRATION

8

Alcohol promotes water loss. It reduces the production of the antidiuretic hormone, causing you to pee more. This in turn leads to dehydration.

Water loss from drinking alcohol also means the loss of important minerals. These help maintain nerve and muscle action and coordination.

9

VITAMIN &  
MINERAL  
DEPLETIONREDUCED  
SLEEP

10

Getting a good night's rest is important for sports performance. Alcohol reduces the amount of REM sleep. This means you will wake up feeling drowsy and low in energy the next day.



# AVOIDING ALCOHOL TOLERANCE

## DO'S

- DRINK RESPONSIBLY
- KNOW HOW FAST YOU ARE DRINKING (SIP, DON'T GULP)
- KNOW HOW OFTEN YOU'RE DRINKING AND HAVE AT LEAST 2 ALCOHOL-FREE DAYS A WEEK
- AVOID HEAVY DRINKING DAYS
- LIMIT TIME SPENT IN DRINKING SITUATIONS OR WITH FRIENDS WHO ARE HEAVY DRINKERS
- HAVE A MIX OF FRIENDS AND ACTIVITIES

## DON'T'S

- DON'T DRINK AS A REACTION TO EMOTIONAL UPSET OR PROBLEMS- TALK TO A FRIEND OR FIND OTHER WAYS TO COPE
- DO NOT USE ALCOHOL TO RELIEVE WORK STRESS
- DON'T START TO DRINK EARLIER OR BEFORE YOU GO OUT



# RELATIONSHIPS

I	Violence	67
II	Keeping a Long Distance Marriage Healthy	68
III	How to Prepare Your Relationship for Unaccompanied Tours	69
VI	Green Flags for a Healthy Relationship	70
VII	40 Questions to Build Intimacy in a Relationship	71

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## Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is physical, mental, sexual or emotional abuse in an intimate relationship. It occurs when one person uses deliberate pattern of abusive tactics to gain power and control over a partner or former partner.

Domestic violence is not a private matter or a fight. It is not a momentary loss of temper or the abuse of drugs and alcohol. Violence is a choice the abuser makes.

Domestic violence does not discriminate; it crosses all races, social and economic backgrounds, culture, religions and relationship types.

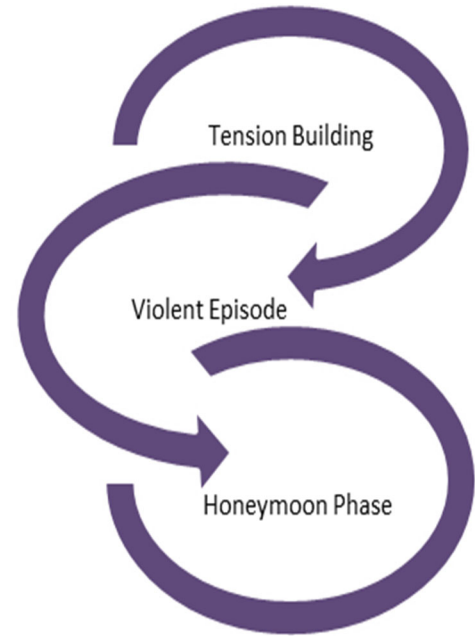
### Are you in an Abusive Relationship?

If you believe you may be in an abusive relationship, here are some questions to ask yourself :

Does your partner...

- Isolate you from friends, family or supporters?
- Embarrass you with put-downs?
- Look or act in ways that scare you?
- Control what you do or who you see or talk to?
- Prevent you from working or attending school?
- Dominate all decisions?
- Destroy your property?
- Shove, slap, choke or hit you?
- Threaten to commit suicide?
- Threaten to kill you?

## Cycle of Violence



### Phase 1: Tension Building

*Victim feels:* Angry, unfairly treated, hopeless, tense, afraid, embarrassed,

*Abuser feels:* Tense, frustrated, disgusted, self-righteous, or jealous

### Phase 2: Violent Episode:

*Victim feels:* Frightened, trapped, helpless or numb

*Abuser feels:* Angry, enraged, "right," jealous and/or frustrated

### Phase 3: Honeymoon Phase:

*Victim feels:* Relieved, angry over the incident, resentful, guilty, hopeful, in denial over the seriousness of the incident

*Abuser feels:* Apologetic, remorseful, forgetful about degree of violence, self-righteous, unable to understand why the woman is still angry.

