Boost your own emotional health

Our emotions have a lot of control over our lives. After all, if you're feeling angry or sad, this can affect your work, personal life and even your food choices for the day.

That's why good emotional health is just as important as your physical health. People with good emotional health are not necessarily happy 100% of the time. But, they know how to cope with life's challenges and have healthy relationships.

Better emotional health is a skill you can learn. These habits can help you get there:

- *Think about your feelings.* Do certain things make you feel sad, stressed or frustrated? If you can, take steps to change them. If you can't, work on accepting them.

- *Don't keep feelings inside.* It's okay to tell others how you are feeling. With time and practice, this can be done without yelling or emotional outbursts. Try to talk things through in a calm way.

- *When you feel yourself getting angry, stop and breathe.* Take a deep breath and count to 10. Leave the room if needed. This can help stop you from saying or doing something you may regret later.

- *Focus on a healthy body.* Regular exercise and a healthy diet can help you feel more energized and ready to take on the world. These healthy habits can even help relieve mild depression or anxiety.

- *Be social.* Even if you're shy, it's good to connect with others. Have lunch with a friend or family member regularly. Join a group or volunteer at a charity you love.

- *Do something relaxing every day.* Try deep breathing, meditation, exercise or yoga. These practices can help you keep stress levels in check, which improves emotional health, too.

- *Do things you love.* If you love music, art, sports or a special hobby, find a way to do this regularly. This is a great way to help you feel more positive about life.

- *Find purpose for your life.* What is important to you? Whether it's family, volunteering or something else, people need purpose and meaning to feel good. Try to think about your special purpose each day. If you're not sure what it is, connecting with people may help you find it.

Mental illness can stand in the way of your emotional health. See your doctor as recommended and talk about your mental and emotional health during your checkups.

Source: American Academy of Family Physicians