

# Mental Health Program

JULY 2022 | A&A Medical Healthcare Supplies Aid



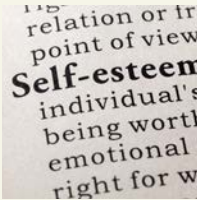
<https://www.medicalhealthcaresupplies.ca/>



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# WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?



Mental health encompasses the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of individuals. It affects how individuals think, feel, and act and it further influences their cognition, perception, and behaviour. It also helps determine how individuals navigate stress, relate to others, build interpersonal relationships, and make decisions. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

- 1 in 5 Canadians experiences a mental illness (Camh 2022).
- Currently, more than 6.7 million people are living with mental health conditions in Canada (Camh 2022).

## WHO IS AFFECTED?

- Young people aged 15 to 24 are more likely to experience mental illness and/or substance use disorders than any other age group (Camh 2022).
- 39% of Ontario high-school students indicate a moderate-to-serious level of psychological distress such as symptoms of anxiety and depression (Camh 2022).
- Men have higher rates of substance use disorders than women, while women have higher rates of mood and anxiety disorders.
- Mental and physical health are linked. People with long-term physical health conditions such as chronic pain are much more likely to also experience mood disorders. Conversely, people with a mood disorder are at much higher risk of developing a long-term medical condition.
- People with mental illness are twice as likely to have a substance use disorder compared to the general population. At least 20% of people with a mental illness have a co-occurring substance use disorder (Camh 2022).
- More than 15% of people with a substance use disorder have a co-occurring mental illness (Camh 2022).
- Canadians in the lowest income group are 3 to 4 times more likely than those in the highest income group to report poor to fair mental health (Camh 2022).
- Studies in various Canadian cities have indicated that between 23% and 67% of homeless people may have a mental illness (Camh 2022).

# MENTAL HEALTH AND YOUTH

In Canada, only 1 out of 5 children who need mental health services receive them (CMHA 2022).



- Approximately 5% of male youth and 12% of female youth, aged 12 to 19, have experienced a major depressive episode (CMHA 2022).
- Suicide is among the leading causes of death in 15 to 24 year old Canadians, second only to accidents; 4,000 people die prematurely each year by suicide (CMHA 2022).

## MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY

**Mental illness and substance use disorders are leading causes of disability in Canada.**

**The mortality rate due to suicide among men is four times the rate among women.**

**People with mental illness and substance use disorders are more likely to die prematurely than the general population.**

**Mental illness can cut 10 to 20 years from a person's life expectancy (Camh 2022).**

**The disease burden of mental illness and substance use in Ontario is 1.5 times higher than all cancers put together and more than 7 times that of all infectious diseases (Camh 2022).**

**It is estimated that 67,000 deaths per year are attributable to substance use in Canada (Camh 2022). This includes over 47,000 deaths attributable to tobacco, and nearly 15,000 deaths attributable to alcohol (Camh 2022).**

**There were an estimated 14,700 opioid-related deaths in Canada between January 2016 and September 2019 (Camh 2022).**

# EXAMPLES

## Of the Most Common Mental Illnesses and Their Treatment



### ANXIETY DISORDERS:

Characterized by the underlying feelings of extreme fear or worry that remain consistent. Contained within this group of conditions are generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, social anxiety and other phobia-based anxieties.



### TREATMENT

Common types of treatment include psychotherapy, medications and other complementary health approaches, which include various stress and relaxation techniques.



### DEPRESSION

An individual that has experienced what doctors refer to as a "depressive episode" that lasts for more than two weeks. A depressive episode can be exhibited through feelings of hopelessness, a general lack of energy and thoughts of death and suicide.



### TREATMENT

One of the most misunderstood mental illnesses, depression affects over 17 million American adults every year. Depression can be treated with therapy, medicine or a combination of both. Recent advancements in medicine and therapy techniques have made depression treatable to a very high degree, although there is still no cure.



### PTSD (POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER)

PTSD significantly affects women at higher rates than it does men. PTSD is caused by being exposed to trauma which is a treatable condition.



### LUNCHBOX

There are effective regimens such as therapy and/or counselling, and many people are able to successfully manage their symptoms.

# STRESS & MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

## WHAT IS STRESS?

Think of a time that you have felt stress. Why do you think that happens?

Stress is a human reaction to times of pressure or strain, which has physical, chemical, and emotional factors to being in a state of strain. Think of stress as a threat to a human's homeostasis or the normal conditions of the body. Stress can come in many forms such as when we are doing a test or work, which I am sure we have all experienced, or when we are running away from dangers, like a lion attack or a moving car.

