

Mental Health Boosters

(Mental Health or Life, Canadian Mental Health Association, 2014)

Recognize your Emotions

Emotional well-being is not about being happy all the time. Feeling sad, angry, and anxious at times is part of being human. Emotional well-being involves expressing our emotions in a way that respects everyone. Bottling up our feelings doesn't respect our own experiences, just as lashing out because we feel angry may not respect others. Emotional well-being also includes recognizing what influences our emotions, discovering how our emotions affect the way we think or act, taking action when our emotional response isn't helpful, and learning to accept our emotions—even the difficult ones.

Booster: Identify and Deal with your Moods

Find out what makes you happy, sad, joyful or angry. What calms you down? Learn ways to deal with your moods. Share joyful news with a friend, and find support when you feel sad. Physical exercise can help you deal with your anger or anxiety. Keep a stack of your favourite funny cartoons, stories, or videos for times when you need to laugh. And don't forget the power of music to lift you up or calm you down.



Spiritual Well-Being

Spiritual well-being means getting to know ourselves, discovering our values, and learning to be at peace with who we are. It also involves finding and connecting to something bigger than ourselves and living with purpose. Spirituality can give us meaning and solace, help us overcome challenges, and help us build connections with others. This



may mean religion for some, but it doesn't have to—it's really about how we feel on the inside.

Booster: Connect with Yourself

Set aside quiet, quality time to be totally alone. Try a breathing exercise: count your breaths from one to four,

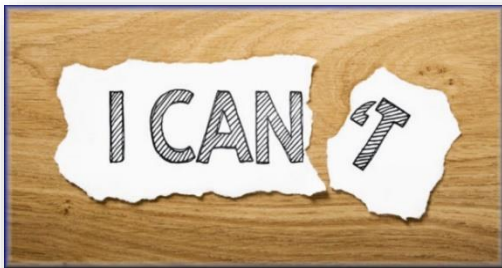
and then start at one again. Or do something you love to do, like dancing, going to a baseball game, building a bird house, going for a hike—whatever works for you!

Build a Healthy Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is more than just seeing your good qualities. It is being able to see all your abilities and weaknesses together, accepting them, and doing your best with what you have. Self-esteem means recognizing your unique talents and abilities, and using that confidence to follow your goals and interests without comparing yourself to others.

Booster: Build Confidence

Take a good look at your good points. What do you do best? Where are your skills and interest areas? How



would a friend describe you? Now, look at your weak points. What do you have difficulty doing? What makes you feel frustrated? Now, which list was easier to write?

Remember that all of us have our positive and negative sides. We build confidence by developing our weaker areas and regularly reminding ourselves of the things we're comfortable with and proud of.

Build Positive Support Networks

Good relationships take effort, whether it's relationships with family members, friends, or other important supporters. It takes courage to reach out and time to build trust. But social support is a very important part of mental health. People in our networks can offer many different kinds of support, like emotional

support, practical help, and alternate points of view. Support can come from family and friends, neighbours, coworkers or classmates, faith communities, clubs or support groups for specific problems.

Booster: Make Time to be with Important People in your Life.

Make time for simply having fun and enjoying each other's company, and time for serious conversations.



Get Involved

Being involved in things that really matter to us provides a great feeling of purpose and satisfaction. You make a difference, no matter how big or small your efforts. Getting involved connects you with others in your

community who share similar interests or values and connects you to groups of people you might not normally meet. It can help you learn new skills, build confidence, and see your own experiences in a different way.



Booster: Volunteer

Be a volunteer. Read to children at your local library, visit people in a hospital or care facility, serve on a committee or board of your favourite charity, clean up your favourite park or beach, volunteer at your local animal shelter or simply help a neighbour.

Build Resiliency

Resiliency means coping well with problems, stress, and other difficult situations. Problems and stress are a normal part of life. Situations like accidents or illness, unexpected life changes, and conflict happen to everyone. Resiliency is what helps you look at the situation realistically, take action when you can make changes, let go of things you can't change, and recognize the helpful supports in your life. Your resiliency toolkit might include skills like problem-solving, assertiveness, balancing obligations and expectations, and developing support networks. While some people learn these skills during treatment for

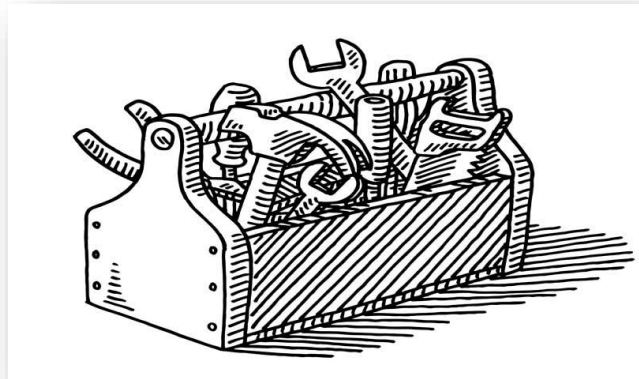
mental health problems, we should really think of them as skills for everyone. You can learn more about these skills online, in books, through community organizations, or through your health care provider.

Activity: Build your Own Toolkit

Set aside time to think about the resiliency tools you already have. This might include skills like structured problem-solving or people who can help you during difficult situations.

Remember to include strategies that have worked for you in the past. Keep your list on hand and use it as a reminder when you need help.

It's also a good way to see where you might want to build new skills or supports.



BoostTube

[Kid President Pep Talk](#)

[The Black Dog of Depression](#)

[My Name is Trauma Storybook](#)

[Managing Stress](#)

[Give a Compliment, Get a Compliment](#)

[Brain Neuroplasticity](#)

[Growth Mindset](#)

[Building and Practicing Resilience](#)

[How Brains are Built- Toxic Stress vs Healthy Stress](#)

If this is an emergency, please call 911 immediately.



Sometimes you just need someone to talk to. We're here to listen.

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