



31 SIMPLE TIPS FOR MAY

Strategies for *Healthier* Mental Health

For each day of Mental Health Awareness Month, we offer simple practices you can engage in to impact your mental health and whole-body wellness. Remember that these tips are general suggestions, and it's essential to tailor them to your preferences and needs. Everyone is different, and you need to find strategies that work best for you.

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MAY 1

Get up, get out, and explore!

Take a walk or hike outside, visit local parks or gardens, grab your camera and check out your surroundings, attend a cultural event or festival, or be a tourist in your own town - anything involving movement, discovery, and adventure.

Today's Action:

Choose a destination and embrace the spirit of exploration.

MAY 2

Build your circle of support!

Spend time with friends, family, or even your pet, participate in activities to connect with others, and foster positive relationships to combat feelings of isolation. Your network of support can help you through the inevitable bad days that come along.

Today's Action:

Make a list of individuals in your life who you trust and feel comfortable turning to for support.

MAY 3

Focus on physical health!

Stay hydrated, prioritize restful sleep, reduce stress, and consume a balanced diet of nutrients to support physical and mental health.

Today's Action:

Pick one area you feel you need to work on and set a goal you want to achieve.

MAY 4

Practice mindfulness!

Focus on your breath, observe your surroundings, and engage in mindfulness exercises. Practice healthy coping skills and learn about your feelings and how to understand and manage them.

Today's Action:

Watch this short video to learn about a mindfulness strategy to utilize in your daily life!



MAY 5

Express gratitude!

Write thank you notes to people you know, track appreciation and achievement in a journal, or write a poem. Be sure to reflect on the positive aspects of your life regularly.

Today's Action:

Write down three things you are grateful for!

MAY 6

Maintain positivity!

Replace negative thoughts with positive affirmations to work on changing the narrative and prevent a spiral into a worst-case scenario thinking. Start your day by repeating phrases that reinforce self-worth and positivity.

Today's Action:

Repeat the phrase, "I am enough. My best is enough." to yourself throughout the day as you experience negative thoughts!

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MAY 7

Try something new!

Live curiously. Experiment. Shake up your routine. Take up a new hobby or learn a new skill. Get out of your comfort zone.

Today's Action:

Pick an activity you've never experienced and do it!

MAY 8

Take time to relax!

Find time each week to read a book, take a bubble bath, meditate, watch the stars or clouds, get a massage, spend time with your pets, or do other self-care rituals.

Today's Action:

This shouldn't be hard. Choose something relaxing to do and enjoy.

MAY 9

Set goals, milestones, or priorities for yourself!

Whether you're focusing on drinking more water or spending more time with loved ones, allow yourself to recognize the challenges you face. Break down large tasks into smaller, achievable tasks or goals and celebrate small victories along the way.

Today's Action:

When setting goals for yourself, make sure they are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. This focus will help you make steady progress toward your desired outcomes.

MAY 10

Laugh, smile, and have fun!

Find humor in everyday life and laugh and smile regularly. Engage in activities that bring joy, which can significantly impact your mood, mindset, and general health. Hang out with an amusing friend, watch a comedy show or movie, or check out funny videos or memes.

Today's Action:

Let loose, be silly, and engage in playful activities. Tell jokes, pull harmless pranks, and indulge in whimsical adventures to infuse your day with laughter and fun.

MAY 11

Be aware of alcohol consumption!

Alcohol is often associated with "having fun" in a social setting, but did you know that it is a depressant? Moderation, self-care, and mindfulness are critical components of a healthy relationship with alcohol. If you find that alcohol is negatively impacting your mental health or if you struggle to moderate your consumption, consider seeking support from a healthcare professional or a support group.

Today's Action:

Increase pro-social behavior by attending a gathering, going to a venue, or socializing without alcohol.

MAY 12

Set boundaries!