### Please see below for some resources:

**National Domestic Violence Hotline:** +1 (800) 799-7233

**Sexual Assault Response Coordinator:** +351 966-677-266 (Commercial)/535-2124 (DSN)

**Portuguese Sexual Assault Response Coordinator:** +351 965-831-418

**IDMT:** 535-4233/535-1086

**Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** +1 (800) 273-8255

# KEEPING A LONG DISTANCE MARRIAGE HEALTHY

BEING IN A LONG-DISTANCE MARRIAGE CREATES COMPLICATIONS AND CAN MAKE MARRIAGE EVEN MORE CHALLENGING. HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO KEEP YOUR MARRIAGE STRONG EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE NOT LIVING UNDER THE SAME ROOF!

## COMMUNICATION IS CRITICAL

COMMUNICATION IS KEY! IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMAIN BOTH INTERDEPENDENT AND INTERCONNECTED DESPITE THEIR DIFFERENCES. KEEP THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN ON A DAILY BASIS AND TRY TO MAKE TIME FOR EACH OTHER!

### WAYS TO CONNECT:

SEND A LOVE LETTER OR EMAIL

WRITE IN A SHARED JOURNAL AND MAIL IT TO EACH OTHER

CHAT ONLINE OR VIA TEXT

PLAY VIRTUAL GAMES TOGETHER

STREAM A MOVIE OR TV SHOW TOGETHER BY VIDEO CHATTING

SEND CARE PACKAGES

KEEP PHOTOS OF ONE ANOTHER IN YOUR PERSONAL SPACES

GIVE EACH OTHER A SCENTED PILLOWCASE OR SHIRT TO HELP FEEL PRESENT WITH EACH OTHER

PLAN A TRIP FOR WHEN YOU REUNITE



## PRIORITIZE TRUST



SHARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS ABOUT BEING APART FROM ONE ANOTHER. ALSO, SHARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS ABOUT BEING TOGETHER AGAIN. IT IS VITAL THAT YOU ARE BOTH COMMITTED TO ONE ANOTHER AND TRULY BELIEVE IN YOUR MARRIAGE.

BE OPEN ABOUT YOUR SEPARATE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES. SECRETS BREED MISTRUST. WHEN YOUR PARTNER KNOWS WHAT YOU ARE DOING, THEY FEEL MORE CONNECTED.

DON'T ASSUME INFIDELITY WILL OCCUR BECAUSE OF YOUR PHYSICAL SEPARATION. WHEN YOU FACE CHALLENGES, DISCUSS THEM WITH EACH OTHER, NOT WITH OUTSIDERS LIKE FRIENDS OR RELATIVES.

## WHEN YOU ARE REUNITED

DON'T RUSH INTO GETTING THINGS DONE AROUND THE HOUSE RIGHT AWAY OR SPENDING LOTS OF TIME WITH FRIENDS WHO HAVE MISSED THE TRAVELING SPOUSE.

BOTH PARTNERS WILL NEED SOME QUALITY TIME TO ADJUST TO BEING BACK TOGETHER.

CHILDREN AND PARENTS WILL ALSO NEED TIME TO ADAPT TO THE NEW REALITY OF HAVING EVERYONE UNDER ONE ROOF.



# How to Prepare Your Relationship for Unaccompanied Tours



## **Find out all that you can about the tour:**

Where will your spouse be?

How long will the deployment last? Learning as much as you can about

where your partner will be and what he or she will be doing may help reduce anxiety and uncertainty.

## **Practice having a check-in with each other regarding your feelings:**

Identify what you are each feeling and to learn to ask for what you need. Practice this together pre-move, so that you're better able to keep this experience going when you're apart

## **Share fondness and admiration:**

Even though you will be apart physically, you can still engage in a simple exercise together over the course of the deployment. This would be an excellent time to work through the "Seven Week Plan for Sharing Fondness & Admiration" in Dr. John Gottman's book "The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work." Many of these activities involve writing short notes to each other. The suggestions may help you keep communication lines open and stoke your fires of love, romance, and passion for each other while you are away.

## **Build and connect with your community:**

Many branches of the service offer support in the form of social groups, counseling, or advice. Look into what's available for you as a military family member.

## **Be prepared for reintegration:**

You may have been longing for the reunion, so when it comes, you may be startled to discover feelings of sadness and frustration mixed in with the joy and passion. Understand that these feelings are somewhat to be expected, due to the separate lives you've been leading while apart. The partner who remained at home may have learned to navigate independently and may have even thrived with childcare and home management tasks, and the service member may struggle to find a place at home once reunited. These are predictable adjustments

Geographic separation, whether it is for 6 weeks, 6 months, or longer, is inevitably difficult. The key to a successful separation for any couple is to learn together all you can in order to prepare for your time apart, to communicate together as often as possible, and to regularly share and listen to each other's feelings and needs.

