



Maintaining Mental Fitness

Whether intense or light, most people exercise to increase their physical health. The simple act of movement by walking, running, lifting weights, and even more rigorous exercise, such as triathlons or CrossFit, have beneficial results. The actual means of exercise are less important than the simple act itself. We can borrow these same principles when it comes to our mental health too. Many times, stigma, lack of knowledge, and fear of the unknown can contribute to resistance to care for our own mental health.

Mental Exhaustion

While some stress is normal and can be good for the body, prolonged and continuous effects of stress impact mental tranquility. Mental health fatigue signs may include:

- Irritability
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Foggy brain, unable to stay focused or finish a task
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco and/or other substance abuse

Caring for your Mental Health

Take a social media break! Social media can sometimes lead to increased stress. Disconnect from social media by deleting the apps from your phone, making them more difficult to access. Use that extra time to focus on healthier tasks.

Make a list! On a piece of paper, list the behaviors you exhibit when under stress. On the same piece of paper, list all the ways in which you decompress (i.e. swimming, hiking, reading a book, throwing the ball for the dog). Refer to this list when you find yourself under stress and commit to decompressing when needed. This list can be posted in a highly visible area or shared with loved ones.

Surround yourself with healthy food! Whenever possible, eat healthy homecooked meals. Not big on cooking? No problem, there are lots of fun and easy apps and websites to help you learn to make delicious and easy meals. Share a meal with a friend or make it a family event. A healthy diet can make you feel better, and healthy choices can increase your mental health.

Make sleep a priority! Sleeping better is easier to achieve without the distraction of social media or stress inducing news programs. Set an early bedtime to ensure enough sleep. As Benjamin Franklin once said, “early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.”

Remember! If there is a crisis, call 9-1-1 immediately.



For important signs you should not ignore, check out this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9B-wTp2PZH8>

