

Easy ways to improve your mental health through daily habits

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Mental health is as important as physical health. The pandemic has made us realise this. Daily habits can go a long way to improve mental health.

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With our life on a fast-track, today's modern times are leaving us in a constant state of stress and distress. While it tires one physically, the mental or emotional fatigue is also huge. Though our mental state was not a worrisome issue before, today it is rapidly becoming a topic of concern.

Before we go any further, let us briefly understand, what is mental health? Simply put, mental health is a "person's condition concerning their psychological and emotional well-being". It influences how we think, feel and react to situations, enabling us to bounce back particularly after a rough life situation. It gives us the fortitude to handle our daily challenges and stoic tenacity to maintain steady relationships.

Most of us struggle with mental health issues of varying degrees at some point or the other in our lives. While it is wise to seek professional counsel in an overwhelming situation, there are easy yet significant ways you can improve your mental health on your own.

Through this article, I shall recommend a few tips that can help you cope with your everyday stress. Let us begin with eight 'significant ways' that will help you combat everyday stress:

Get plenty of sleep – 'sleep well': Sleep is extremely important, as it helps the body to rest and the mind to reset. Hence, a good night's sleep leaves you in a happier mood the next day. If you are not getting enough snooze or if your sleep patterns are disturbed, you will be irritable and experience mood swings. This can also affect your physical health, resulting in other health issues. Lack of sleep will rob your skin of its shine so get your beauty sleep!

Eat a well-balanced diet and exercise: A balanced diet is necessary to be fit and fine. When you eat nutritious food, the digestive system responds well making you less anxious. Exercising is another must-have activity that will help you to maintain a stable mental state because movement releases emotion. When you work out, your body produces endorphins aka happy hormones, which help fight stress-causing hormones. So, physical activity keeps you strong-for-long, while preventing conditions like diabetes, heart diseases and various mental issues.

Limit your social media consumption and time with electronic devices: We live in a digital world and hence our preoccupation with electronic devices, be it mobile phones, laptops, video games, and so on has increased tremendously. Moreover, the pandemic has doubled this addiction, immersing us in digital devices either for leisure or for work.

This robs our minds of the essential 'down time'. Our brains are not designed to function continuously, and when we do this, it increases our restlessness.

Disconnect from being online constantly and instead spend time with your family.

Learn to filter information that reaches out through social media platforms. This will help you relax and calm your feelings of FOMO (fear of missing out).

Shake up the monotony: Routines give us a sense of structure by making us feel safe. While some routines are good, don't shun the power of 'change'. Shake the pace occasionally. For example, take a different route while going for a jog, try a different route while going to work, or simply move around things in the house or any such activity. Revel in it. This will break the monotony and perk your mood. It will give you a sense of achievement and boost your self-confidence.

Volunteer: The very thought of helping someone makes one feel positive and enriched. Consider volunteering either individually or in group activities. There are unlimited avenues of how you can help with your time and skill. It is a happiness booster.

Set realistic goals for yourself: Our aspirations in our lives are endless. This often leads us to achieve unrealistic life goals. The fact that you have a list that runs a mile will push you into scramble, ultimately leading to a burnout. This inevitably leads to frustration. To begin with, set realistic goals, only one or two at a time. List them in terms of personal and professional priorities.

Once you accomplish those, move on to more. Build your goals intrinsically just like you build your body's muscles, while training. As you begin to execute and complete these jobs, one by one, you will experience a sense of joy and accomplishment and happiness.

Practice gratitude and mindfulness: Remember, a grateful heart is a happy heart. Set aside some time each day to think about the positives in your life. Note them down and refer to them. Maintain a [gratitude](#) journal. Each morning when you wake up, write at least three things you feel grateful for and before going to bed, write down three things you feel thankful for.

Practice this regularly and you will begin to value the little things in life you once ignored. The sense of peace and happiness you will experience when you do this will shift your perspective towards positivity.

Seek professional help when and if you need it: If you feel that you are unable to handle a situation, seek professional counselling immediately. Therapists and coaches will not only help you identify the root cause of the issue, but help you chalk out a roadmap to overcome it. Remember seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

The last word

Life can throw many challenges in our way, but we need to build our inner resolve to overcome every test. We can do so only if we are physically and mentally fit. Being strong from within can also serve us to lead a rewarding life.

After all, as Lalah Delia rightly says, “self-care is how you take your power back.”



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