Boosting Your Mental Health

Good mental health is just as important as good physical health. Whatever happens in your life, make your mental health a priority. You'll feel good and deal with stress better.

These ideas can keep your spirits up:
- **Stay in touch with family and friends.** Maintaining relationships is good for your mental wellbeing. Call and visit your children or grandchildren. If you don't have family or friends nearby, join a local church or synagogue, or a community organization.
- **Give yourself time to adjust to big life changes.** This includes not only obvious negative events, like the death of your spouse or a friend, but also positive events like moving or retiring. These can be accompanied by a sense of loss. Grieving any loss is natural and necessary.
- **Keep busy with mentally stimulating activities.** Consider volunteering or taking a class. Explore new interests like learning another language.
- **Consider getting a pet.** A pet can be a wonderful companion. Pet owners get more exercise and have more social contact than those without a pet.
- **Exercise.** Take a walk or ride a bike. Exercise improves how you feel mentally, as well as physically.
- **Get enough sleep.** Lack of sleep can contribute to depression. Try to get as much sleep as you need. Although we often say that a person needs about eight hours of sleep per night, this is only an average number. Some people find they need more. It's important that you find out for yourself how many hours you need for restful and restorative sleep.
- **Practice optimism and good humor.** A positive attitude and laughter boost your mood. Spend time with people who make you laugh.

Keep this list handy and add ideas of your own. It's worth putting good mental health on the top of your "to do" list every day.

For more information about boosting your mental health, contact your Work/Life Services.

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