



10 Tips for Improving the Mental Health of Older Adults

Maintaining mental wellness, enlisting the help of others when you need it and surrounding yourself with a supportive, healthy environment are essential in today's modern, on-the-go world. Spending time with family and loved ones, engaging in new activities and volunteering are just a few of the ways you can relieve stress and cope with everyday life. For even more ideas, read the list that follows.

- **Get plenty of rest** – Take frequent naps. Not only will they help calm your mind, but they can give you more energy. Make certain to devote a full seven to eight hours of sleep each night to sustain a proper balance of physical and mental health.
- **Go for a walk** – Regular exercise is an excellent way to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Enjoying a long walk at a moderate pace allows you to reflect on your day while getting the blood flowing. For an added spin, invite family members and friends to join you for an evening stroll. During bad weather, complete laps inside a local mall or community center.
- **Eat something new** - Whether it's tackling a new recipe or re-inventing a traditional one, cooking is a great way to eat well and have fun in the process. Invite family and friends to join you once a week for dinner and take turns preparing meals. Kick off special events with a potluck dinner or host an evening filled with international cuisine.
- **Exercise your mind** - Challenge yourself with a jigsaw puzzle, solve riddles or read a good book. Even better, involve others with these activities by reading aloud to kids or helping them with homework at a local library, school or daycare center.
- **Spend time with others** – Spending time with family and friends is important. Reach out to someone you haven't talked to a while and create new memories. Call on a friend or relative to join you as you run errands or complete routine, everyday activities. Doing things together is a great way to raise your spirits and engage those around you in your life.
- **Indulge yourself** – Sooth aching bones and wash away worrisome thoughts with a long bath or hot shower. Enjoy a healthy dessert, sip a cool glass of iced tea or juice when it's hot outside curl up under a blanket and relax when it's cold.
- **Stay in** – Don't feel obligated to do everything asked of you. It is okay to say no. To avoid feeling overwhelmed, opt to spend time with yourself once in a while. Watch a movie, paint a personal masterpiece or organize a prized collection of keepsakes.
- **Make the most of leisure time** - Make plans with family members, loved ones and/or a tour group to visit a place you've always wanted to go. Join a club, start a new hobby or learn a new skill such as gardening, bird watching or dancing. Whatever you choose to do, make sure it's something that you truly want to do!
- **Get involved** – Volunteering is a great way to give back. Knowing that you have helped someone else can help you to feel better about yourself. Plus, sharing your time with others is a great way to get out and meet new people, with common goals and interests.
- **Take things one at a time** – It's easy to get caught up in the desire to do and experience new things, but having too much on your plate can be counter-productive. Try making a list. If possible, break large tasks into smaller, more manageable items that can easily be finished.

Completing one thing at a time can lead to a greater sense of accomplishment and spur you to do even more!

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