Stress is completely natural. It is the way humans survive and respond to natural shocks to our system. But, if we experience stress over a prolonged period of time it can become very unhealthy. Think of it like holding a glass of water. If I hold a glass of water for a few minutes then it should be fine. But, if I keep holding onto the glass for more than a day, then my arm will start hurting (a lot!). The glass of water represents our stress and, amazingly, people hold onto this glass for months and even years!

Prolonged stress can have damaging physical and emotional consequences. Some examples of symptoms are aches and pains, high blood pressure, and anxiety. Stress can also cause unhealthy behaviours such as smoking, gambling, and drinking. Stress can play a huge role in our lives and, for this reason, controlling it in a healthy manner is really important!



Stress occurs when people feel as though they are under pressure or strain. Stress is completely normal but becomes unhealthy when it occurs under prolonged period of times.

# STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

## Finding ways to manage stress

Finding ways to manage stress is one of the first steps one can take to overcome it. There are many different ways that one can do stress management and, in all honesty, it is very individualistic depending on the person. We, however, want to provide you with some recommendations.



## Being a healthy individual

The first and most important way to manage stress is to ensure that you are being a healthy individual! This includes what one would think are basic parts of one's daily routine such as drinking lots of water, eating enough, and sleeping. But, amazingly, many people do not focus on these activities enough and are often deprived of one, if not multiple, of these categories!

Notably, an important part of keeping healthy is exercising regularly. Whether it be walking outside for an hour or doing arriba classes, exercise should be part of everyone's daily schedule to maintain a healthy body and mind. Also, if you are not already a fitness expert, then that's ok! We recommend starting with doing exercise once or twice a week and then building up from there.



## Having a positive mindset

- Firstly, it is important to reduce triggers of stress. If you are like most people, you may be having a lot going on in your life at any given moment of time. This can become overwhelming very quickly and cause even more stress! We, therefore, recommend that you reduce triggers of stress by practicing time management skills. It is ok to sometimes take out some free time and give yourself time to breathe in the middle.

Stress is possible to manage with the correct techniques.

Remember that each person will approach these techniques slightly differently and that is ok!

# STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

## Having a positive mindset

- Secondly, maintaining a high self-esteem is really important. In a world where social media is very prevalent, it is very easy to get caught up in comparing oneself with others to the point that we can feel bad about ourselves. Always remember to step back and celebrate small victories. You are confident and smart and deserve all the happiness in the world!
- Thirdly, set realistic goals and expectations for yourself. Unlike what some people might think, we are not superhuman! We are not obligated to be perfect at everything and, honestly, it is good that we are not. Keep this in mind when thinking about goals you set for yourself in the future. Lastly, remember that it is ok to assert yourself sometimes. It is ok to say “no” if something feels too heavy on your schedule and is giving you unnecessary stress.



## Your Support Group

It is essential to have a strong support group to help with dealing with stress.

Your support group can consist of family, friends, or even members of your community. Whenever you feel that anything is overwhelming, we recommend that you reach out to them and tell them your worries. Remember that experiencing stress is as natural as laughing and crying! For this reason, you should not feel ashamed to talk about your feelings and daily concerns. We also recommend that you use your support group when you want to take a break or unwind from the stressors in your life. A walk in the park or watching a few on netflix can really help relieve daily stress and put a smile on people's faces!

Lean on your support group if you need help with managing stress. They are there for you and are willing to help :)



# GOALS

## *in life*

### WHAT IS A GOAL?

It is the objective aspiration of a person's ambition or effort, or in other words, an aim or desired result.

### WHAT IS THE MEANING OF HAVING A "GOAL IN LIFE"?

Life goals are all of the aspirations an individual would like to accomplish in their lifetime. Often life goals are very meaningful to that individual and can make a lasting impact on their life. They can be large and challenging goals (long-term), or they can be smaller and more personal (short-term). It all depends on what they would like to achieve.

### LONG-TERM GOALS

These types of goals often refer to accomplishments that will take a significant amount of time, effort, and planning to achieve. They have a delayed-gratification outcome of months or even years of focus.



# GOALS

## *in life*



### SHORT-TERM GOALS

Short-term goals are goals that can potentially be achieved in 12 months or less.

### HOW TO SET YOUR GOALS

- Consider what you want to achieve and ensure you are committed to it
- Use SMART to help you articulate your goals and write them down to make so they can feel more tangible
  - Specific
  - Measurable
  - Attainable
  - Relevant
  - Time-bound
- Plan the steps you must take to realize your goal, and cross off each one as you work through them!

### STEPS AFTER SETTING YOUR GOALS

- Create an action plan
- Create a timeline
- Take action
- Re-evaluate and assess your progress at every step

# *An Introduction to* SELF- ESTEEM



It is important to improve our self-esteem because self-esteem impacts our decision-making processing skills, relationships, emotional health, and our overall well-being. When people have healthy self-esteem, we intend to feel positive about ourselves and about life in general. It makes us feel better to deal with life. Living with low self-esteem can harm one's mental health and it can lead to different problems such as depression and anxiety.

