

When people think about making healthy changes, most think about making changes to their physical well-being, like losing weight or exercising more.

We want you to consider your mental well-being and see how your mental health affects many aspects of your health.

5 Practices to Improve Your Mental Wellness

- **Mindfulness** allows you to have conscious awareness of what you are doing so you can make choices to override automatic thinking and make positive changes in thoughts and behavior. Ten minutes a day in meditation is a good start; in a matter of days, one will feel less stress, more calm, greater clarity and ability to focus.
- **Physical wellness** cannot be separated from mental wellness. Nutrition is becoming a new treatment for psychiatric disorders because growing research is showing that levels of neurotransmitters in the brain are directly affected by other areas of the body, like the digestive track. Exercise releases endorphins into the body, which results in feelings of pleasure. Eat healthfully and exercise at least 10 minutes a day.
- **Practice self-compassion** and treat yourself with kindness and respect. Many people self-criticize as a motivation tool to be better, demand perfection and set unrealistic expectations for themselves as a means to becoming who they want to be. However, negative self-talk damages the self-esteem and can lead to serious conditions like anxiety and depression.
- **Showing love & compassion to others** releases chemicals in the brain, lowers levels of stress & blood pressure and some report relief from depression and physical pain. Research shows that those who practice altruism have a higher quality of life and live longer. Helping others and volunteering helps get out of one's own head and creates well-being for others.
- **Input the positive** since what is taken from one's environment matters a great deal to the emotional well-being, because it stays active in the subconscious for a long period of time. Do an environmental detox where anything that feels like it generates a negative emotion is removed.

(PSYCHOLOGY TODAY)

What Is Mental Health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

US DEPT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Because of the stigma surrounding mental illness, many people tend to put little effort into their mental well-being. It is normal for people to discuss physical ailments, but many people are too embarrassed or ashamed to talk about any issues going on inside their heads (MHAG).

