

## HEALTHY LIFESTYLE ACTIONS TO

# SUPPORT MENTAL WELLNESS

### What is Mental Wellness?

Mental Wellness is about finding balance with your mental, social, physical, and spiritual well-being. One way to support wellness is to nurture yourself. Life can throw a lot at us, and finding strategies to support the way you feel, think, and react to stressors is key. Creating supports and strategies for mental wellness not only impacts the individual, but families, communities, and society as a whole. We must not talk about wellness without acknowledging the broader social factors that impact many Indigenous people's wellness. Longstanding harms of colonization have devastating impacts on individuals, families, and communities. I-SPARC is committed to providing supports, events, and building relationships to create community supports for wellness.

### How can I build up and support my Mental Wellness?

While many causes are out of our control, we can focus on building mental wellness in three key areas - Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Physical Activity, and Social Support.



There are many parts of our society that affect our health and lives that are beyond an individual's level of control. We want to acknowledge the social, political, economic, and environmental impacts to the health of the lands, waters, and forests, which in turn affects our health. We want you to know we are here to support you with your wellness goals and will meet you wherever you are at in your wellness journey.



## NURTURE YOUR SPIRIT

Make time to do activities that make you feel connected, whether it be to the land, your family, ancestors, or Creator. This could be getting out on the land, waters, drumming, dancing, or spending time with family or friends.



## IDENTIFY STRESS & COPING STRATEGIES

Identify stressors - can you eliminate or minimize it? Some stress is beyond an individual's level of control. It can help to break down potential solutions into small, manageable steps. Watch your coping strategies that may not reduce stress. Limit alcohol, drugs, and caffeine which can reduce coping skills and affect sleep.



## CONNECTION

Make connections. Connect with someone who makes you laugh. Connect with an Elder, traditional knowledge and medicine keeper, or herbalist to learn about plants that can support your journey in boosting your mental wellness like lavender, mint, rose, chamomile, sage, sweetgrass, and water.\*



## MINDFULNESS

Mindset is important - embrace positivity, practice gratitude through prayer or journaling as well as mindfulness exercises. Be mindful of overextending yourself. It is ok to set boundaries and say no!



## SEEK SUPPORT

Who can you reach out to? A friend, an Elder, a family member, or a wellness health professional - you are never alone!



## CULTURAL PRACTICES FOR MENTAL WELLNESS

Our nations and communities have culturally relevant practices for mental health. Engage in ceremony and other healing practices and protocols that are relevant to your community.



## SCHEDULE TIME FOR YOURSELF

Schedule time to relax, time for self-care, and time for activities that you love (taking a bath, art, reading, beading, writing, etc.)



## PRIORITIZE SLEEP

Try researching sleep hygiene and create a nighttime routine that works for you.



## MOVE YOUR BODY

Physical activity boosts your mood! Find ways that you enjoy and start small - even 10 minutes a day! Go for a short walk at lunch, try chair exercises or a short home exercise video.

*\*Consult with a medical professional to ensure there are no contraindications with medicine you are currently taking.*

## Where you can find more information and support



If in crisis, call: KUU-US Crisis Line at 1-800-588-8717 or 1-833-METISBC for culturally safe help 24 hrs/day.



Learn about mental wellness: <https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-illness-and-addiction-index>  
<https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-COVID-19-Mental-Health-and-Cultural-Supports.pdf>  
<https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/traditional-healing>



Call FNHA Benefits: 1-955-550-5454 or your benefits provider. Find a therapist here <https://bc-counsellors.org/> or <https://healingincolour.com/directory>