



EFR EMPLOYEE & FAMILY RESOURCES

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS



MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH. WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO TAKE CARE OF *YOU*?

Discover the prevalence of mental illness, what can boost your day-to-day mental health, and how your free Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help.

When thinking of "health," most of us think of physical wellness -- we tend to think of everything for which we'd visit a medical doctor. However, mental health is a critical element of our overall well-being.

More than likely, if you yourself are not suffering from a mental illness, such as depression or anxiety, you know someone who is.

According to Mental Health America, **1 in 5** adults have a mental health condition. That's more than 40 million Americans -- more than the populations of New York and Florida combined -- with

a mental health condition.

A multitude of issues can impact mental health, some for longer periods of time than others. They include, but are not limited to:

- Loneliness and isolation
- Grief and loss
- Domestic and family violence
- Work stress
- Alcohol and drug use
- Sleeping problems
- Physical health and/or limitations
- Life stage changes and transitions
- Financial stress
- Other major life events

Fortunately, despite all of the circumstances that can harm mental health, there are also many effective methods for boosting mental health:

Value yourself.

Be kind to yourself -- you actually do deserve it! Make time for hobbies and projects you enjoy, or do something new to expand and grow your interests.

Take care of your body.

Meeting your physical needs can improve your mental health. Be sure to exercise, drink plenty of water, get enough sleep, eat nutritious meals, and avoid tobacco and alcohol to boost your mood.

Calm your mind.

Meditation, deep-breathing exercises and mindfulness exercises, prayer, and yoga are all great ways to quiet your mind and re-focus.

MOOD BOOST FOODS

Check out these **10 healthy foods** that can help you combat depression in the tastiest of ways!



Create a support network.

People with strong social or family connections are generally healthier than those who lack a support network. Surround yourself with supportive friends and family, or seek out activities where you can meet new people.

Switch it up.

While routines give us a feeling of safety and security, a little change of pace can break up a tedious schedule. Take a walk somewhere new, clear off your desk, try a new recipe, or hang up some new pictures.

Deal with your stress.

Because stress is a part of life, aim to practice good coping skills. To reduce stress, try going for a walk in nature, journaling about your feelings, watching a funny video, exercising, or playing with a pet.

Get help when you need it.

Your confidential and free EAP benefit is a 24/7-accessible resource. The services your EAP provides to you and your household family members can be accessed by calling **800.327.4692**.

IN-PERSON COUNSELING

A masters-level clinician can help and support you with a variety of issues, such as: depression or grief, anxiety or panic, job stress, drug or alcohol disorders, relationship stress, and more.

OTHER SERVICES

Your EAP also provides other beneficial services to relieve stress that can harm your mental health. These services include:

- **Financial Consultation**
 - i.e. debt management, taxes, budgeting, financial planning
- **Legal Consultation**

- i.e. OWIs, divorce, custody, crafting a will
- **Identity Theft Resolution**
 - i.e. services provided by a certified fraud resolution specialist or licensed attorney
- **Elder- and Childcare Resources**
 - i.e. daycare centers and state-licensed assisted living facilities in your local area, how to provide care for a relative living in another state
- **Life Coaching**
 - i.e. time management, communication skills, goal setting, work-life integration

You're not in this alone. It's OK to ask for help when it comes to managing your mental health -- we know life can be challenging, and we're here to help!

WELLNESS

Move For Your Mood

Many people associate exercise with weight loss, building muscle, or staying fit -- instead of focusing on what it can do for you physically, think about how it can improve your mental well-being, too. Whether you're looking to manage anxiety, lessen stress, regulate mood swings, or reduce chronic pain, exercise might just be your solution.

To experience the benefits exercise can have on your mood, you have to get started. But, as we all know, getting started can be the hardest part of any lifestyle change, especially if you're not feeling motivated. Here are five suggestions for you to consider:

1. **Accidentally exercise:** stand up when talking on the phone, park farther away, or stretch while watching TV.
2. **Set the bar low:** don't push yourself to do too much too soon. Consider a small goal and work from there.
3. **Avoid convenience:** if you are able, take the stairs.
4. **Find a friend:** exercising with friends or family creates accountability.
5. **Find your fit:** There are countless ways to exercise so explore many options before settling on just one.

While the benefits are endless, sometimes what it takes is focusing on the benefit you need most. Most often, when one area of your well-being is improved, many other areas benefit, as well.



EFR EMPLOYEE & FAMILY RESOURCES

For related articles and support, visit our website at www.efr.org/myeap. To access EAP services, call 800.327.4692.

This newsletter is provided by your employer in cooperation with your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) because we care about you and your family.



WWW.EFR.ORG