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SURVIVING OR THRIVING: MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Looking after your mental health is important and it doesn't have to be expensive or time consuming. We are delighted to share these tips from the Mental Health Foundation.

- 1 TALK ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS.** Talking about your feelings can help you stay in good mental health and deal with times when you feel troubled.
- 2 KEEP ACTIVE.** Regular exercise can boost your self-esteem and can help you concentrate, sleep, and look and feel better. Exercise keeps the brain and your other vital organs healthy, and is also a significant benefit towards improving your mental health.
- 3 EAT WELL.** Your brain needs a mix of nutrients in order to stay healthy and function well, just like the other organs in your body. A diet that's good for your physical health is also good for your mental health.
- 4 DRINK SENSIBLY.** We often drink alcohol to change our mood. Some people drink to deal with fear or loneliness, but the effect is only temporary. When the drink wears off, you feel worse because of the way the alcohol has affected your brain and the rest of your body. Drinking is not a good way to manage difficult feelings.
- 5 KEEP IN TOUCH.** There's nothing better than catching up with someone face to face, but that's not always possible. You can also give them a call, drop them a note, or chat to them online instead. Keep the lines of communication open: it's good for you!
- 6 ASK FOR HELP.** None of us are superhuman. We all sometimes get tired or overwhelmed by how we feel or when things don't go to plan. If things are getting too much for you and you feel you can't cope, ask for help. Your family or friends may be able to offer practical help or a listening ear. Local services are there to help you.
- 7 TAKE A BREAK.** A change of scene or a change of pace is good for your mental health. It could be a five-minute pause from cleaning your kitchen, a half-hour lunch break at work, or a weekend exploring somewhere new. A few minutes can be enough to de-stress you. Give yourself some 'me time'.
- 8 DO SOMETHING YOU'RE GOOD AT.** What do you love doing? What activities can you lose yourself in? What did you love doing in the past? Enjoying yourself can help beat stress. Doing an activity you enjoy probably means you're good at it, and achieving something boosts your self-esteem
- 9 ACCEPT WHO YOU ARE.** We're all different. It's much healthier to accept that you're unique than to wish you were more like someone else. Feeling good about yourself boosts your confidence to learn new skill
- 10 CARE FOR OTHERS.** Caring for others is often an important part of keeping up relationships with people close to you. It can even bring you closer together.