When it comes to improving one's self esteem, the best ways are to:

- Have a positive attitude
- Set time aside for yourself
- Get up and get moving
- Write down your goals
- Be Optimistic
- Believe In Yourself
- Do something that makes you feel good
- Spend time with people who make you feel good about yourself
- Improve Your Physical Health
- Give Yourself a Break
- Build Positive Relationships

Self esteem can be interrelated to mental health issues as low self esteem may induce things like anxiety and depression. On that note, many celebrities have suffered from these types of mental health issues! For example, when Adele had anxiety and depression, she said that it almost led to the downfall of her marriage. She was able to overcome her mental health issues by traveling to different places that had positive energy. In May 2021, Ryan Reynolds revealed that he also was suffering with anxiety. He was learning to overcome his anxiety by meditating and being mindful.

*"I got my own back." - Maya Angelou*

# *Our* BODY IMAGE

Having a healthy relationship with your appearance will help boost your self-esteem. Many often struggle with their body image which also decreases their self-confidence. You may have a poor body image if you are super critical about your looks, constantly compare your body to others, or avoid certain activities due to your appearance. Body image refers to how you feel about your body and not on how you look.

## 1 Reasons for why you may be experiencing poor body image:

- Unrealistic societal beauty standards portrayed in media
- Social media where comparing yourself to others is often done
- Peer pressure to look a certain way to fit in certain groups
- The common use of photoshop in advertisements
- Being around people that talk negatively about your appearance
- Basing your worth as an individual by only your appearance

## 2 The negative impact of poor body image:

- Decreased self-esteem
- Increased risk for depression
- Increased risk for eating disorders

## 3 Ways to have a healthy body image:

- Use positive language when speaking or thinking about your appearance. Talk to yourself about how you would talk to someone you care about.
- Avoid focusing on only your appearance but rather also look at other aspects of yourself such as your personality, accomplishments and relationships with others.
- Decrease your social media usage and when you do use it be aware that many images are highly edited and are not real.
- Remember no human is perfect, we all have our flaws.



# BODY DYSMORPHIA

Constantly obsessing over your appearance in a way it negatively impacts your daily life could be a result of Body Dysmorphia. Those experiencing body dysmorphia would avoid social interactions due to fearing being judged by others. With body dysmorphia, the individual may feel they have a major physical flaw which causes them to be constantly stressed when in reality the imperfection is not noticeable to others.

## The impact of Zoom

We already know the use of filters on social media apps has been shown to poorly impact people's self-esteem. However new studies have shown a new phenomenon known as Zoom dysmorphia. With much of our lives being online such as using platforms such as Zoom has caused people to stare at their faces for a long period. This shift to video platforms gives people more opportunity to pick out flaws in their appearance they may have not noticed before.



## Symptoms of Body Dysmorphia:

- Avoiding social situations
- Taking up a lot of your time focusing on the flaw you see in your appearance
- Trying to hide the flaw through makeup or clothing
- Always comparing your appearance with those around you
- Seeking perfection in regards to your appearance
- Feeling others are noticing your flaws and are judging you
- Some individuals may avoid mirrors
- Some individuals may spend extra time checking the flaw they feel they have
- Performing a repetitive behaviour to get a sense of relief

If you feel you are struggling with negative body image or body dysmorphia, talk to your healthcare provider to get more help.

# The Relationship Between Social Media and Self Esteem

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## Social Media and Self-esteem:

Countless studies continue to indicate that using social media leads to increased risks of depression, low self-esteem, loneliness, and anxiety. According to some studies, using social media causes a significant decrease in self-esteem, especially among girls between the ages of 10 and 18.

## The Negative Effects of Social Media on Self-Esteem:

Social media serves to amplify what other people have and what is going well for them. After all, many people use their social media profiles to project a perfect image with carefully chosen photos, often showcasing different filters. As a result, you may begin to feel worse about yourself.

Social media also adds stress to your daily life, especially when it comes to evaluating the posts you make. Each time you post a picture or update your status, you always tend to worry about the number of likes, shares, and comments your post will generate. This offers another opportunity for comparison, as you might wonder why another person's images or content got more attention and positive feedback than yours.

If you want your teen or the people around you to continue using social media but also hope to combat the negative effects it is having on their self-esteem, have them consider the following:

- Remember that social media does not paint an accurate picture of a person's life.
- Do not determine your self-worth based on social media.
- Take a break if you are feeling down because of social media comparisons.

## The Positive Effects of Social Media on Self-Esteem:

Despite all of the negative effects, there are substantial benefits to social media use as well. Not only does social media allow you to expand your network and meet people with the same interests, but it is also a great way for you to stay in touch with family members and friends you already know in real life.