# Green Flags

## FOR A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

We often focus on the negative aspects or "red flags" in relationships instead of GREEN flags to cultivate healthy, consensual and safe relationships. Emphasizing your wants and needs brings you one step closer to making a healthy relationship a reality. This outlook allows each person in the relationship to grow as individuals, as well as together.



You Feel Like Yourself  
Around Each Other



You Each Take Accountability  
For Your Actions



You Support Each Other  
Without Judgement



You Each Communicate  
Respectfully, Especially  
During Conflicts



You Respect Each Other's  
Boundaries, Autonomy  
and Privacy



You Take Time for Each Other  
and Gestures are Reciprocal



You Both Have Fun and Exercise  
Moderation and Discernment



You Have a Support System That  
Doesn't Involve Only Each Other



# 40 Questions to Build Intimacy in a Relationship

1. If you could choose anyone in the world, living or dead, to have in our home as a dinner guest, who would you choose and why?
2. If you could choose the activities to do that would make a perfect day, what would you choose?
3. If you had a crystal ball that could tell you anything at all about your life that you don't already know, what would you ask it to tell you?
4. What's your favorite childhood memory?
5. What are the 10 most important things on your personal bucket list?
6. When did you last cry about something and what did you cry about?
7. If you could wake up tomorrow morning with one new skill or ability, what would you choose?
8. What do you like best about our relationship?
9. What's something that you'd like to try, but that you're too scared to try?
10. If all of your friends were asked to describe you, which friend's description would be the most accurate and why?
11. What was your favorite book (or movie) as a child and why did you like it so much?
12. What's the one thing about yourself that you would most like to change?
13. What would be your dream vacation?
14. What are three qualities you admire about yourself?
15. What are three qualities you admire about me?
16. What's one of your best memories from when we were dating?
17. What was your favorite place to go as a child and why did you love it there?
18. If you could be any character in a book (or movie), who would you choose to be?
19. If all of a sudden you knew that you had six weeks left to live, what would you want to do in the time you had left?
20. What three things in your life could you not imagine doing without?
21. Let's say that our house is on fire, but you know that our family members and pets are safe. What things would you want to rescue from the fire and why?
22. If someone gave you enough money to start a business—no strings attached—what kind of business would you want to start?
23. What are the five things that you are most thankful for right now?
24. If you could possess one artistic talent (painting, sculpture, composing music, writing, etc.), which talent would you choose and why?
25. If you could be an Olympic or professional athlete, what sport would you choose and why?
26. Do you see yourself in our kid(s)? If so, how?
27. When you were a kid, did you think about having kids yourself one day? If so, how many and what did you imagine doing with them?
28. What's one of the most adventurous things you have ever done?
29. If you could have been an eyewitness to any event in history, which one would you choose?
30. What do you dream about the most often?
31. Which of your parents do you think you're most like and why?
32. What was the first thing about me that attracted you?
33. What do you like most about your appearance?
34. Over the last five years, how do you think you have changed?
35. If you could take a year-long paid sabbatical, what would you do?
36. If you had to guess right now, what do you think our kid(s) would choose as a career someday and why?
37. When you think about the future, what do you imagine?
38. When you listen to music, do you focus on the words or the music?
39. Do you learn new skills or information best by hearing, seeing, or doing?
40. If you could plan the perfect date with me, what would that include?

# SUICIDE PREVENTION

I	Warning Signs of Suicide	73
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# WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE:

The behaviors listed below may be some of the signs that someone is thinking about suicide.

## TALKING ABOUT:



- ▷ Wanting to die
- ▷ Great guilt or shame
- ▷ Being a burden to others

## FEELING:



- ▷ Empty, hopeless, trapped, or having no reason to live
- ▷ Extremely sad, more anxious, agitated, or full of rage
- ▷ Unbearable emotional or physical pain

## CHANGING BEHAVIOR, SUCH AS:



- ▷ Making a plan or researching ways to die
- ▷ Taking dangerous risks such as driving extremely fast
- ▷ Withdrawing from friends, saying goodbye, giving away important items, or making a will
- ▷ Displaying extreme mood swings
- ▷ Eating or sleeping more or less
- ▷ Using drugs or alcohol more often

**If these warning signs apply to you or someone you know, get help as soon as possible, particularly if the behavior is new or has increased recently.**

**988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**  
Call or text 988  
Chat at [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org)

