



EDUCATIONAL VIDEO SERIES

Taking Care: A Look at Mental Wellness



→ Our lifestyle and habits can directly impact our mental health.

If we don't take care of our mental health, our physical health can suffer and vice versa. Just like we should exercise our bodies to keep our hearts, lungs, and other vital organs healthy, we also need to take care of our brains. Taking care of our brains is referred to as mental wellness.

→ Activities that support mental wellness

There are certain behaviors and lifestyle habits that promote mental wellness and can decrease the risk of developing mental health issues:

Enhance social support and connectedness

- Loneliness and feelings of disconnectedness are serious threats to mental health. Make time to regularly connect with friends and family members, even if it's a telephone call or text. Engaging in social activities like book club or group gym classes can also have a positive effect on mental health. Staying socially connected can also prevent the onset of depression. Remember, quality relationships are more important than quantity.

Manage your stress

- Stress is the body's way of responding to the mental and physical demands of life. Common events or situations that cause stress include daily responsibilities and commitments like work, school, and family. Moderate to high stress situations include traumatic events, the loss of a loved one, illness or another event that significantly alters your life. There are several activities and actions that can be taken to relieve and reduce stress:
 - Identify stressors (things that cause stress) and write a list designating which ones can and cannot be controlled.
 - Work toward finding solutions. For the controllable stressors, write out methods to alleviate or remove those stressors. For the stressors that cannot be controlled, know that you CAN control how you react to those. Imagine a scenario where you react differently to a negative stressor - does the situation work out for the better in your mind? Try it in real life. Remember, you don't have to find solutions alone. Therapists are trained in helping us find tools to manage stress.



Video two

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Main points

1. Our lifestyle and habits can directly impact our mental health.
2. Factors that support mental wellness and activities we can all do:
 - Social connectedness
 - Stress management
 - Care for your body
 - Life skills and resilience
 - Help-seeking

- Set a timer for 5, 10, or 15 minutes each day to try one of many relaxation techniques like mindfulness meditation, breathing exercises, or progressive muscle relaxation. Test them out to find the relaxation technique or combination of techniques that works best for you.
- Keep a planner that organizes work and home tasks that must get done. Check items off as they are accomplished. Remember it's important to schedule fun and enjoyable activities into your calendar, too.

Take care of your body with proper diet, exercise and sleep.

- Not only does eating healthy and nutrient-rich foods help keep your body in good working order, eating well can also positively affect your mood. Follow these four main guidelines to increase energy and boost overall wellness:
 - Eat plenty of whole foods. This includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and reduced fat dairy products.
 - Protein is a cornerstone of the human diet and a major component of our bodies. Obtain protein by eating lean meat, eggs, fish, beans and nuts.
 - Limit the amount of sugar, salt, saturated fat and trans fats ingested. These are abundant in processed foods.
 - Caffeine and alcohol can worsen or trigger anxiety. It's best to drink water to stay clear, focused, and hydrated.
- The current recommendation for exercise for the average adult includes 75-150 minutes of vigorous exercise each week. Another recommendation is to vary and balance the type of exercise between cardiovascular, strength training, and stretching. Workers in the construction industry likely get more exercise than their office job counterparts.
- Sleep is critical. Health care practitioners recommend getting between seven and nine hours of sleep each night to help us perform optimally at our everyday lives. In fact, lack of sleep due to stress or other issues can lead to serious physical and mental health problems. Here is a short list of tips for getting the recommended amount of sleep:
 - Set a bedtime and adhere to it. Your body loves consistency when it comes to sleep.
 - Turn off the screens one hour before bed. Use this time to relax away from the stimulants and prepare your body for sleep.
 - Try to de-stress before bed. Many hours of sleep are lost to restless minds preoccupied with work or other stressful events. Meditate, do some light stretching, listen to soothing music quietly, or take a hot shower or bath. Find what works best to put you at ease and in a restful state.
 - Exercising earlier in the day can help prepare you for restful sleep. Avoid rigorous exercise right before bed.
- Manage any existing physical health problems:
 - Mental and physical health are deeply interconnected, and it's important to deal with any health issues that may be restrictive. If health issues are a major life stressor or a factor of depression, a therapist can help you adjust to a new physical reality.



Social connectedness



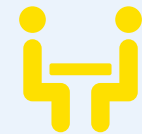
Stress management



Care for your body



Life skills and resilience



Help-seeking



Preventing mental illness requires practice and repetition of healthy lifestyle changes. Sometimes, life gets in the way of these and that's okay. Improving overall health is a lifelong journey and any small adjustments could result in significant benefits.

Build life skills

- Boost self-esteem.
 - Self-esteem or your level of confidence in your ability to accomplish goals provides an important protective quality to our mental wellbeing. It's the lens through which we view our self-worth from day-to-day, and it can affect how we respond to different situations. Avoid letting self-esteem spiral out of control after an experience of failure or rejection. Have self-compassion. If we let negative life circumstances deteriorate our self-esteem, we may question our worth, in turn creating a false sense of doubt that prevents us from taking advantage of life's opportunities.
- Increase resilience to adversity by changing thoughts and behavior. A couple ways to start:
 - Address emotional pain. Be mindful of what experiences in life cause emotional pain. Some common feelings that may indicate emotional pain include feelings of grief, anger, rejection, or failure. Although we can't always control the cause of our emotional pain, we can practice techniques to treat it. Letting emotional pain last too long can lead to depression and other mental health conditions.
 - Avoid repetitive negative thoughts. Disrupt repetitive thinking or over-thinking about distressing or negative events in daily life by finding a positive distraction. Do something that requires concentration to help prevent dwelling on events and situations that are uncontrollable or in the past. A cycle of repetitive negative thinking can lead to depression and other medical issues.

Ask for help

- No one has to do anything in life alone. If you have trouble coping for any reason, reaching out to others is key. Primary care doctors can provide referrals to therapists or other physicians who can address troubles in the body and mind. Family and friends can provide support and empathy.

If you are worried you may be experiencing a mental health crisis or having thoughts of suicide, call, text or chat 988 for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Contact

Jen Owens

SAVE Director of Programs
save@save.org

About SAVE

SAVE is a national nonprofit dedicated to ending the tragedy of suicide through education, training, advocacy, and support for suicide loss survivors. We fulfill our mission by:

- Educating and empowering people to identify suicide warning signs and refer those at risk to the support they need;
- Providing empathetic assistance and valuable resources to help suicide loss survivors navigate the devastating loss of a loved one;
- Advocating at state and national levels to amplify voices of those impacted by suicide and create meaningful change.

By offering free educational resources, teaching life-saving skills, supporting suicide loss survivors, and advocating for change, we believe we can make a significant impact and save lives.

About WTW

WTW (NASDAQ: WTW) is in the business of people, risk and capital. With roots dating to 1828, our company has more than 45,000 colleagues serving more than 140 countries and markets. Our values – client focus, teamwork, integrity, respect and excellence – underlie all that we do, including how we behave and interact with each other. They are part of our WTW DNA. [wtwco.com](https://www.wtwco.com)



IDEAL BODY ENVIRONMENT AND MIND