Additionally, social media allows you to share special moments with the people you love and care about. It can also be a fun distraction as you play games, watch funny videos, and share memes. Lastly, social media provides ample opportunity for connection.

# The Relationship Between Social Media and Self Esteem

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## Signs of Low Self-Esteem:

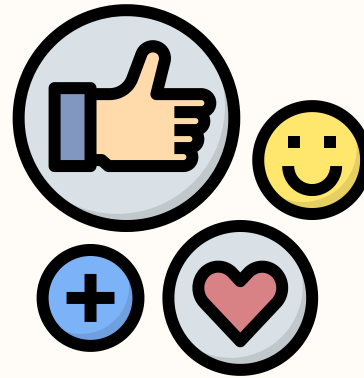
It's not possible to correct bad social media interactions if it isn't clear that there is a problem.

Watch out for these warning signs of low self-esteem in your child or for the people around you:

- Self-deprecation, even when joking
- Ignoring or discounting achievements
- Placing blame on yourself when things go wrong
- Failing to accept compliments
- Feelings of anxiety, depression, shame, anger, or sadness
- Crippling fear of failure

For teens, in particular, additional signs may include:

- Gradually declining school grades
- Mood swings
- Refusing to help with household chores
- Giving up on tasks at the first sign of frustration



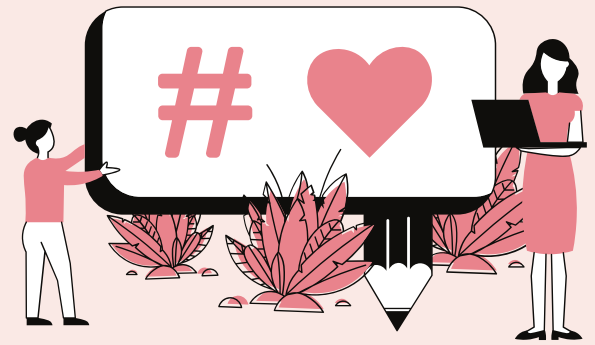
At its core, self-esteem is how you think about yourself. Even if your child or the people around you give off an appearance of confidence, they could have low self-esteem. If they speak negatively about their life, judge themselves, have negative body images, or are hypercritical about their failures, they may be suffering from low self-esteem brought on by the excessive use of social media applications.

You can help your teen or the people around you by reminding them that their worth is not related to social media interactions. Just as you wouldn't want them to continue to pursue a relationship or friendship that makes them feel bad, encourage them to sign off for a bit especially if social media is making them feel the same way.

## Social Media Research

# PARENTS:

## What You Can Do to Help Your Teen with Low Self-Esteem Due to Social Media Use:



If you notice any signs of low self-esteem or social media addiction or overuse in your teen, it may be time to gently correct the way in which they use social media. Remember, low self-esteem in your teen can have lifelong consequences if it's not reversed. If you recognize a problem, you want to address it as quickly as possible.

Here are some tips to help your teen's self-esteem get back on track:

- Set limits for the amount of screen time for your child.
- Set boundaries for when it is appropriate to check social media accounts (never before bed).
- Have an honest conversation about how unrealistic social media posts can be.
- Limit distractions by changing notification settings.
- Set a good example about healthy social media use.
- Encourage hobbies and activities that are not online, especially any activity that makes your child feel accomplished.

Implement each of these tips gradually, discussing each change with your teen so that they know why it is happening. Do not overwhelm your teen with advice. Instead, guide them gently to a healthier mindset about social media – one that will encourage good self-esteem.

**If your child or teen fell victim to the negative effects of social media use, contact Social Media Victims Law Center today to learn how they can be helped.**

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# WHAT IS ADDICTION

## THE DEFINITION OF ADDICTION

An addiction can be summarised as the need for something intensely, while lacking the ability to control the desire to use and continue using it, despite the adverse consequences. It not only alters the brain by changing how pleasure is registered but as well as altering other normal feelings such as desires and love.

The term addiction refers to more than just dependence on substances. But also refers to an inability to stop engaging in habits such as gambling, eating, and even the use of social media. Though many people do start using a drug or first engage in an activity voluntarily, addiction take's over and reduces self-control.

## SYMPTOMS

Addiction may manifest differently in everyone, but there are common traits to look out for, including behavior changes like lying, extreme mood swings, as well as physical changes such as fatigue, and drastic weight change.

Please note that you can never know for certain what another person is experiencing unless they willingly share it with you. So, if there is concern about someone in your life that you believe may have an addiction; first, you must know where to look. People who suffer from addiction tend to show signs ranging from psychological, physical, and social changes. A point to note is that while they are split into 3 separate categories, this does not mean that symptoms overlap does not occur, (i.e., diverting money from daily expenses into money for said addiction, to ease the psychological cravings).



