

## It's one thing to look after your body, just don't forget about your mind

**Practicing mind + body fitness** centres on a healthy mind, body and spirit. It's a positive, pro-active enjoyable way to equip ourselves for the many and varied challenges that each day can bring.

We have all come to realize the power of regular physical activity to enhance our sense of general well-being. What if we devoted the same attention and energy to nourishing our mental health? Our society has come to recognize that a state of good health includes both physical and emotional health. Both are essential for a well-balanced life. And yet, the awareness that surrounds physical fitness is by no means matched by recognition of the need to support and develop our mental fitness.

### Here are some Mental Fitness Steps

**Step 1:** Think about your emotional well-being. Assess your emotional health regularly. Consider the particular demands or stresses you are facing and how they are affecting you.

**Step 2:** Give yourself permission to take a break from your worries and concerns. Recognize that dedicating even a short time every day to your mental fitness will reap significant benefits in terms of feeling rejuvenated and more confident.

Here are some simple ways to practice mental fitness:

**"Collect" positive emotional moments** – Make it a point to recall times when you have experienced pleasure, comfort, tenderness, confidence, or other positive emotions.

**Learn ways to cope with negative thoughts** – Negative thoughts can be insistent and loud. Learn to interrupt them. Don't try to block them (that never works), but don't let them take over. Try distracting yourself or comforting yourself, if you can't solve the problem right away.

**Do one thing at a time** – For example, when you are out for a walk or spending time with friends, turn off your cell phone and stop making that mental "to do" list. Take in all the sights, sounds and smells you encounter.

**Exercise** – Regular physical activity improves psychological well-being and can reduce depression and anxiety. Joining an exercise group or a gym can also reduce loneliness, since it connects you with a new set of people sharing a common goal.

**Set personal goals** – Goals don't have to be ambitious. You might decide to finish that book you started three years ago; to take a walk around the block every day; to learn to knit or play bridge; to call your friends instead of waiting for the phone to ring. Whatever goal you set, reaching it will build confidence and a sense of satisfaction.

**Share humour** – Life often gets too serious, so when you hear or see something that makes you smile or laugh, share it with someone you know. A little humour can go a long way to keeping us mentally fit!

**Treat yourself well** – Cook yourself a good meal. Have a bubble bath. See a movie. Call a friend or relative you haven't talked to in ages. Sit on a park bench and breathe in the fragrance of flowers and grass. Whatever it is, do it just for you.

## Did you know?

Mental illness doesn't discriminate, but people with mental illness may face discrimination due to stigma, a form of negative stereotyping.

Even though mental illness affects one in five Canadians at some point in their lives and may affect every one of us through friends and loved ones – stigma persists. Embarrassment about having depression, for example, often keeps people from seeking treatment for a very treatable illness.

## Alzheimer Society

ONTARIO



ontario cervical  
screening program  
a cancer care ontario program



ontario breast  
screening program  
a cancer care ontario program



Sécuri  
JEUNES  
CANADA



Osteoporosis Canada

Ostéoporose Canada



CANADIAN MENTAL  
HEALTH ASSOCIATION  
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE  
POUR LA SANTÉ MENTALE



CANADIAN PARTNERSHIP FOR  
CONSUMER FOOD SAFETY EDUCATION  
PARTENARIAT CANADIEN POUR  
LA SALUBRITÉ DES ALIMENTS



The Arthritis  
Society

nedic



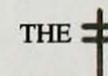
CANADIAN  
DIABETES  
ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION  
CANADIENNE  
DU DIABÈTE

NOCA



National Ovarian  
Cancer Association



THE LUNG ASSOCIATION™

When you can't breathe, nothing else matters.

Thank You