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# MIND YOUR MENTAL

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*A Selfcare Guide for  
College Students*



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**MAWF**  
MIND AND WELLNESS  
FOUNDATION

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW .....

03

RECOGNIZING MENTAL  
HEALTH CHANGES .....

04

SPEAK UP & REACH OUT .....

05

PRACTICING SELF-CARE .....

06

MOVE YOUR BODY,  
MOVE YOUR MIND! .....

07

WAYS TO RELEASE .....

08

GETTING INVOLVED .....

09



# OVERVIEW

Welcome! Throughout this article, you can find some useful tips to incorporate into your routine to cope with the stressors of life. This will include important topics including recognizing changes in your mental health, articulating your thoughts and emotions to trusted individuals, extending grace to yourself by practicing self-care, etc. Not only does this apply to college students, but this information can also be helpful to those of all ages and backgrounds.



# RECOGNIZING MENTAL HEALTH CHANGES

When your mental health begins to take decline, you may or may not notice changes in your behavior or habits. Here are a few signs to watch for not only within yourself but within your loved ones as well.

**Isolation-** Isolation is a common behavioral change that occurs when we may not be feeling like ourselves, feeling overwhelmed, or are going through a tough time whether it's personal, financial, or academic. It's okay to not be okay and to take some time to rest, but making it a habit is where it can become unhealthy. At the end of the day, we're humans and humans need that interaction with others.

**Changes In Appetite-** As a recent college graduate myself, I understand the struggle of balancing coursework on top of extracurriculars you may be involved in. If you're experiencing changes in your mental health, it can be easy to not eat on a regular basis. I'm not implying that you have to prepare a three-course meal every day, but it's important to still make sure you're eating at least a couple times a day

## SPEAK UP & REACH OUT

We want you to understand that it's okay to not be okay. No one on earth is happy all the time because we all go through phases where we're struggling, but it's so important to reach out to trusted individuals who can help you or point you in the right direction.

### **Seeking Mental Health Services on your Campus**

Typically, every university offers mental health services to their students whether it's counseling, sexual assault hotlines, etc. They are there to help you, so if you find yourself in need of these services, don't be afraid to seek out their information.

### **Support Groups/Confiding in Those You Trust-**

Support groups are another helpful avenue to consider when you notice changes in your mental health. This could be an online space, a niche club on campus, or just talking to friends who can provide wisdom or maybe have been in a similar situation. It's extremely comforting knowing that you're not alone and people can relate to you.

There are so many of those who care about you and are more than willing to help you if you need it.



# PRACTICING SELF-CARE



As mentioned previously, it can be difficult to find the time or energy to care for yourself during hard times. However, it is still important that you continue to show up for yourself and practice self-care on a regular basis. Self-care is the best way for us to come back to ourselves and do what we love to do.

Page Forward →

## MORE... PRACTICING SELF-CARE

**Maintain Good Hygiene-** We understand that when you're suffering from a mental disorder such as depression, anxiety, etc., it can be fairly easy to neglect yourself due to being consumed with intense emotions. However, making sure you're still taking care of yourself is very important. When you look good, you feel good too, so even if you have to force yourself some days, shower daily, brush your teeth twice a day, put on clean clothes, and do a skincare routine if you have one.



**Go Out with Friends-** Companionship always makes life a little better despite what your circumstances may be. Even if it's only once a month, make sure you make time for your friends and do something fun together whether that be going to a game night, finding an on campus event, going out for drinks, etc. (this only applies if you're over the age of 21).

Next Page →



# PRACTICING SELF-CARE WRAP-UP

## **Treat Yourself!**

We all deserve to reward ourselves every once in a while. Do activities that you really love to do or even try something new that you've been interested in, but may have been too afraid to try before. Even if you discover that something isn't really for you, that's completely okay! That's the beauty in really getting to know yourself and it means that you're a step closer to finding a passion if you don't already have one.



# #MINDYOURMENTAL



# MOVE YOUR BODY, MOVE YOUR MIND

Maintaining your physical health goes hand in hand with maintaining your MENTAL health as well. It's vital to stay active while you're young. Here are a few ways that you can:

**Go to your Local Gym-** This is a pretty obvious, yet effective way to stay in shape and get your body moving. If you're a complete beginner to fitness, I recommend walking on a treadmill for about 30 minutes daily. You can progress into weightlifting as you get more comfortable and consistent with being in a gym setting.

**Take a Nature Walk-** Walking is some of the best cardio you can do. Not only are you getting your steps in for the day, but nature walks are a great way to clear your mind and reset.

**Practice Yoga-** Yoga is also a great way to stay active, stretch tense muscles, and relax your mind. You can also find guided videos on YouTube.

# WAYS TO RELEASE

## Journaling



I understand that not everyone is completely comfortable with talking to someone about their feelings. If that resonates with you, journaling is a great alternative as it still allows you to write down what you're feeling and it's just as effective.

## Music



Everyone loves music! It can be a spiritual experience listening to tunes you know and love or even discovering new music that you like. We all know that feeling of comfort when we listen to a song that really pinpoints how we feel in that moment and it lets us know that even though it hurts in the moment, there's a light at the end of every tunnel.

## Meditation



It may sound cliché, but meditation can really help you focus on something else and release any tension in the body. Meditation forces you to focus on your breathing and relaxes your muscles.

# GET INVOLVED

## Getting Involved

College doesn't always have to be stressful, it can be really fun! Don't be afraid to step outside your comfort zone and join organizations on campus. You never know what opportunities may present themselves as a result.



## Join Clubs

At the beginning of every semester, every campus typically holds club fairs that give the student body an opportunity to see what each club does on campus and has to offer. I highly recommend attending these as you may find something that you never thought you'd be interested in. It's also a great way to meet new, like-minded people.



## Attend Workshops

If your school offers different seminars, attend those that would be useful to you. This can include resume building, how to prepare for job interviews, panel discussions about social life, personal life, pop culture, etc.



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