# WHAT IS ADDICTION

## PSYCHOLOGICAL SYMPTOMS:

These are the emotional and or mental aspects of addiction:

- Strong cravings or difficulty to think about anything else
  - (This boils down to an obsession with said addiction, as they tend to spend lengths of time and energy finding ways of getting and using.)
- An inability to stop using even to the point of ignoring health problems
  - (The continuous and regular reliance and or use of said addiction, ignoring all health complications such as the development of lung cancer due to smoking)
- A belief that to do something the substance in question is needed, ranging from day-to-day functioning to sleeping, and even working.
  - (Boils down to having it has a crucial crutch to deal with their problems)
- Loss of interest in usual activities

## PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS:

Are the results of their body starting to rely on a substance to function, as it has begun to impact their bodily function. When one stops using said substance is when physical symptoms of withdrawal occur.

- Changes in appearance
    - The reliance on substances may alter their appearance as they may lose or gain weight drastically, appear less put together as time goes on, always tired, and easily annoyed, etc.
  - Increase in tolerance
    - Their body experiences reduced effects of the substance over time, so to achieve the same effect they would have to take higher and higher doses
  - Health risks
    - The development of damages to their bodily systems as well as diseases, i.e., constant smokers developing lung cancer
  - Slurred speech
    - Inability to speak correctly or even hold a proper conversation
  - Insomnia
    - The disruption of their sleep schedule due to them constantly looking and or using said addiction
  - Withdrawal where they might experience cravings, trembling, seizures and at times drastic shift in behavior (including violence)
-

# WHAT IS ADDICTION

## SOCIAL SYMPTOMS:

Are the ways in which they both interact and react with other people.

- Loss of interest in hobbies and activities
  - As time goes on and the addiction continues, a person may stop taking part in things they used to enjoy doing because they are unable to due to side effects of their addiction
- Decreased socialization, like ignoring relationships
  - Due to side effect of said substance they might, be unable to or refuse speaking or seeing any of their friends unless it is to partake in said addiction
- Denial
  - Most people are not aware they have a problem, and that goes for people who have an addiction; and might explain it away as "I can stop whenever I want" thus refusing to seek treatment
- Changes in mood, appetite, and sleep
  - Inability to properly regulate themselves. Either by lashing out, decrees or increase in appetite and inability to sleep
- Legal and Financial issues
  - Legal matters may occur due to impairment under the substance such as being stopped for driving under the influence or to the extent of causing public disorder or violence. And financial difficulties may arise as all their expenses are being directed towards fulfilling their addiction

Every individual who suffers from substance abuse disorder will experience it differently.



# WHAT IS ADDICTION

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# SPECIFIC SYMPTOMS OF ADDICTIONS

Now that we have covered the categories and the type of symptoms that can appear in someone suffering from addiction, we can now look at specific symptoms of some well-known addictions such as alcohol, heroin, cocaine, and opioids.

## Alcohol Addiction:

Since it is legal, most people do not perceive it as a drug, but it is. It is legal mainly because of its popularity and commercial profitability, not because of its widespread acceptance.

Physical and behavioral symptoms:

- Weight loss
- Redness of the cheeks and nose
- Blackouts
- Legal trouble

## Cocaine Addiction:

May exhibit the following symptoms:

- Restlessness
- Paranoia
- Elevated mood
- Anxiety
- Feeling invincible
- Excited speech
- Dilated pupils
- Financial trouble

The life of those who use cocaine is known to spiral out of control as people become unemployed, file for bankruptcy, and can even end up homeless.

## Heroin Addiction:

May exhibit the following symptoms:

- Constricted pupils for 4–5 hours
- Disorientation
- Shallow breathing
- Unkempt, dirty appearance
- Track marks on arms or other body parts
- Stomach and muscle cramps or diarrhea
- Weight loss
- Tremors

Signs of heroin addiction should be taken seriously as it is an extremely addictive substance and overdose can lead to death.

## Opioids Addiction:

Is not easy to catch, especially in the early stages of addiction, but some symptoms to look out for are:

- Mood changes, including excessive swings from elation to hostility
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Borrowing medication from other people or "losing" medications so that more prescriptions must be written
- Seeking the same prescription from multiple doctors, to have a "backup" supply
- Poor decision-making, including putting himself or herself and others in danger
- Uncontrollable cravings
- Weight loss
- Frequent flu-like symptoms
- Stealing from family, friends, or businesses
- New financial difficulties

Though opioids can be prescribed by a doctor to treat pain, their misuse does lead to addiction.

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# TREATMENTS



Though it is often difficult for individuals to admit to themselves that they really do have a problem, let alone an addiction; it is nevertheless the most crucial step. The next step would be to seek out treatment programs that can help with regaining their health and overall well-being.

