10 Steps to Positive Mental Health

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1. **Connect with Others**

   Ensure you spend time with others and do not isolate yourself. Often when we feel upset we tend to do less and avoid being around people, but it is important to make sure   you spend time around people as much as possible. Spend time with positive people who make you feel good about yourself.

   CONNECT

2. **Be Active**

   This does not necessarily mean you have to join a gym! Find an activity you enjoy and spend time doing this each week. Keeping active is very important for our mental health so you need to spend less time online and more time doing physical activity.

3. **Take Notice**

   Often, we worry about things that may happen or think about things that have happened to us in the past. However, we have no control over these things and cannot change them. It is therefore important to try to be mindful wherever possible: which means trying to be aware of your thoughts, feelings and behaviours in the present moment as much as possible.

   BE ACTIVE

4. **Learn**

   Learning new things and gaining new skills gives us confidence, a sense of achievement and helps us to maintain positive emotional well-being. So why not sign up for an activity you haven't tried before or begin learning a new skill? I know you do a lot of learning at school, but you can make your own choice about what you want to learn.

5. **Give**

   Giving to others has been shown to be good for our mental well-being. It does not have to be big gestures as even the smallest act can count, such as a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Giving to others will not only make you feel good about yourself but it is another way for you to connect with others.

   KEEP LEARNING

6. Talk to Others

It is important to talk to others about how you are feeling, especially when you are not feeling too good. Everyone has mental health and can go through times of difficulty, but it is important to speak to someone and access further sources of support. If you struggle to talk about how you feel then find other ways to express yourself, such as through writing a letter, Art or Music.

KEEP SAFE

7. Keep Safe

It is important to keep yourself safe both in person and online. Do not give out any personal information or details which could identify you and NEVER send any explicit photographs to others. Make sure you avoid drinking alcohol or using recreational drugs as both of these things can impact greatly on how safe you keep yourself.

8. Self-Care

Looking after yourself physically is important- make sure you eat healthily as this can have a significant impact on your mood. Exercise well and ensure you get enough sleep (at least 9 hours is recommended). It is also important to look after your emotional health by recognising your warning signs when you are struggling and then doing something about it by trying to help yourself.

9. Learn to Relax

Find ways to relax which are helpful for you. Everyone is individual so will find different things relaxing so it important you find your own ways to help you keep calm. When we feel anxious, angry or upset our bodies go into stress mode, so we need to find ways to soothe ourselves and feel less stressed. Go for a walk, listen to some music or practice some relaxation techniques!

10. Recognise Achievements

Start to focus on your achievements and what you do well, rather than thinking about the things you can't do. Don't set yourself unrealistic standards to achieve or be too hard on yourself when you don't do as well as you would have liked. It is important to remember that everyone has different strengths and weaknesses.

RELAX

A Mental Health Support Directory for Young People is available on this website. This directory outlines lots of useful sources of support which are available for you to access online.