Clearly define your personal and professional boundaries to protect your time and energy. Recognizing your limits helps you avoid overload and burnout and find a balance between meeting the needs of others and taking care of yourself. And remember, you are allowed to say no even when you aren't busy.

Today's Action:

Identify an individual or situation where you must establish more precise boundaries. Communicate your boundaries assertively, directly, and respectfully, using "I" statements to express your needs.

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MAY 13

Create a morning routine!

Start your day motivated. Engage in simple exercises that give you time to take care of yourself. Drink a cup of tea or coffee, make a healthy breakfast, practice yoga, meditate, write in your journal, or take a walk.

Today's Action:

If you aren't clear about how to spend your morning routine, create a "not-to-do list" of things that don't add value to your mornings.

MAY 14

Be kind and help create a better world!

Hold the door open for someone, serve meals at a homeless shelter, or help a stranger in need. Doing something kind for someone else or helping others can provide a sense of purpose and fulfillment. Acts of kindness benefit both the giver and the receiver.

Today's Action:

Participate in 5 random acts of kindness today.

MAY 15

Treat yourself!

Engaging in pleasurable activities can stimulate happiness and well-being and help you feel rewarded. Indulge in a spa day, enjoy your favorite chocolate dessert, or buy yourself the small gift you've wanted.

Today's Action:

Pamper yourself with something YOU love or enjoy.

MAY 16

Commit to personal development!

Think about things you would like to work towards and identify what tools will help you. This type of growth can involve reading books, taking courses, attending workshops, seeking mentorship, or other educational opportunities.

Today's Action:

What personal development goal do you want to achieve? Once you have a clear goal, create a plan to get started.

MAY 17

Spend reflection time daily!

Moments of solitude can be a time for self-reflection, relaxation, and personal growth. List facts, not feelings, about any situation to help process appropriate next steps. Emotions can lead you to regret decisions later, so learning to focus on the facts can help.

Today's Action:

Ask yourself open-ended questions to guide your reflection time, such as: What were the highlights of my day? What challenges did I encounter, and how did I respond to them? What did I learn about myself today?

MAY 18

Practice forgiveness!

Holding grudges can harm your well-being. By letting go of anger, resentment, or hostility toward someone who has wronged you and embracing forgiveness, you can experience emotional healing and freedom. Don't only focus on forgiving others but also yourself.

Today's Action:

Write a forgiveness letter to someone whose words or actions have affected you emotionally. Once written, you can decide whether to send the letter or keep it to yourself.

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MAY 19

Move your body!

Physical activity can improve mood and reduce stress. Exercise has added mental health benefits, whether it's walking, running, yoga, or an organized sports activity. Dancing around the living room, taking a quick stretch break, tidying up your house. Whatever it is, get out of that chair and move around!

Today's Action:

Enlist the support of a workout buddy, fitness coach, or online community to help you stay motivated. A support system can provide encouragement, inspiration, and accountability on your fitness journey.

MAY 20

Make future plans!

Plan a staycation, arrange your next camping trip, schedule an upcoming social gathering for your work friends, or organize a fundraiser for the PTO. Focusing on events you can look forward to provides a sense of purpose, direction, and hope.

Today's Action:

Make a list of fun events, trips, or social activities to plan in the near or far future - big or small. A surprise birthday party for a friend, a special dinner party, or a trip or weekend getaway.

MAY 21

Ask for help when you need it!

If you're having trouble with a task at work, feeling stuck with a long to-do list, or need advice about your career, ask for help! You don't have to carry your stressors or burdens alone. Sometimes, we need to simply ask for words of support, help with a chore at home, or guidance at work to feel better.

Today's Action:

List trusted individuals or resources you can contact for help, such as friends, family members, neighbors, colleagues, or mentors.

MAY 22

Enjoy the sunshine!

Spend time outdoors and enjoy the benefits and beauty of nature. Whether it's a park, garden, hiking trail, or just your backyard, nature has a calming effect. Vitamin D is critical for mental health, as it promotes the release of chemicals in the brain that improve our mood - the best source of Vitamin D is the sun.

