

GAME CHANGERS

for mental health

Self-care information

What is self-care?

Self-care means taking time to do things that you enjoy or that make you feel better. It can include activities you normally do and new things you are trying.

Self-care activities may add meaning to your health while also supporting your life. They can also help reduce the effects of negative stress on your life.



Self-care strategies

Here are some examples of self-care activities you might be already doing or may want to try. You can add these, or you own ideas, to create your personal self-care plan.

HEALTHY SLEEP

Try to get seven to nine hours of sleep each night. If you are finding this hard, try avoiding caffeine later in the day, creating a bedtime routine, and using a blue light filter on your screens an hour or two before bed.

HEALTHY EATING

Try not to skip meals. Try to eat lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, and limit less healthy foods to three servings per week if you can. Try to drink up to eight glasses of water a day. Adapt foods to your own culture and to what is locally available.

PHYSICAL FITNESS

Try to do some regular exercise that gets your heart pumping. You could go for a fast walk or a bike ride. Or you could try joining a gym, or working out at home using an exercise app.

WATCH YOUR TECHNOLOGY USE

Try to be aware of the time you spend on technology. Think about which kinds of technology use make you feel better and are part of your self-care, and which might be working against it. The amount of time you spend using technology can also have an effect. If you feel overwhelmed by technology or social media, try taking a break from it to see if that is helpful.

RELAXATION

Try to take time each day to intentionally relax. Experiment with different relaxation techniques to see what works best for you. Relaxing can be as simple as enjoying a calm walk. Slow, deep breaths can also help relaxation. Or you might try progressive muscle relaxation: in turn, hold different muscles as tight as possible, and as you relax them picture your tension disappearing. YouTube and many apps can help you with relaxation, meditation, or mindfulness.

JOURNALING

Sometimes writing things down can help get them out of your head. Try taking five minutes to think and write about the events of your day. For example, you could list three things from each day that you are thankful for, or personal strengths that you drew upon today.



TIME MANAGEMENT

Try to develop an organized approach to your schedule. Taking a few minutes to plan out your day or make a to-do list can remove uncertainty, and allows you to focus on getting tasks completed.

FUN ACTIVITIES

Try taking time to do more activities that you enjoy. The choice is yours, but it could include things like seeing a movie with a friend, reading a book, baking something you like to eat, or listening to music.

CONNECTING

Try to spend time with family, friends or other support networks. Focus on the positive relationships in your life. You can also try connecting to things that give you support, meaning, and enjoyment. Participate in different cultural activities or prayer, if this is something that is helpful for your happiness and health.

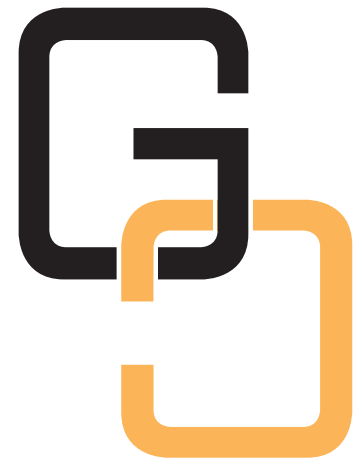
TALKING ABOUT IT

Try talking to other people about things that might be bothering you. If there is no one you are comfortable sharing things with, you could try talking to a therapist (available through many different agencies). It may take time to feel open to doing this, so another option is to use anonymous phone support services.



For mental health resources and more, see the resource section of the Game Changers website at

www.camh.ca/gamechangers/game-changers-resources.



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FOUNDATION

Game Changers is a partnership between CAMH and HBC Foundation.

Visit www.camh.ca/gamechangers.

CAMH provides other services for mental health and substance use concerns.

For more information, visit www.camh.ca or call 416 535-8501 (or 1 800 463-6273).