

7 Ways to
Support Your

MENTAL HEALTH

NATURALLY

Mental Health is More Than
Just Thoughts and Feelings



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Dr. Whitney Mathison, PhD, LPC-S, NCC

Introduction

Mental health is more than just thoughts and feelings; it is deeply connected to how we treat our bodies. This guide offers seven simple and powerful lifestyle habits and tools scientifically proven to support better mood, cognition, and emotional balance.



What is Mental Health?

Mental health is an individual's social, psychological, and emotional well-being. It influences how people cope with stress, build relationships, make decisions, and contribute to overall well-being (World Health Organization [WHO], 2004).

**ANXIETY AND
DEPRESSION RATES
HAVE INCREASED OVER**

25%

Why Natural Mental Health Strategies Matter

- Rates of anxiety and depression have increased by over 25% globally since 2020 (WHO, 2022).
- Lifestyle-oriented mental health care offers sustainable solutions.
- Physical and mental health are interdependent.
- Natural strategies support coping with everyday stressors.

WAY 1: Prioritize Quality Sleep

Adults need 7–9 hours of sleep each night (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2022). Sleep deprivation is linked to increased anxiety, low mood, and poor cognitive performance. Sleep supports emotional regulation and mental clarity. Sleep can also improve memory.

Tips:

- Establish a consistent bedtime routine.
- Practice good sleep hygiene.
- Limit screen time before bed.

Reference: Walker (2008)



WAY 2: Harness the Power of Physical Activity

Engaging in 30 minutes of daily physical activity can reduce depression risk by up to 25% (Mikkelsen et al., 2017). Exercise improves sleep, boosts serotonin and endorphins, and enhances cognitive function.

Ideas to Try:

- Brisk walking
- Yoga
- Group fitness classes
- Outdoor activities

Reference: Mikkelsen et al. (2017)



WAY 3: Nourish Your Mind With Whole Foods and Protein

The Mediterranean diet is linked to a 35% lower risk of depression (Sánchez-Villegas et al., 2009). Protein contributes to amino acid production, which supports neurotransmitters such as serotonin and dopamine.

Nutrition Tips

- Include leafy greens, omega-3s, and probiotic-rich foods.
- Choose lean meats, beans, tofu, eggs, and Greek yogurt.

Reference: Fernstrom (2013)



WAY 4: Practice Mindfulness and Meditation

Mindfulness has been shown to reduce stress by 33% (Goyal et al., 2014). It enhances self-awareness, emotional regulation, and focus.

Simple Practices:

- Start with 5 minutes of daily breathing exercises.
- Use mindfulness apps or guided meditation.

Reference: Goyal et al. (2014)



WAY 5: Build Strong Social Connections and Process Emotions

Loneliness increases the risk of early mortality by 26% (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015). Talking with others supports emotional processing and reduces amygdala reactivity.

Tips for Connection:

- Join community groups, classes, or spiritual centers.
- Engage in regular conversations with trusted people.

Reference: Lieberman et al. (2007)



WAY 6: Hydrate with H²O

Mild dehydration can impair mood, memory, and attention. Water supports brain function and clears mental fog (Pross et al., 2014).

Tip:

- Drink 6-8 cups of water daily, or more during activity or heat.

Reference: Pross et al. (2014)



WAY 7: Talk to a Licensed Therapist

Therapists help individuals uncover barriers to success, build action plans, and offer unbiased support. Many successful people attribute their accomplishments to working with a counselor.

Why it Helps:

- Enhances self-understanding
- Encourages goal-setting and resilience
- Provides emotional validation

Reference: American Psychological Association (2020)



REVIEW Seven Daily Practices

1. **Hydrate**
2. **Prioritize sleep**
3. **Get moving**
4. **Process emotions and build social connections**
5. **Eat protein with every meal**
6. **Talk to someone you trust or a therapist**
7. **Practice mindfulness and meditation**

Overcoming Common Barriers

- **Time:** Stack new habits with existing routines.
- **Motivation:** Set small, attainable goals.
- **Accessibility:** Seek community or online resources.

**Start
Here**

Action Plan & Resources for Lasting Change

- ☐ Drink 6–8 cups of water
- ☐ Sleep 7–9 hours
- ☐ Move for 30 minutes
- ☐ Eat protein-rich meals
- ☐ Practice 5 minutes of mindfulness
- ☐ Connect or talk with someone
- ☐ Review progress weekly

Recommended Books:

- Tawaab, N. G. (2021). *Set Boundaries, Find Peace: A Guide to Reclaiming Yourself*. TarcherPerigee.
- Mellody, P. , Wells Miller, A., & Miller, J. K. (2003). *Facing Codependence: What It Is, Where It Comes from, How It Sabotages Our Lives*. HarperOne.

Conclusion

Daily choices impact your mental health. Small, natural actions can create significant positive changes. You deserve the energy, peace, and clarity that natural habits can help you build.

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RESOURCES

BE GOOD?

NEED SUPPORT?

Free Individual Counseling for Residents of the City of Dallas

Get connected with a counselor today!

HARMONYCDC.ORG/COUNSELING



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