Western Cape Government
Education
FOR YOU

10 ways to look after your mental health

Taking care of your mental health is an important part of staying healthy and ready for anything. Here are ten things you can do to improve your mental wellbeing.

1. **Get plenty of sleep**
Research shows that sleep deprivation increases anxiety, depression, and overall distress, so it's important to establish a good sleep routine.

2. **Eat well**
Certain mineral deficiencies, such as iron and vitamin B12, can contribute to low mood. Try to eat a balanced diet and, if you experience anxiety, try limiting or cutting out caffeine.

3. **Reduce alcohol**
Drinking too much may lead to depression and anxiety and in some instances, a thiamine deficiency, which can lead to severe memory problems and confusion.

4. **Get plenty of sunlight**
Sunlight is a great source of vitamin D, which research shows may help our brains to release mood-boosting chemicals like endorphins and serotonin.

5. **Manage stress**
Stress is often unavoidable, but knowing what triggers it and how to cope is key to maintaining good mental health.

6. **Activity and exercise**
Being active gives you a sense of achievement and boosts the chemicals in your brain that contribute to good mood. Exercising can help to eliminate low mood, anxiety and stress.

7. **Do something you enjoy**
Try to make time for doing the things you enjoy, like walking, painting and listening to music.

8. **Connect with others**
Make an effort to maintain good relationships. Having friends is important not just for your self-esteem, but for providing support when you're not feeling great.

9. **Do things for others**
Acts of kindness can boost your self-esteem and make you feel good about your place in the world.

10. **Ask for help**
One of the most important ways to keep yourself mentally healthy is to recognise when you're not feeling good, and to know when to ask for help. There's no shame in asking someone for support if you're feeling low, worried, or stressed. Everyone goes through difficult periods.

Speak to your friends or family or, if you think your mental health is getting on top of you, make an appointment with your doctor, or reach out to Lyra Wellbeing for help.

Toll-free: **0800 111 011**
Request a call back: ***134*905#**
Get in touch online: **http://app.lyrawellbeing.health/**
Your departmental code: **WES007**

lyra wellbeing