**Crisis Text Line**  
Text "HELLO" to 741741



National Institute  
of Mental Health

[www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention)

NIMH Identifier No. CM 22-4316

# Suicide Prevention 101

## *Tools You Can Use*



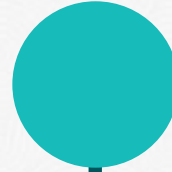


# When Hope is Hard Work

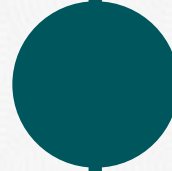


- Suicide is often surrounded by stigma, making it less likely someone will seek help, and harder to know when someone really needs help.
- People who are suicidal do not want to die, as much as they do not want to go on living with their pain.
- The more we understand about suicide prevention the more we can help the people we care about who are struggling.

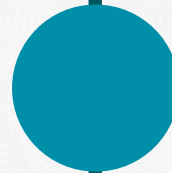
## What can be done to prevent suicide?



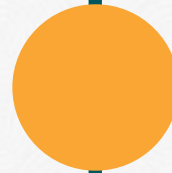
Know the warning signs



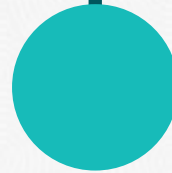
Ask directly: “Are you thinking about suicide?”



Make a safety plan and reduce access to lethal means



Connection to MH professional trained in suicide prevention treatments (DBT, CAMS, etc.)



Create systems to respond to suicide risk in least restrictive (least traumatizing) way

# Warning Signs & Risk Factors

**Warning signs:** Specific behavioral or emotional clues that may indicate suicidal intent.

**Risk factors:** Conditions or circumstances that may elevate a person's risk for suicide.



# Risk Factors for Suicide

Many factors contribute to suicide among those with and without known mental health conditions.



**Note:** Persons who died by suicide may have had multiple circumstances. Data on mental health conditions and other factors are from coroner/medical examiner and law enforcement reports. It is possible that mental health conditions or other circumstances could have been present and not diagnosed, known, or reported.

SOURCE: CDC's National Violent Death Reporting System, data from 27 states participating in 2015.

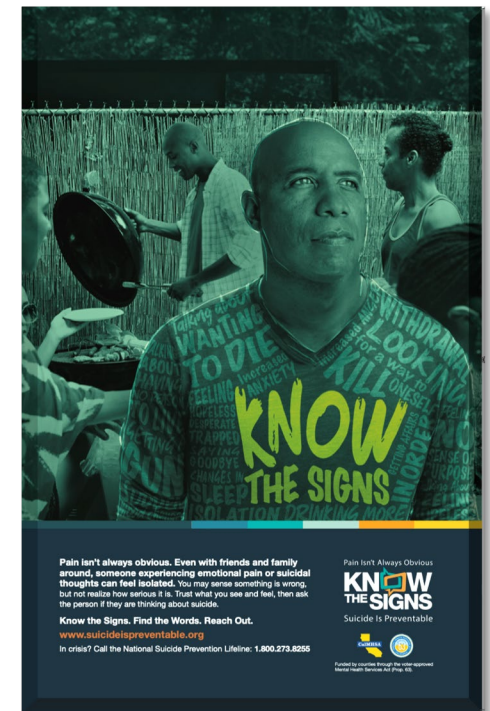
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/datasources/nvdrs/index.html>



# What Groups are Most Impacted by Suicide?

Statistically, the following population groups are disproportionately affected by suicide risk:

- Males
- American Indian/Alaska Natives and Whites
- Older adults
- Veterans
- Those living in rural areas
- LGBTQ youths and adults



# Protective Factors

- **Access** to effective behavioral health care
- **Connectedness** to individuals, family, community, and social institutions
- **Life skills**, including problem solving skills and coping skills, ability to adapt to change
- **Self-esteem** and a **sense of purpose** or meaning in life
- Cultural, religious, or personal beliefs that discourage suicide

**What are  
some other  
warning signs  
for suicide?**





Feeling hopeless or  
worthless

Feeling trapped or in  
unbearable pain

Fear of becoming  
a burden

Preoccupation with death or a lack of concern  
about personal safety

Extreme mood swings

Withdrawal, isolation

Sudden uplift in mood, without a reason

Sleeping too much or  
too little

Increasing use of substances,  
especially alcohol

These additional warning signs  
may not indicate an immediate  
crisis, but are also cause for  
concern, *especially when the  
behavior is new, has  
increased, or seems related to  
a painful event , loss or  
change.*



# KNOW THE SIGNS

Pain isn't always obvious, but most suicidal people show some signs that they are thinking about suicide. The signs may appear in conversations, through their actions, or in social media posts. **If you observe one or more of these warning signs**, especially if the behavior is new, has increased, or seems related to a painful event, loss, or change, **step in or speak up**.



