

Your Emotional Health

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Taking control of your emotional health involves being proactive when you are concerned about your thoughts or feelings and physical well-being. When ignored, mental health problems like depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders, eating disorders and addiction can make it hard to do well or feel good. The good news is that these problems are treatable and getting help is the first step towards feeling better and moving forward.

Learn the Signs & Symptoms:

Here are some common signs that a friend needs help dealing with emotional issues:

- Depression or apathy that interferes with obligations or participating in social activities.
- Lack of coping skills around day to day problems or extreme reactions to certain situations.
- Extreme highs, referred to as mania, that may include rushed thoughts, bursts of energy, sleeplessness and compulsive behavior (like excessive spending or promiscuous sexual behavior).
- Severe anxiety or stress
- Constant feelings of sadness or hopelessness.
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs.

Learn About Getting Help:

The key to taking control of your emotional health is to put yourself first. Listen to your body and understand its needs. Make sure to

get plenty of sleep. Stay active. Be sure to eat a healthy, balanced diet. Care for others, volunteer. Take a break, a change of scene, a change of pace. Avoid stressful situations whenever possible. Know your limits when it comes to use of tobacco, drugs and alcohol.

Above all else, speak up and get things checked out if you are concerned about your thoughts, feelings or behavior; you are overwhelmed. It is important reach out to someone you trust. Let others help you.

Learn How to Help a Friend:

Are you worried that a friend or loved one needs help managing their emotional health? You may see warning signs that they cannot or do not want to recognize. Maybe you have noticed that their behavior or appearance has changed, or that they are acting uncharacteristically irritable or tense. Maybe they often complain about feeling overwhelmed by everything they have to do. Do not assume that the problem will go away on its own.

How you respond to a friend that is showing signs of emotional distress is often dependent on your relationship with that person. If you have a long history and friendship with the person, you may be a key resource for support and feel comfortable having a discussion with your friend about how they are feeling. If the person struggling is a more recent acquaintance, your role may involve letting someone else know about the problem. Regardless, it is important to remember that it is not your job to provide treatment. Your role is to be supportive and encourage them to reach out to family, other people whose advise they value, a counselor or another medical professional as a first step even if you do not fully understand the problem.

Quotes of the month:

"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself, any direction you choose"
~Dr. Seuss

We are on  



Suggested Readings:

The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom
By Don Miguel Ruiz

It's My Life! A Workout for Your Mind
By Tian Dayton, Ph.D.

