

GREAT FUTURES START HERE.



Team Tailgate

Mental Health Awareness Month

During the month of May, the American Counseling Association (ACA) joins the national movement to raise awareness about mental health. Established in 1949, Mental Health Month sought to put a spotlight on the importance of mental health and wellness. While 1 in 5 people will experience mental illness throughout their lifetimes, everyone will face challenges that can and will affect their mental health. There are always a handful of roles that each of us are juggling. If you are a parent, a student, an employee, a caretaker, someone struggling with a mental health concern, or are just feeling overwhelmed with the responsibilities of day-to-day life, the idea of taking time for yourself may seem unimaginable. Sometimes it can be difficult to even take basic care of ourselves - but there are small things that can be done to make self-care and taking time for ourselves a little bit easier.

Fast Facts

- On average, people only spend 15 minutes a day on health-related self-care. Self-care is proven to reduce stress and anxiety levels while increasing self-compassion - Of people who took a depression screen at mhascreening.org in 2020, 3% felt tired or said that they had very little energy at least half of the time or nearly every day.

Accept Yourself As You Are

- Try not to compare your life and what it looks like right now to anyone else's. When you start comparing yourself to others, it's easy to feel inadequate, making it hard to even take the first step in self-care.
- Try your best to accept the person that you are and where you are in life right now.

Focus on the Basics

- Taking time for yourself doesn't necessarily mean treating yourself to special things - Important things you can do is focus on steps to ensure you're living a healthy lifestyle. Showering and brushing your teeth every day, eating nutrient-rich food, moving your body, and getting good sleep are all building blocks of good self-care.
- Taking a break from social media. Research shows that limiting or taking extended breaks from social media may significantly reduce a person's depression and improve overall well-being.

Find What Makes You Happy

- What works for someone else may not work for you. Take time to think about what things you can do to make yourself feel happy or accomplished and include them in building the self-care routine

Practice Mindfulness

- Mindfulness is one of the best ways to make the most out of any amount of time that you do have to care for yourself, take a few slow, deep breaths, focus on each of your senses, and try to be fully present in whatever you're doing.
- Mindfulness reduces stress and it also has the power to help you slow down and really take care of yourself

Make Small Goals

- Taking time for yourself doesn't just happen overnight, so try to be patient - Set small goals that you want to accomplish for yourself. Daily tasks like wanting to take a 15-minute walk outside each day, or journaling for 10 minutes every night.

Remember That You Are Not Alone

- Everyone struggles to take time for themselves, so try not to get down on yourself - As circumstances change, you'll probably have to rethink your routines and how you use your time many times throughout your life.
- There will always be people who understand where you're coming from and are willing to help - Ask your friends and family for help when you need to take some time for your mental health

More information and resources can be found at:

The Mental Health America website at www.mhanational.org/

BGCA:

www.bgca.org/news-stories/2023/May/helping-kids-manage-mental-health-six-ideas-from-boys-and-girls-clubs/

<https://www.bgca.org/news-stories/2023/July/social-media-and-mental-health-4-tips-for-teens-on-building-and-protecting-self-esteem/>

<https://www.bgca.org/news-stories/2024/March/what-is-a-mental-health-day-for-kids/>

<https://www.bgca.org/news-stories/2024/January/getting-help-for-your-childs-mental-health-19-resources-for-parents-and-caregivers/>

<https://www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/mental-health-conditions/>

<https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/mental-health-awareness-month/>