

The **10 steps** to positive mental health and wellbeing



**BREAK
THROUGH**

mental health research foundation

Positive wellbeing and **resilience** are linked to protect against the development of mental illness, and recovery from mental health issues.

While looking after ourselves can sometimes feel like the last thing we need to do amongst the busyness of our lives, it is vital to ensure our long-term wellbeing.

It is important you take the time to look after yourself and your loved ones.

Follow these **10 simple steps** and share them with your family, friends and colleagues.

You never know who might need to hear them.



1. Ask for help

One of the most important ways to keep yourself mentally healthy is to recognise when you are not feeling good and know when to ask for help. There is no shame in asking someone for support if you are feeling low or stressed. Everyone goes through times when they don't feel as good as they should. You can speak with friends or family, or if you think your mental health is getting on top of you then speak with your GP.



2. Talk about your feelings

It's ok not to feel ok and it is even better to be able to talk about it with your family, friends or colleagues. This isn't a sign of weakness; this is a positive sign of acceptance of your situation and exploring ways in which you can manage what is happening to you.

3. Get plenty of sleep

Sleep is important for our physical and mental health. Sleep helps to regulate the chemicals in our brain that transmit information. These chemicals are important in managing our moods and emotions. If we don't get enough sleep, we can start to feel depressed or anxious.



4. Eat well

Eating well isn't just important for our bodies, but it's also important for our minds. Certain mineral deficiencies, such as iron and vitamin B12 deficiencies, can give us a low mood. Try to eat a balanced diet. If you find you're particularly stressed, you should try limiting or cutting out caffeine as this can make you feel jittery and anxious.



5. Drink sensibly

Drinking isn't something we associate with withdrawal symptoms, but it can cause some which impact on your mental health. When you've had a few drinks, you can feel more depressed and anxious the next day, and it can be harder to concentrate.



6. Keep in touch

Keeping in contact with family, friends and colleagues is important as this helps promote routine, a sense of belonging and also ensures we reduce the risk of isolation. When we feel low, it can be difficult to reach out and sometimes easier to disconnect. Work through this challenge as the benefit of talking far outweighs the negative impacts of isolating ourselves.

7. Be active and exercise

Activity and exercise are essential in maintaining good mental health. Being active not only gives you a sense of achievement, but it boosts the chemicals in your brain that help put you in a good mood. Exercising can help eliminate low mood, anxiety, stress and feeling tired and lazy. It is also linked to living a longer life. You don't need to run a marathon or play 90 minutes of football; a short walk or some other gentle activity will do the trick.



8. Do something you enjoy

Try to make time for doing the fun things you enjoy. If you like going for a walk, painting or a certain TV show, try to set aside time to enjoy yourself. If we don't spend any time doing things we enjoy, we can become irritable and unhappy.

9. Connect with others and be sociable

Try to maintain good relationships and talk to people whenever you get the chance. Having friends is important not just for your self-esteem, but also for providing support when you're not feeling great.



10. Do something for others

Helping others is not just good for the people you're helping; it's good for you too. Helping someone can help with your self-esteem and make you feel good about your place in the world. Feeling as though you are part of a community is an important part of your mental health because it promotes our sense of purpose and sense of belonging. You could try volunteering for a local charity, or just chatting to your neighbour.



Use these tips as a guide for whenever you're feeling a bit low. Check in with yourself. Check in with your family, friends and colleagues. Be the mental health champion in your network and promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

And Breakthrough is always here if you need other tips and resources to ensure your wellbeing.

Visit www.breakthroughfoundation.org.au and follow our social media channels.



BreakthroughMHR



www.breakthroughfoundation.org.au

