

Simple, Practical Mental Health Tips

Healthy Body - Healthy Mind

- Compiled by **Mr S V Sai Baba**, Former AGM, Indian Bank

Are you feeling depressed lately and wondering how to improve your mood? Are you in the midst of getting over a significant loss in your life and wondering how to keep your mind healthy as you grieve? Are you interested in how you can maintain a healthy mind to keep your body healthy?

Mental health is a complex subject - it's hard to define and difficult to grasp all the different aspects of mental health. Still, however, there are simple tests that you can take in your life to keep your mind healthy.

Check out these practical tips for maintaining a healthy mind. Employ just a few of these ideas and you'll likely feel the difference in your mental health.

- 1). **Make sure you are getting enough rest** : Sleep is the body's way of recharging, meaning that sleep doesn't only increase your energy - it actually boosts your mental health.
- 2). **Feel what you feel** : Don't worry about controlling or changing your feelings. For now, focus on expressing the feelings that you have rather than trying to feel a certain way.
- 3). **Forgive yourself for past mistakes** : Messing up is a part of life, and mental health requires understanding that and moving past mistakes in our lives. Is there a mistake or regret that eats at you? LET IT GO.
- 4). **Throw a mini-party for yourself** : Celebrate a recent accomplishment in your life by patting yourself on the back and rewarding yourself with a small gift you have been looking forward to. It's important to acknowledge successes - not just failures.
- 5). **Find a good support system** : Whether family, friends, a temple, or something else, find a group of people who are willing to love you for who you are. This boosts resilience and helps to provide perspective in the midst of stress and pain.
- 6). **Eat Healthy** : Invest time in learning which kinds of foods bring you "up", and which kinds bring you "down". Committing to a diet can make you feel good about yourself, give you a sense of self-improvement, and boost your sense of accomplishment.
- 7). **Exercise** : Regularly exercising can help you cut back stress in your life., releasing pent up energy as you work your body. Exercise releases endorphins, chemicals in the brain that energise us.
- 8). **Get some sun** : Sunlight can lift one's spirits, boosting mental health and preventing depression.
- 9). **Leave some time for leisure** : Make sure you allow time in your schedule for what causes you to relax. May be it's watching movies or completing cross word puzzles or walking outside. Make time for the things you know relax you.
- 10). **Stay away from drugs and alcohol** : When you consume cigarettes, illegal drugs and alcohol, these drugs tamper with your mental health, decreasing mental stability and giving you "false positive" emotions.
- 11). **Commit to helping others** : You can build self-esteem and self-worth by regularly pouring out your energy and talents to help others. Volunteering is another activity that releases endorphins, boosting your mood.
- 12). **Do things that require discipline** : Self control increases self worth, as you feel like you can control aspects of your life.
- 13). **Learn something new** : Part of what makes us human is our tendency to challenge ourselves. Challenge yourself to learn something new - may be a new skill, sport or game.

- 14). Spend time enjoying art : Studying artworks exercises our minds and encourages us to think creatively. Take sometime to visit a gallery or an art show - you may return with a new perspective on your situation.
- 15). Find a good listener, and return the favor : Find one person who is willing to listen to you vent and talk freely. It can also relieve stress to form a listening partnership, where the two of you share on a regular basis.
- 16). Stick to your friends : Do what you can to intentionally keep in touch with a circle of friends. Schedule lunches, dates, or get-togethers with your friends more often. Deep friendships remind us of a sense of belonging.
- 17). Make the decision not to worry : Worry will consume your mind if you let it, but you can also train yourself to avoid worry, to choose a life without anxiety. Ask God to help you not to worry.
- 18). Do things that engage your senses : Each day, perform one task that engages each of your senses : Sight, touch, smell, sound and taste. Engaging your senses helps you to live in the moment and focus on the present.
- 19). Leave time to build and create : Even if it's just LEGOs or a can of Play-doh, it's important to engage our creative sides frequently. When the mind gets into a rut of the same sort of thinking, it gets sick. Keep it well by staying creative.
- 20). Consider getting a pet : This is a big decision, but having a pet really help mental health. Pets love us unconditionally, keep us active, and provide us a way to care for something.
- 21). Leave time for nothing : Make sure your schedule has a little room for free time; time that is unbudgeted. Use that time for meditation, prayer, or relaxation exercises.
- 22). Cut out late-night TV and Computer use : Studies have shown that watching TV or using computer late at night can cause depressive symptoms.
- 23). Spend time with people everyday : Find people who are like you and who like you. This one seems pretty obvious, but it is easy to forget when you are depressed or down. Interacting with people is likely part of the solution, not the problem.
- 24). Work to understand what stresses you : Understand your stressors and be able to recognize how you need to react. e informed about what is happening in your mind and body.
- 25). Give and receive compliments : Find reasons to praise people, and be willing to accept people's praises of you. This will help you to appreciate the good in those around you and recognize it in yourself.
- 26). Join a club or social group that meets regularly : This will help you to create a community in your life, fueling purpose and camaraderie.
- 27). Leave time to laugh : Try to laugh hysterically everyday. Feed yourself funny things, allow your mind to decompress from time to time.
- 28). Accept that there are some things you can not change : A lot of anxiety stems from trying to change things beyond our control. Recognizing that some things are beyond our control is a key to a healthy, anxiety-free mind.
- 29). Engage in spirituality on a regular basis : Make sure you are exercising not just your mind and body but also your spirit. Interact regularly with a spiritual community. Putting faith on God relieves stress on ourselves.
- 30). Talk to God about where you're at : Interact with God in prayer on a daily basis and allow God to be a part of your stress-reduction strategy. He's been doing it for thousands of years - He's got a little more practice than you do.

