

WAYS TO BUILD RESILIENCE AND IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH.

Depression occurs as often as cardiovascular disease and anxiety disorders occur as often as diabetes. Think about how often you talk about these medical conditions, but not about your mental health.

Try these simple lifestyle changes to strengthen your resilience and mental health:

- Exercise regularly, eat healthy meals and get adequate sleep
- Spend time with friends and loved ones
- Talk about your feelings
- Develop new skills
- Relax and enjoy your hobbies
- Focus on the positive things in your life
- Express gratitude
- Talk to your doctor or a health professional



THE ROLE OF SLEEP IN EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Research suggests that for every hour of sleep you miss at night, there is a **14% increase in risk of unpleasant emotions** or feelings that effect day to day function.

Further studies have also uncovered that individuals with a history of insomnia are four times as likely to **develop major depression**.

Are you getting enough sleep each night?

Try these sleep tips to help ensure a good nights sleep:

- Switch off blue light emitting devices such as cell phones, tablets and laptops at least an hour before your go to bed.
- Go to to bed at the same time and wake up at the same time. This includes weekends. Your body follows a circadian rhythm and which on consistency.
- Keep your room cool, around 20°C. Your brain and body need to drop their core temperature by about two or three degrees Celsius for good sleep.
- Avoid alcohol before bedtime. Alcohol is a sedative that just knocks your brain out instead of putting it into natural sleep.



EXERCISE CAN BOOST YOUR MOOD.



Just 30 minutes of exercise each day can **reduce your risk of depression and anxiety by up to 30%**.

Everyone knows exercise is good for your health, but new studies show it physically alters your brain to feel happier.

When you are really stressed, pretty much any kind of exercise can do you some good. Following any exercise your body releases endorphins into the brain which improves your mood and makes you feel better.

It also helps you sleep, which is important to help you stay resilient against stress.

Aim for 20 minutes each day. Walk, skip, jog or dance up a storm. It all adds up to better mental health.



WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE? HEALTHY GUT. HEALTHY MIND.

- **A high intake of raw fruit and vegetables is linked to reduced depressive symptoms and a more positive mood.** Each morning grab two pieces of fruit to eat while commuting or enjoy as a snack during the day.
- **Skip the refined sugars. A high intake has been shown to impact an area of the brain important for mood regulation.** Aim for unprocessed food options to avoid added sugars.
- **Fermented foods contain probiotics and research shows that probiotic-rich diets help to reduce stress and help memory.** Fermented foods include yoghurt with active cultures, kefir, tempeh and sauerkraut.



HOW DOES YOUR PLATE STACK UP?

For each main meal, divide your plate into the sections as shown in this diagram. This healthy plate provides the best balance of grains, proteins, vegetables, fruit and fats to maintain a healthy body and mind.