It must be noted that treatment for addiction is not uniform when we consider how different each person is from one other. It is evident that each person will have to ensure the treatment they choose is one that best caters to you specifically; whether it be spiritual, or faith-based. This would better increase the chances of achieving their goal of recovery.

## HELPING HAND:

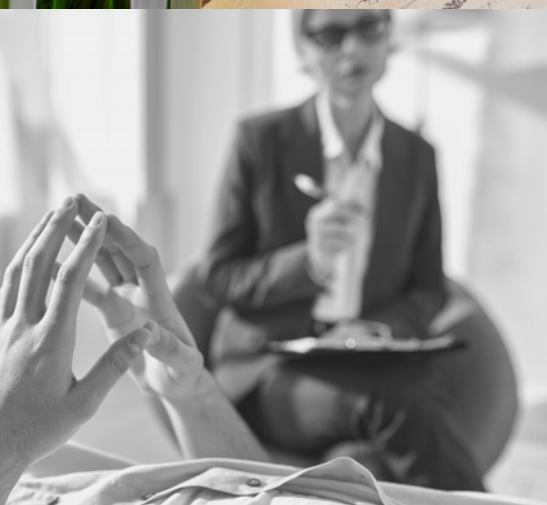
If you are concerned about the well-being of someone close to you, here are some things to keep in mind:

### Stay Informed

Addiction is hard to talk about and you will need to better inform yourself more about whatever substance or activity that they are addicted to. This will give you a better idea of how to better approach the situation as well as and what treatment might look like.

### Be Present

Be involved with the treatment process by spending time, following up on how they are feeling and doing, and letting them know when you are available in time if they find themselves in a difficult situation. And remember to avoid judgment. There is already stigma surrounding addiction, therefore people find it difficult to reach out for help.



# TREATMENTS



## TYPES OF TREATMENT:

Though there are countless forms of treatment that exist, treatment is not a one-time thing but long and continuous, and whatever is put in is what the patient gets out; therefore it is essential that they must be actively engaged with every step of the treatment.

### **Detoxification**

A medically assisted detox program allows you to rid your body of addictive substances in a safe environment. This is helpful because sometimes substances can cause unpleasant physical symptoms. However, detox does not address the underlying behavioral cause of addiction, therefore it is recommended that another form of treatment that caters to the underlying cause of addiction is done alongside detox.

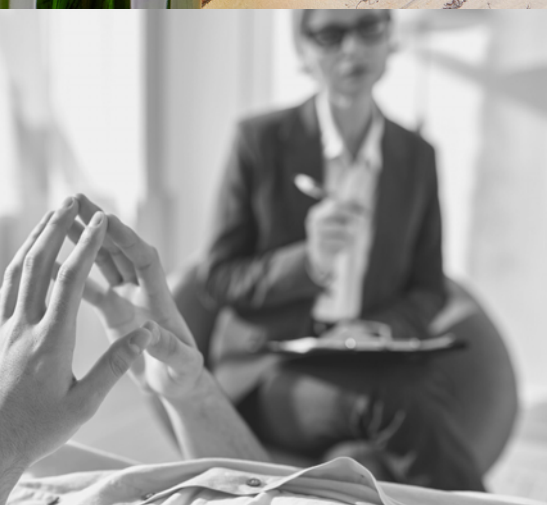
### **12-Step Facilitation**

Is a type of group therapy that treats alcohol and drugs, and it aims to help recognize the negative impacts of addiction on a social, emotional, physical, and spiritual level. Programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous are one of these programs, and it uses group meetings for discussions and mutual support. This form of therapy first begins with acceptance, then moves to surrender to a higher power, and transitions into increased attendance and participation in regular group meetings.

### **Treatment with Medication**

As a treatment for addiction, certain medications may be used in combination with behavioral therapy which is able to help reduce cravings and addictive behaviors as well as improve mood. An example of this is a medication like acamprosate, which is known to help reduce behaviors that lead to drinking.

# TREATMENTS



## TYPES OF TREATMENT:

### **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy**

Is a highly flexible form of treatment as it can be used to help treat several different addictions such as food addiction, alcohol addiction, and prescription drug addiction. (CBT) can also help one identify their triggers, as well as help with the development of coping skills. It can also be combined with other therapeutic techniques.

### **Contingency Management**

There is a wide variety of addictions that can be treated with condition management (CM), including alcoholism, narcotics, and tobacco addiction. This type of treatment rewards your positive behavior such as remaining and maintaining sobriety with tangible rewards.

### **Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy**

Helps you identify and combat your negative thoughts and feelings of self-defeat. Its goal is to help you understand that rational thinking lies within you and is not dependent on situations outside of your control.

### **The Takeaway**

Remember the treatment plan must be continuously reviewed and modified to fit the patient's changing needs. And if you or a loved one are battling addiction, there is no need to do it alone, as there are known successful treatments that can help.