Today's Action:

Make the most of the sunny day (and don't forget the sunscreen). Even if the sun isn't out, you can engage in plenty of activities outside.

MAY 23

Plan ahead!

Consider meal prepping or packing lunches for the week ahead, picking out your clothes for work, or planning for extra drive time for events. Efficiently organizing your time by creating a schedule that balances work, tasks, relaxation, and social activities enables a sense of control that can help reduce stress. Maintaining a balance that allows for spontaneity is also essential.

Today's Action:

Find a planning tool that works for you - a physical planner, digital calendar, task management app, or a combination of tools. Find a system that suits your preferences and helps you effectively organize your tasks and commitments.

MAY 24

Live within your means!

Make the most of your money and work from a budget. Taking on unnecessary debts, overspending, and being miserly or hypervigilant all lead to stress in different ways.

Today's Action:

If you are unsure where to start, NPR's piece "[How to spend less money, starting with a budget](#)" can help you track your spending and make more informed money decisions.

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MAY 25

Unplug!

Disconnecting from emails, alerts, phones, and other interruptions can reduce stress and improve focus. Allow yourself short breaks during the day to relax and recharge by resting your eyes and mind.

Today's Action:

Set aside two hours to try a digital detox, disconnecting from all electronic devices. Engage in a meaningful activity, free from distractions.

MAY 26

Set time aside for things you love!

Whatever brings you joy, schedule time weekly to partake in that activity, such as cooking new recipes, creative writing, engaging in artistic pursuits, having a jam session, or playing pickleball.

Today's Action:

Schedule time for your chosen activities on your calendar. Treat this time as a non-negotiable appointment with yourself and prioritize it as you would any other commitment. Block off sufficient time to fully immerse yourself in the activity without feeling rushed or distracted.

MAY 27

Find an emotional outlet!

Find healthy ways to express your emotions and share your mental health journey - celebrating good things and processing the rough times. Talk to a friend or join a support group where you can share experiences and receive support. Start a journal or use art to express your thoughts and feelings.

Today's Action:

What will you choose? Start today.

MAY 28

Declutter!

Decluttering your physical space can positively impact your mental well-being. Take time to organize and simplify, tackling decluttering by breaking it into tiny steps.

Today's Action:

Start small with one 10-minute declutter project, such as a junk drawer or medicine cabinet. You'll be able to finish it quickly and feel accomplished.

MAY 29

Practice self-compassion!

Be kind to yourself and avoid self-criticism. Maintain a balanced and supportive relationship with yourself, encouraging kindness, understanding, and patience. Realize that you are human and it's okay to make mistakes.

Today's Action:

Try "Self-Compassion Journaling," writing about your experiences, emotions, and thoughts, particularly those that involve self-criticism or self-judgment. Practice responding to these experiences with self-compassion, using kind and understanding language toward yourself.

MAY 30

Stimulate your senses!

Incorporating activities that stimulate your senses can help you stay grounded and reduce anxiety. Experiment with different activities and find what works best for you. Snuggle with a cozy blanket, sit silently, savor the flavors in your favorite meal, cuddle up with animals, or use essential oils.

Today's Action:

Identify and plan activities that stimulate each of your senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.

MAY 31



It's OK not to be OK.

Know when it's time to seek professional help.

If you are facing persistent mental health challenges, these daily practices are consistently unhelpful, or you have trouble living your daily life, it is essential to consult a mental health professional. Signs that it may be time to reach out for help include persistent symptoms, difficulty coping, negative impact on functioning, thoughts of self-harm or suicide, substance use, strain on relationships, physical symptoms, and lack of improvement.

Today's Action:

Remember that CMMHC's crisis line is always available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year - anytime you need us.

We are here to help you through difficult times.

Call 320.253.5555 or 800.635.8008.

**When we prioritize our mental health,
we lay a solid foundation for whole-body wellness.**

