

World Mental Health Day: October 10

World Mental Health Day is observed every October 10 in an effort to raise awareness of mental health issues and to mobilize support for those in need. The day provides an opportunity for all stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work and what needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide.

Take Care of Yourself

World Mental Health Day also serves to remind us not to take our own mental health for granted. According to the National Mental Health Association, mental illness is more common than cancer and lung and heart disease combined. People suffering from stress, anxiety or depression not only suffer from lower quality of life, they also are at higher risk for developing health problems such as diabetes or heart disease.

Watch for these common warning signs of depression:

- › Continual sadness or anxiety
- › Loss of interest in activities
- › Fatigue
- › Sleep problems
- › Feelings of hopelessness
- › Difficulty making decisions

Seek professional assistance when these problems last two weeks or more. Your Employee Assistance Program can help with free, confidential counseling from trained professionals.

To sustain and increase your own mental health, use these daily suggestions from the NMHA:

- › **Relax.** Spend time with loved ones or alone. Relaxing can help you open your mind and restore your energy.
- › **Plan.** Scheduling out the week's activities lowers stress and helps you stay on track throughout the week.
- › **Find support.** Supportive people, whether friends, family or members of a group, can help you reconnect with memories and create new ones.
- › **Be physically healthy.** Diet, exercise and rest all help to keep your mind healthy.
- › **Help others.** Volunteering and assisting others makes you feel good about yourself and about the act of giving back.
- › **Expand your interests.** New hobbies, new places and new experiences all help to keep you mentally alert while stimulating your mind.
- › **Enjoy yourself.** Take pride in your accomplishments and reflect on how good it feels to be happy with yourself.

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