# Addiction Statistics

## HOW COMMON IS IT?

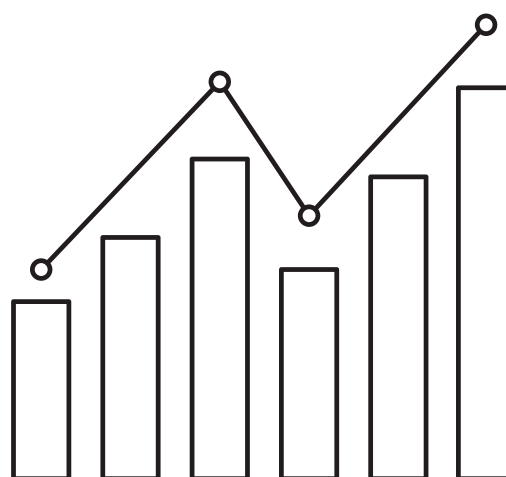
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Substance use is quite common on an international scale and statistics vary depending on the substance being consumed. It is estimated that nearly 5% of the world's population has used an illicit substance, 240 million people around the world use alcohol problematically, and approximately 15 million people use injection drugs (CMHA 2022).

However, in Canada, it is estimated that approximately 21% of the population (about 6 million people) will meet the criteria for addiction in their lifetime (CMHA 2022). Alcohol was the most common substance for which people met the criteria for addiction at 18% (CMHA 2022). Cannabis, also known as Marijuana, has one of the highest rates of cannabis use in the world, with more than 40% of Canadians having used cannabis in their lifetime and about 10% having used it in the past year (CMHA 2022).

While some people may be able to consume substances without resulting in significant harm, some people may experience ongoing substance-related problems. In Ontario, it is estimated that approximately 10% of the population uses substances problematically (CMHA 2022).

Recently, Ontario has seen a growing trend of harm related to opioid use. Opioids are a class of psychoactive drugs that are often used for pain management. These can include fentanyl, morphine, heroin, and oxycodone. While opioids are effective for pain relief, and many individuals can use them for short periods of time without concern, this class of drugs has led to harm across the province in recent years, including deaths due to overdose. In 2016 there were 865 deaths due to this substance, equal to an opioid-related overdose death occurring in Ontario every 10 hours (CMHA 2022).



# Addiction Statistics

## ADDICTION IN YOUNG PEOPLE IN CANADA:

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DRUG USE IS ESPECIALLY COMMON AND ESPECIALLY DETRIMENTAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. CANADIAN YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS ACCOUNT FOR A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF DRUG USERS.

### HERE ARE SOME SUBSTANCE USE STATISTICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN CANADA:

- Young people ages 15–24 are more likely to experience mental illness and/or substance use disorders than any other age group (Addiction Guide 2022).
- 60% of illicit drug users in Canada are between the ages of 15 and 24 (Addiction Guide 2022).
- 23% of students in Ontario report that they have been offered, sold, or given a drug in school in the past year (Addiction Guide 2022).
- Top 4 substances used by Ontario students: (Addiction Guide 2022)
  - Alcohol (58%)
  - Marijuana (35%)
  - Non-prescribed use of pain relievers (17%)
  - Tobacco (11.7%).
- 23% of 14-year-olds and 70% of 17-year-olds in Saskatchewan reported binge drinking at least once in the past month in 2008 (Addiction Guide 2022).
- About 1 in 20 Ontario students in grades 7 to 12 reported using cocaine in the past year in 2005 (Addiction Guide 2022).



# Addiction Statistics

## SOCIAL-ECONOMIC STATUS, RACE, GENDER & MENTAL ILLNESS WITH RESPECT TO ADDICTION:

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### SOCIAL-ECONOMIC STATUS:

Socio-economic status (SES) is your social standing, and it is usually a combination of income and occupation and education. It appears to play a role in addiction. For example, young adults in wealthier families are the most likely to use alcohol and marijuana.

Experimentation starts early, and this can set young children up for abuse.

In lower classes, drugs may be more readily accessible. For example, children may encounter drug deals while just walking to school.

Additionally, lower SES is associated with higher levels of stress. Chronic stress is a risk factor for almost all mental illnesses. That means poorer populations may be more susceptible to addiction.

Of course, socioeconomic status also plays a role in recovery. People with a lower SES may have a harder time accessing the care they need. They may not have health insurance. They might also not have the option to stop or cut back on working in order to attend treatment.