TEENS  
THE SIGNS  
OLDER ADULTS



"He kept showing me things around his apartment when I came over, like where he kept his keys, money, important papers, and even his will. But he was only 28 years old. When I questioned him, he said 'I'm telling you just in case I'm not here anymore'."

## Giving away possessions

They give away prized or favorite possessions.

If any of these signs are present, call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](https://www.national suicide prevention lifeline.org/) at 1-800-273-8255.

- Talking about death or suicide
- Seeking methods for self harm, such as searching online or obtaining a gun
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason

# Having the Conversation: Getting Ready

*You don't have to have all the answers.*

*The most important thing you can do is listen.*

- Take a deep breath
- Create a safe environment
- Give yourself plenty of time (don't rush)
- Be prepared with resources and also for their response (yes or no)
- Listen more than you talk
- Make sure to have your own supports in place

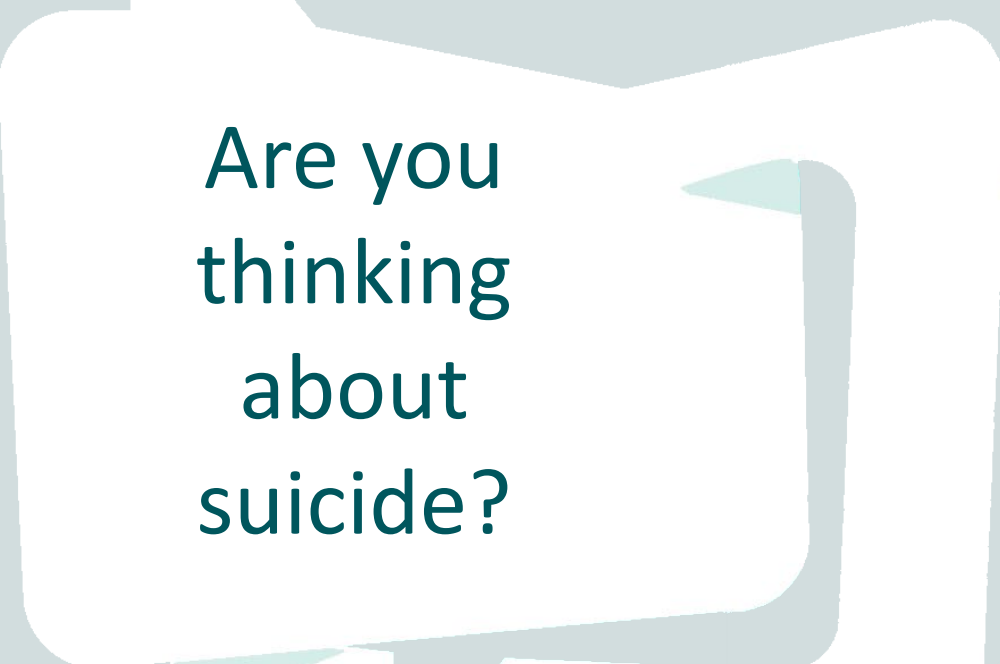
# Starting the Conversation



Dad, I've noticed some changes in you recently that are worrying me. You used to spend time at the barbershop with your buddies but you haven't had a haircut in a long time. Lately it seems like you aren't enjoying all the things you used to like doing.

Joe, it's not like you to avoid your friends. And I heard you say something earlier today about not being around to see how the next football season goes.

Honey, I'm worried about you. You just don't seem yourself lately. I think your appetite is off and it looks like you're losing weight.



Are you  
thinking  
about  
suicide?

# It's *OK* to be Direct

Talking about suicide does not  
increase suicidal behavior.

By talking openly and directly,  
you are sending the message  
that you care and want to help.


Is someone you love not acting like themselves?



suicideispreventable.org


- Are you thinking about suicide?
- Have you thought about how you would do it? (*have you made a plan?*)
- When do you feel the most pain? What happens before that leads to you thinking about suicide?
- What have you done in the past to stop you from making an attempt?





## If They Say “No”

- Encourage them to talk about how they are feeling
- Support their coping and resiliency. Ask what helps them feel better.
- Encourage them to reach out to resources such as the Suicide Prevention Lifeline
- Remind them that you are there for them
- Listen without lecturing or judgment
- Be vigilant about the behaviors you are noticing and continue to check in with them on a regular basis.



