



RETIREE BENEFITS

News

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Mental Health Awareness Month for Retirees

How to cope with the challenges of retirement and stay mentally healthy

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness and reduce stigma about mental health issues. Mental health is an important aspect of well-being for everyone, but especially for retirees, who may face unique challenges and transitions in their lives. Retirement can be a rewarding and fulfilling stage of life, but it can also bring stress, loneliness, boredom, anxiety, depression, and other mental health problems. In this article, we will discuss some of the common mental health tips and resources to help retirees cope and thrive in their golden years.

What are some tips to improve your mental health after retirement?

The good news is that mental health issues are treatable, and there are many ways to cope and stay mentally healthy in retirement. There is no one-size-fits-all solution for mental health, but here are some general tips and resources that can help you improve your mood, self-esteem, and happiness after retirement:

- Stay physically active. Exercise can boost your mood, energy, and brain function. It can also prevent or reduce the risk of chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, or dementia. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week, or as much as you can. You can choose any activity that you enjoy, such as walking, biking, swimming, gardening, or dancing.
- Stay socially connected. Social interaction can reduce the feeling of isolation and loneliness, and provide you with emotional support, companionship, and fun. You can maintain or expand your social network by joining a club, a volunteer group, a class, or a hobby group. You can also reach out to your friends, family, neighbors, or former colleagues regularly, either in person, by phone, or online.
- Stay mentally stimulated. Learning new things can keep your mind sharp, curious, and creative. It can also give you a sense of achievement and purpose. You can challenge yourself by taking up a new hobby, skill, or language, reading books, doing puzzles, or playing games. You can also share your knowledge and experience with others, such as mentoring, teaching, or writing.
- Stay positive. Having a positive outlook can help you cope with stress, adversity, and change. It can also make you more resilient, optimistic, and grateful. You can practice positive thinking by focusing on the good aspects of your life, expressing gratitude, setting realistic goals, and celebrating your successes. You can also avoid negative self-talk, and replace it with affirmations, such as "I can do this", "I am worthy", or "I am enough".
- Seek professional help if needed. Sometimes, you may need more than self-care to improve your mental health. If you are feeling overwhelmed, hopeless, or suicidal, or if your mental health is affecting your daily functioning, you should

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seek professional help as soon as possible. You can talk to your doctor, a therapist, a counselor, or a mental health hotline. There is no shame in asking for help, and you deserve to get the support you need.

What are some resources for retiree mental health?

There are many resources available for retirees who want to improve their mental health, such as:

- The National Institute on Aging (NIA) offers information, tips, and tools on healthy aging, including mental health, physical health, and social well-being. You can visit their website at nia.nih.gov/ or call their toll-free number at 800-222-2225.
- The American Psychological Association (APA) provides resources, articles, and podcasts on various topics related to mental health and aging, such as retirement, caregiving, dementia, depression, and anxiety. You can visit their website at apa.org/ or call their toll-free number at 800-374-2721.
- The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) offers support, education, and advocacy for people with mental health conditions and their families. You can visit their website at nami.org/ or call their toll-free number at 800-950-6264.
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides information, treatment, and prevention services for substance abuse and mental health issues. You can visit their website at samhsa.gov/ or call their toll-free number at 800-662-4357.
- The Mental Health America (MHA) is a nonprofit organization that promotes mental health awareness, prevention, and recovery. You can visit their website at mhanational.org/ or call their toll-free number at 800-969-6642.