



## What is good mental health?

Good mental health is characterised by a person's ability to fulfil a number of key functions and activities, including:

- the ability to learn
- the ability to feel, express and manage a range of positive and negative emotions
- the ability to form and maintain good relationships with others
- the ability to cope with and manage change and uncertainty.

Mental health refers to your overall psychological well-being. It encompasses the way you feel about yourself, the quality of your relationships, and your ability to manage your feelings and deal with difficulties.

Strong mental health isn't just the absence of mental health problems. Being mentally or emotionally healthy is much more than being free of depression, anxiety, or other psychological issues. Rather than the absence of mental illness, mental health refers to the presence of positive characteristics.

People who are mentally healthy have:

- A sense of contentment
- A zest for living and the ability to laugh and have fun.
- The ability to deal with stress and bounce back from adversity.
- A sense of meaning and purpose, in both their activities and their relationships.
- The flexibility to learn new skills and adapt to change.
- A balance between work and play, rest and activity, etc.
- The ability to build and maintain fulfilling relationships.
- Self-confidence and high self-esteem.
- These positive characteristics of mental and emotional health allow you to participate in life to the fullest extent possible through productive, meaningful activities and strong relationships. These positive characteristics also help you cope when faced with life's challenges and stresses.

Having solid mental health doesn't mean that you never go through bad times or experience emotional problems. We all go through disappointments, loss, and change, and while these are normal parts of life, they can still cause sadness, anxiety, and stress. Just as physically healthy people are better able to bounce back from illness or injury, people with strong mental health are better able to bounce back from adversity, trauma, and stress. This ability is called resilience.

People who are emotionally and mentally resilient have the tools for coping with difficult situations and maintaining a positive outlook. They remain focused, flexible, and productive, in bad times as well as good. Their resilience also makes them less afraid of new experiences or an uncertain future. Even when they don't immediately know how a problem will get resolved, they are hopeful that a solution will eventually be found.

Good mental health doesn't just mean you don't have a mental illness. It means you are in a state of wellbeing where you feel good and function well in the world.

According to the World Health Organization, good mental health is when you can:

- cope with the normal stresses of life
- work productively
- realise your potential
- contribute to the community
- If you have good mental health, you feel good. You might have emotions including happiness, love, joy or compassion, and you feel generally satisfied with life.

You are also likely to feel like you belong to a community and are making a contribution to society.

15 ways to promote and support good mental health:

- Make sure you get enough sleep
- Eat healthy food and drink healthy drinks
- Learn how to relax and switch off
- Connect with friends and family
- Learn new things every day
- Helps others whenever you can
- Exercise each day
- Talk about your feelings
- Be mindful and take notice what is happening around you
- Be thankful for all the things you have
- Set goals for yourself and embrace your wishes and dreams
- Challenge any negative thoughts
- Learning how to smile more!
- Ask for help if you have a problem
- Have fun and laugh!