## If They Say “YES”

- Take it seriously
- Remain calm
- Thank them for their honesty and openness
- Encourage them to talk about the reasons they feel this way and listen
- The most important action you can take is to listen...really listen
- Encourage them to reach out for help; offer to make the call with them

# Recap: What You Can Do

- If you sense something is wrong, **don't delay in getting help!**
- Find the Words to have this difficult conversation.
- **Express your concern**, mention specific things you have noticed
- Ask directly if they are thinking about suicide



# Plan for Safety

- Ask them if they have access to weapons or medications, and work with them to safely store those items
- Help them identify signs of crisis and things they can do to help take their mind off their problems.
- Make a list of who they can call when they are in a crisis
  - Trusted individuals, professionals, crisis lines

**Patient Safety Plan Template**

**Step 1: Warning signs (thoughts, images, mood, situation, behavior) that a crisis may be developing:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 2: Internal coping strategies – Things I can do to take my mind off my problems without contacting another person (relaxation technique, physical activity):**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3: People and social settings that provide distraction:**

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. Place \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Place \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 4: People whom I can ask for help:**

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 5: Professionals or agencies I can contact during a crisis:**

1. Clinician Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Clinician Pager or Emergency Contact # \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. Clinician Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Clinician Pager or Emergency Contact # \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. Local Urgent Care Services  
 Urgent Care Services Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Urgent Care Services Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 4. Suicide Prevention Lifeline Phone: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

**Step 6: Making the environment safe:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_

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The one thing that is most important to me and worth living for is:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

# Reach Out




**CRISIS TEXT LINE |**

**Text HELLO to 741741**

**Free, 24/7, Confidential**


**You are not alone. There are resources available 24/7 to help.**



## Should You Call 911?

- If you have ever been in this position, you know how difficult it can be.
- The fear of saying or doing the wrong thing, or not doing enough, can be overwhelming.
- The safest response might seem like calling 911. While this is true in some situations, in most situations, a less drastic response may be more helpful.
- **Instinct and compassion: two tools you can always count on.** There is no foolproof process for knowing exactly the right thing to do. Trust your instinct if it tells you something is wrong.





## When Should You Call 112?

- **Calling 112 connects the situation to first responders, such as law enforcement, firefighters and EMT.** If you suspect someone is about to or has already harmed themselves and requires medical attention, or if you are in danger, you should call 112.
- **Crisis lines are equipped to deal with crisis situations.** Crisis line counselors quickly assess the level of risk get the caller to the appropriate services if risk is imminent. They also counsel the person over the phone to reduce their risk. Crisis lines can also be helpful if you are concerned about someone else.

### Helpful Blog:

<https://www.eachmindmatters.org/covid19/supporting-someone-while-they-find-their-reasons-for-living/>

# FIND THE WORDS

"Are you thinking of ending your life?" Few phrases are as difficult to say to a loved one. But when it comes to suicide prevention, none are more important. Here are some ways to get the conversation started.



# Take Care of Yourself

- Exercise
- Healthy eating
- Sleep
- Time off
- Get outside
- Laugh
- Practice mindfulness
- Talk with a friend



# Breathe

Breathing exercises can shift your current feelings, connect you more deeply with your body, calm your nervous system and decrease stress! There are a variety of different breathing exercises, allowing you to find one or a few that work for you.





## KNOW THE SIGNS

Pain isn't always obvious, but most suicidal people show some signs that they are thinking about suicide. The signs may appear in conversations, through their actions, or in social media posts. **If you observe one or more of these warning signs**, especially if the behavior is new, has increased, or seems related to a painful event, loss, or change, **step in or speak up**.



SuicideIsPreventable.org

## RECONOZCA LAS SEÑALES

El sufrimiento no siempre se nota, pero la mayoría de las personas suicidas muestran algunas señales de lo que están pensando. Las señales se pueden manifestar por medio de conversaciones, en su manera de actuar o en sus comentarios en las redes sociales. **Si observa, aunque sea una de estas señales**, especialmente si nota que el comportamiento es algo nuevo, que ha incrementado o que parece ser a causa de una pérdida, un cambio o un evento trágico, **actúe o diga algo inmediatamente**.



