

TAKING CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health America Offers 10 Tools to Help You “Live Your Life Wellsm”

With increasing economic troubles piled on to the stress of work and family demands, more and more Americans are suffering. In fact, 58 percent of Americans reported struggling in their lives at the end of 2008, according to the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index. This represents an increase of more than 22 million Americans who reported struggling earlier in the year.

During these difficult times, Mental Health America wants you to know that there are tools that can buffer the effects of stress and help you cope better with the many challenges you face. This May, in honor of Mental Health Month, the organization is launching the **Live Your Life Wellsm** campaign to provide you with 10 specific, research-based tools that can combat stress and promote health and well-being.

The **Live Your Life Wellsm** website (www.LiveYourLifeWell.org) provides 10 research-based, straight-forward tools and ways to apply them in everyday life.

The tools are:

Connect with Others. Research suggests that people who feel connected are happier and healthier – and may even live longer.

Stay Positive. People who regularly focus on the positive in their lives are less upset by painful memories.

Get Physically Active. Exercise relieves your tense muscles, improves your mood and sleep, and increases your energy and strength.

Help Others. Research suggests that those who consistently help other people experience less depression, greater calm and fewer pains.

Get Enough Rest. People who don't get enough sleep face a number of possible risks, including weight gain, decreased memory, impaired driving and heart problems.

Create Joy and Satisfaction. Positive emotions can boost your ability to bounce back from stress.

Eat Well. Eating healthy food and regular meals can increase your energy, lower the risk of developing certain diseases and influence your mood.

Take Care of Your Spirit. People who have strong spiritual lives may be healthier and live longer. Spirituality seems to cut the stress that can contribute to disease.

Deal Better with Hard Times. People who get support, problem-solve or focus on the positives in their lives are likely to handle tough times better.

Get Professional Help if You Need It. If the problems in your life are stopping you from functioning well or feeling good, professional help can make a big difference.

Good mental health keeps you productive, energetic, happy and hopeful—even in the face of stress. There are steps that people can take that can make a real difference in their ability to handle challenges. The tools found on **Live Your Life Well**sm do not require making drastic changes to your life or a large time commitment. The website provides clear, easy-to-understand information on how to incorporate these changes into your life, and all of the contents are free to the public. To learn more about each of the tools and how to use them to better manage stress, visit the **Live Your Life Well**sm website at www.LiveYourLifeWell.org or contact your local Mental Health America affiliate at: 845/473-2500.