

$$\rho \left(\frac{\partial v}{\partial t} + v \cdot \nabla v \right) = -\nabla p + \nabla \cdot T + f$$

The Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, in their National Social Justice Statement for 2020, draw attention to mental health in Australia. Below are some ways you can help support a healthy mind.

5 STRATEGIES FOR BETTER MENTAL HEALTH



EXERCISE MORE

Exercise might be the last thing you feel like doing, especially if you're feeling down. However, just one hour per week can help protect against depression. If you exercise regularly, it can reduce stress and symptoms of anxiety. Exercise can improve your sense of control, coping ability and self-esteem. Exercise distracts from negative thoughts and provides opportunities for new experiences. Brain chemicals, such as serotonin, stress hormones and endorphins, change when you exercise. Exercise increases your energy levels.

GET 7-8 HOURS OF SLEEP

Sleep deprivation makes us more susceptible to reacting negatively to life challenges. A survey from the American Psychological Association reported that adults who slept fewer than eight hours a night were more likely to report symptoms of stress than those who slept eight or more hours. Neuroimaging and neurochemistry studies suggest that a good night's sleep helps foster both mental and emotional resilience. Your mind is surprisingly busy while you sleep. As well as helping with stress, sleep improves your memory, attention and concentration.

EAT A BALANCED DIET

Eating well (i.e. a well-balanced diet rich in vegetables and nutrients) may be associated with feelings of wellbeing. One 2014 study found high levels of wellbeing were reported by individuals who ate more fruit and vegetables. Another 2017 study found that a Mediterranean-style diet (a diet high in vegetables, fruits, legumes, nuts, beans, cereals, grains, fish, and unsaturated fats eg. olive oil) led to a reduction in depression among participants. Also, go easy on alcohol. It is a depressant, and drinking it can affect your mental health.

REACH OUT TO OTHERS

Just as social isolation causes health problems, being socially connected can have enormous positive effects on mental health. Social connection can reduce stress and give a sense of meaning, purpose and belonging. Supportive social relationships has a direct impact on our happiness, as well as, reducing blood pressure, heart rate and stress hormones. Having important and supportive relationships can also have a positive impact in later years, as some research has shown, the risk of dementia is lower in those with good friends and family relationships.

LEAN INTO PRAYER

Research shows a positive correlation between prayer and mental health. A 2018 study found young adults who prayed daily tended to have fewer depressive symptoms, and higher levels of life satisfaction, self-esteem, and positive affect. A recent 2020 study of over 2000 adults struggling with mental health found that over 80 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that spirituality was important for their mental health. Also, a 2016 study found those who frequently prayed or attended religious services had less risk for depression over a two-year period.

FOR MORE HELP

You can obtain additional support by talking to your parish priest or contacting:
Centrecare - www.centrecare.com.au
 (08) 9325 6644
Beyond Blue - www.beyondblue.org.au
 1300 22 4636
Lifeline Australia - 13 11 14



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**“Do not be afraid. Have courage.
I am with you.”**

Matthew 14:27