ElSuicidioEsPrevenible.org

# REINTEGRATION

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# REINTEGRATION

Returning Home From Your Unaccompanied Tour

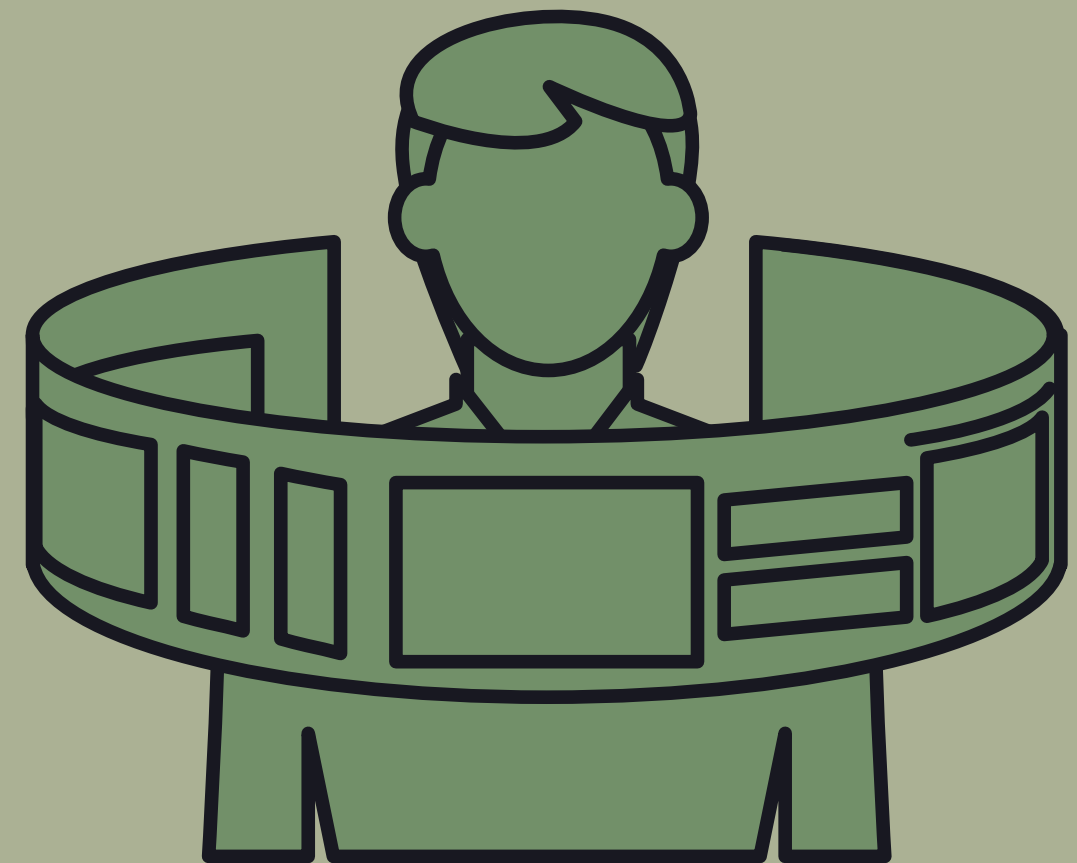
# UTILIZE CORE SKILLS TO ASSIST IN YOUR REINTEGRATION

- Check
- Control
- Connect
- Confidence



# CHECK

- If we compared your priorities before and after your unaccompanied tour, would you notice a change?
  - Physical Fitness
  - Family/Friends
  - Impression of the Air Force
- A sense of purpose guides us through transition.
- Check your purpose/goals and move towards them if you haven't already



# CONTROL: RECHARGE: SLEEP

- Performance can be maximized by good sleep
  - Improves mood
  - Improves concentration
  - Improves situational awareness
- Develop routines
  - Wake/go to sleep at the same time (even on weekends/days off of work)
  - Bed is for sleep ONLY
  - Avoid caffeine, nicotine, sleep meds if possible
  - Regular exercise (except right before bed)



# CONTROL: NUTRITION & FITNESS

- Any fitness changes while on your unaccompanied tour? If so, what/how?
  - Maintain fitness habits at home
  - Get a workout buddy
  - Eat 3 meals a day
  - Eat at least 3/5 food groups per meal
  - Avoid caffeine/energy drinks
  - Journal/monitor progress



