Caring for our Mental Health

- Psychologist -

1 Eat and sleep well

Just like the rest of your body, your brain needs a mix of nutrients to function and stay healthy. Eat **balanced and nutritious meals**, **drink enough water**, and remember to get **sufficient sleep** daily.

2 Exercise and keep active

Physical exercise has the power to reduce stress, improve mood, and boost mental alertness. Go for walks in the park or engage in other moderate exercises on a regular basis. **Go at your own pace!**

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3 Avoid alcohol and smoking

Alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs may provide temporary relief, but have been found to result in worsened mood and poorer mental functioning over time.

4 Do things you enjoy

Try to **make time to do things that are pleasurable to you.** It may be painting, playing a musical instrument, reading, gardening, hiking... anything! Engaging in a hobby can help channel your attention and boost your mood.

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5 Interact with others

If **interacting** face to face isn't possible, you can arrange to **give friends or family a call, drop them a note, or chat to them online**. This keeps a line of communication and social support open.

6 Care for others

Volunteering or helping a friend or family member can help redirect the focus away from yourself. Doing good can also make you feel good and contribute to a stronger sense of community!

- Psychologist -

7 Talk about your feelings

Talking about your feelings to trusted individuals can enable you to cope with a problem you've been carrying around for a while. Being heard and understood allows you to feel more supported in your difficulties.
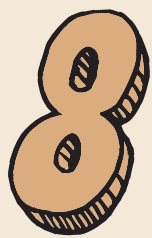
8 Take a break / Learn to manage stress

While stress cannot be avoided in life, we can certainly learn to manage it. Imagine building a '**toolkit' of skills such as taking timed breaks, deep breathing, and other relaxation techniques.**
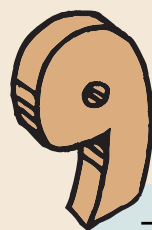
9 Ask for help

HELP

The first step to getting better is **recognising when you're not feeling good**. We all get overwhelmed sometimes, and seeking help is an important part of taking care of ourselves.

- Psychologist -