

## MENTAL HEALTH

Most people are aware of methods to stay physically healthy, but few are educated about what it means to stay mentally healthy. Mental and physical health are closely intertwined, and both should be priorities in our lives. Use the following tips to stay mentally well.



### TIP #1: TALK ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS

It is important not to keep your thoughts or feelings to yourself. Either identify a safe person to talk to or journal feelings and thoughts to release them.

### TIP #2: BUILD YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK

We all need emotional support and friendships in our lives. Make a habit of reaching out to family and friends. Ask for help when you need it. Remember most people like to help when they are asked.

## MENTAL WELLNESS

This brochure was designed with education in mind for ABE teachers and students to teach and learn strategies to improve mental health.

### TIP #3: SET BOUNDARIES

Reduce obligations in your life. Say “no” to a gathering or work project. Use time buying phrases to give yourself time to think about whether you want to do what is asked. Such as, “Let me check my schedule and get back to you”.

### TIP #4: TAKE A BREAK

We all need self-care to decompress and rejuvenate. Take short 10-minute breaks throughout your day, go for a walk, exercise, and do something you enjoy each day.

### TIP #5: QUIET YOUR MIND

We are constantly barraged by information 24/7. Quiet your mind by trying meditation, deep breathing, or turning off electronics for a few hours.



## **TIP #6: KEEP A GRATITUDE JOURNAL**

Write down three things you are grateful for each day. This simple task will remind you of all the good happening daily in your life.



## **TIP #7: FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL**

Put your energy into what you can control and let go of those things you cannot control. When we put energy into those things that are out of our control it increases anxiety and stress. Identify what you can control, and it can empower you and reduce stress in your life.

## **TIP #8: WRITE DOWN YOUR WORRIES**

For 10 minutes before going to sleep write down all your concerns and worries. This method helps release anxiety and improves sleep.



## **TIP #9: CHALLENGE YOUR THOUGHTS**

We often internally say things to ourselves that simply are not true. Write down your negative self-talk thoughts. Then ask yourself, what proof do I have that this is a true statement?



## **TIP #10: REDUCE TOXIC RELATIONSHIPS**

There are some people who give you energy and make you feel supported. And there are others who drain our energy. Consider limiting time with toxic people and spending more time with those who you enjoy.

### **ASK FOR HELP**

Reach out to a mental health professional. It is a strength, not a weakness to ask for help. If you had a broken arm, you would call the doctor. Mental health is just as important, even though you cannot see it.

Therapists are trained to listen, give you tools, and provide support. See PANDA's website to find low-cost mental health clinics at <https://pandamn.org/mentalhealth/resources-6/>