# CONNECT: WINGMAN & LEADERSHIP

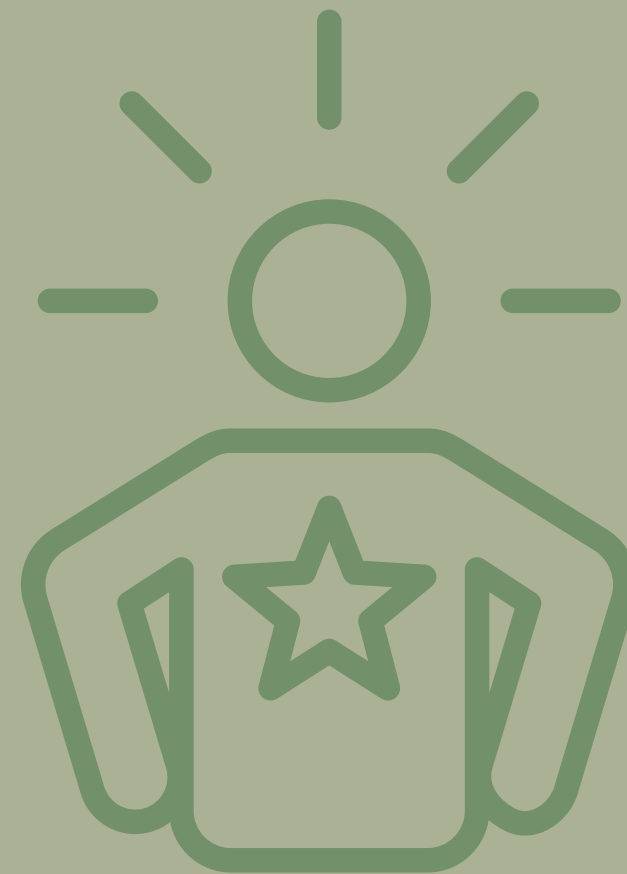
- Watch out for your buddies by continuing to communicate with them while separated
- Talk to them if you notice any changes
- Share your experiences
- Involve leadership if needed
- Encourage help-seeking if needed





# CONFIDENCE

- What are common physical and emotional reactions to unaccompanied tour stressors?
  - It is normal to feel overwhelmed, uneasy, and uncomfortable when returning after being gone for a year or more.
  - Seek help if your stress lasts longer than the reintegration period



# EXPECTATIONS RETURNING HOME

## Yours

Free time/quiet time

Relax at home

Home cooked meals

Intimate moments

Time to adjust

Everyone/everything will  
be how you left it

## Your partner's

Free time/quiet time

Family vacation

Restaurant meals

Intimate moments

Immediately assume old responsibilities

You will be the same



# REALITY OF RETURNING HOME

- People change
  - Positive
    - Build confidence
    - Made a difference
    - Learned a new skill
    - Met new friends
  - Negative
    - Impatient/Short tempered
    - Bad habits/language
    - Aversion to crowds/noises
- Reunion is a process
  - Some report it takes up to 3 months to feel "normal" following return
- Communication is more important than ever
  - You have to relearn each other all over again
  - Many couples argue while working out the new routine and getting used to changes

# STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL HOMECOMING

- Take it easy especially for the first couple of days
- Keep your expectations realistic
- Use a calendar to schedule personal time, time with your partner, and time with the kids
- Tell your partner how you feel/what you need
- Don't pull out the mail, bad report cards, credit card bills, etc. on the first day home
- Don't make judgements about changes you may notice
- Imagine/discuss the challenges you and your partner have faced
- If you are having issues, ask for help and do NOT wait



# CHILDREN & REINTEGRATION

## Birth to 1 year

- Reactions to parent's return
  - Cry/fuss
  - Pull away from parent
  - Have problems with elimination
  - Change their sleep schedule
  - Need time to learn your...
    - Touch
    - Face
    - Voice
    - Smell

# CHILDREN & REINTEGRATION

## 1-3 years

- Reactions to parent's return
  - Shy
  - Avoid returning parent
  - Cry
  - Pull away
  - Temper tantrums



# CHILDREN & REINTEGRATION

## 3-5 years

- Reactions to parent's return
  - Anger
  - Need proof you are real
  - Compete for attention
  - Act out
  - Still need time to warm-up

# CHILDREN & REINTEGRATION

## 5-12 years

- Reactions to parent's return
  - Joy/excitement
  - Anxiety of changing roles
  - Child competes with parent(s)
  - Desire recognition
  - Attention seeking
  - Attempt to split parents

# CHILDREN & REINTEGRATION

## 13-18 years

- Reactions to parent's return
  - Relief
  - Excited
  - Guilty
  - Concerned about changes in rules and responsibilities

# REMINDERS

- Discuss realistic expectations
- Take it easy!
- Realize you are different and your loved ones may have changed while you were gone
- Be patient with yourself and others
- Communicate!
- Know that help is out there
- Find support
  - Trusted friends
  - Religious or spiritual communities
  - Military Sources of Support
  - A professional counselor

