



## positively psyched

### Mental Health is Physical Health!

**Prioritize Self-Care:** Make self-care a priority. This includes getting enough sleep, eating nutritious meals, exercising regularly, and engaging in activities that you enjoy.

**Practice Mindfulness and Meditation:** Mindfulness and meditation can help reduce stress, anxiety, and depression. Spend a few minutes each day practicing mindfulness or meditation to calm your mind and increase self-awareness.

**Stay Connected:** Maintain strong relationships with friends and family members. Social support can help buffer against stress and improve overall mental well-being. We are 'hardwired' for connection, so get connecting!

**Set Realistic Goals:** Set achievable goals for yourself, both short-term and long-term. Break larger goals into smaller, manageable tasks to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Remember SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely).

**Limit Media Consumption:** Constant exposure to negative news and social media can contribute to feelings of anxiety and depression. Limit your media consumption, especially before bedtime and as you rise in the morning. When you are on your screens, attempt to focus on positive and uplifting content. Challenge yourself to a digital detox—your brain and body will thank you.

**Establish a Routine:** Establishing a daily routine can provide structure and stability, which is important for mental health. Try to wake up and go to bed at the same time each day and schedule regular meals, exercise, and relaxation time.

**Practice Gratitude:** Take time each day to reflect on the things you're grateful for. Keeping a gratitude journal can help shift your focus away from negative thoughts and cultivate a more positive outlook on life.

**Seek Professional Help:** If you're struggling with your mental health, don't hesitate to seek help from a mental health professional. Therapy, counseling, and/or medication can be effective treatments for various mental health conditions.

**Engage in Hobbies and Activities:** Engage in activities that bring you joy and fulfillment, whether it's painting, gardening, playing music, or hiking. Hobbies can provide a sense of purpose and distraction from negative thoughts.

**Practice Self-Compassion:** Be kind and compassionate toward yourself, especially during difficult times. Treat yourself with the same kindness and understanding that you would offer to a friend in need. Thank yourself for being yourself.

**Limit Stressors:** Identify sources of stress in your life and take steps to minimize or eliminate them whenever possible. This may involve setting boundaries, saying no to extra commitments, or seeking support from others. Increased cortisol levels (stress hormone) decreases overall mental and physical wellness. Seek balance.

**Get Outside:** Spending time outdoors and connecting with nature can have a positive impact on mental health. Take a walk in the park, go for a hike, or simply sit outside (without your device) and enjoy the fresh air. Engage in the physiological and psychological practice of *Shinrin-yoku* otherwise known as 'Forest Bathing'. This concept originated in Japan and is the process of utilizing mindfulness and relaxation in nature. Engage all 5 senses to focus on sensory engagement in nature while you consciously connect with natural elements.