

# Life, Health and You



## Improving Mental Health

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act as we cope with life. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. There are many different things you can do to improve your mental health, including:

**Staying positive.** It's important to try to have a positive outlook & find a balance between positive and negative emotions. Staying positive doesn't mean that you never feel negative emotions, such as sadness or anger. But you don't want those emotions to take over.

**Taking a break from negative information.** Know when to stop watching or reading the news. Use social media to reach out for support and feel connected to others but be careful. Don't fall for rumors, get into arguments, or negatively compare your life to others.

**Being physically active.** Exercise can reduce feelings of stress and depression and improve your mood.

**Getting enough sleep.** Sleep affects your mood. Over the long term, a lack of quality sleep can make you more likely to become depressed. So it's important to make sure that you have a regular sleep schedule.

**Connecting with others.** Humans are social creatures, and it's important to have strong, healthy relationships with others. Having good social support may help protect you against the harms of stress.

**Developing a sense of meaning and purpose in life.** This could be through your job, volunteering, learning new skills, or exploring your spirituality. Develop coping skills, which are methods you use to deal with stressful situations.

**It's also important to recognize when you need to get help.** Talk therapy and/or medications can treat mental disorders. If you don't know where to get treatment, start by contacting your primary care provider or EAP.

### Mindfulness as Self-Care

To be more mindful: Take some deep breaths. Breathe in through your nose to a count of 4, hold for 1 second and then exhale through the mouth to a count of 5. Repeat often.

Enjoy a stroll. As you walk, notice your breath and the sights and sounds around you. As thoughts and worries enter your mind, note them but then return to the present.

Practice mindful eating. Be aware of taste, textures, and flavors in each bite, and listen to your body when you are hungry and full.

Be aware of your body. Mentally scan your body from head to toe. Bring your attention to how each part feels.

Seek out mindfulness resources, including online programs and teacher-guided practices.

## National Health Observances

Each month, we feature select National Health Observances that highlight important health & life issues affecting people every day.

February is [American Heart Month](#) sponsored by the American Heart Association to raise awareness about Heart Health. Additionally, this year February 7<sup>th</sup> is National Wear Red Day to bring attention to heart disease.

[National Caregivers Day](#): February 21st honors individuals who selflessly provide personal care, and physical and emotional support to those who need it most.

## Mental Health Minute



### Building Resiliency

Develop healthy physical habits. Healthy eating, physical activity, and regular sleep can improve your physical and mental health.

Take time for yourself each day. Notice the good moments. Do something you enjoy.

Look at problems from different angles. Think of challenging situations as growth opportunities. Learn from your mistakes. Try to see the positive side of things.

Practice gratitude. Take time to note things to be thankful for each day. Explore your beliefs about the meaning and purpose of life. Think about how to guide your life by the principles important to you. Tap into social connections and community. Surround yourself with positive, healthy people. Ask for help when you need it.

### LIVE MONTHLY WEBINAR:

Increasing Mental Toughness

Date: 2/12/2025 | Time: 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM MST

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