### THE 2018 NATIONAL SURVEY ON DRUG USE AND HEALTH BREAKS DOWN THE RATES OF SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS BY RACE:

- 4.8% of Asian Americans (Footprints to Recovery 2022)
- 6.9% of Black or African Americans (Footprints to Recovery 2022)
- 7.1% of Hispanic or Latinos (Footprints to Recovery 2022)
- 7.7% of Whites (Footprints to Recovery 2022)
- 9.3% of Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders (Footprints to Recovery 2022)
- 10.1% of American Indian or Alaskan Natives (Footprints to Recovery 2022)

It's impossible to tell whether these numbers vary due to genes, culture, or both, but when it comes to substance use, it is crucial to acknowledge the role of institutional racism and societal expectations.

**As mentioned, most people do not receive the treatment they need for addiction. Unfortunately, racial disparities exist in all forms of healthcare. Minority populations tend to be less likely to receive substance use treatment.**

# Addiction Statistics

## SOCIAL-ECONOMIC STATUS, RACE, GENDER & MENTAL ILLNESS WITH RESPECT TO ADDICTION:

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### GENDER:

About 4% of adolescents have a substance use disorder (Footprints to Recovery 2022). The younger someone is when they begin using drugs, the more likely they are to develop addiction problems later in life.

This may happen for a few reasons:

- Drug use can have harmful, lasting impacts on developing brains
- Early risk factors, like trauma, mental illness, or family problems, may exacerbate the likelihood of developing an addiction.
- Many people think addiction is a young person's problem, but research shows that 25% of all prescribed medications are given to older patients (Footprints to Recovery 2022). It is estimated that the number of adults over the age of 50 who need substance use treatment will increase by 300% from 2000 to 2020 (Footprints to Recovery 2022).

### MENTAL ILLNESS:

In a given year, over 18% of adults have suffered from a mental illness (Footprints to Recovery 2022). These illnesses may include:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Bipolar disorder

About half of people who have a mental illness also experience a substance use disorder and vice versa (Footprints to Recovery 2022). Many people use drugs or alcohol to self-medicate mental health symptoms.

### RECOVERY:

According to a Canadian Center on Substance Use and Addiction survey, people who are in recovery from addiction almost always do so through recovery programs or community services.

Programs that are available to people struggling with addiction or substance use problems include:

- Recovery programs for both men and women
- Calgary Dream Centre's Immersion Experience
- Transitional and Community Housing
- Family Support Programs
- Recovery Statistics

# STAGES OF ADDICTION

Addiction is often viewed as something people choose out of boredom or for some other reasons. However, addiction is a complex condition, created by compulsive substance use, despite harmful consequences. People with addiction have a strong urge to use a certain substance to the point where it takes control of their life. Despite knowing the consequences and problems that substances can cause, people with addiction still use them.

This is due to the fact that men and women with addiction tend to have distorted thinking, behavior, and body functions. The intense cravings to engage in the habit are largely due to the changes in the brain's wiring. These changes are also the reason why it's not as easy to overcome addiction as most people think it is.

A study from the *Frontiers in Integrative Neuroscience* reports that it is still not entirely clear what neurophysiological processes are involved in the development and progression of addictive disorders. The same study focuses on drug addiction, which they define as a chronic relapsing disorder comprised of three stages:

1. PREOCCUPATION / ANTICIPATION
2. BINGE / INTOXICATION, AND
3. WITHDRAWAL / NEGATIVE EFFECTS

These stages feed into one another, thus becoming more intense over time and ultimately leading to the pathological state known as addiction.



# STAGES OF ADDICTION

Different drugs produce distinct patterns of addiction that engage different components of the addiction cycle. Each stage of addiction involves changes in critical neurotransmitters and neural circuits.

While the above-mentioned study suggests there are three stages of developing an addiction, we are going to focus on six to illustrate just how complicated addiction is, but also to demonstrate successful treatment is possible.

## STAGE 1: INITIAL USE

For many people, the initial use of the substance comes in the form of experimentation. This experimentation can cause the individual to grow to like the effects that they experience.

## STAGE 3: TOLERANCE

Tolerance is defined as a person's diminished response to a substance that is a result of repeated use. This can deepen the roots of addiction.

## STAGE 5: ADDICTION

Addiction is compulsive substance use that occurs despite personal harm or negative consequences. It's considered a chronic disease that involves impaired control and craving.

Many self-described addicts have reported feeling "different" from others long before developing their addictions. They felt uncomfortable, lonely, restless, and incomplete.

The American Society of Addiction Medicine explains that addiction is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, the environment, genetics, and a person's lived experiences.

Therefore, addiction is a complicated condition that involves brain changes and other factors influencing a person's health, well-being, and overall quality of life.

## STAGE 2: ABUSE

At this stage, many people are unaware that they have a problem. Abuse can include higher dosages or simply engaging in the harmful activity more frequently.

## STAGE 4: DEPENDENCE

Eventually, the body adapts to the presence of the substance and develops unpleasant withdrawal symptoms when a person stops taking it.

## STAGE 6: RELAPSE

Relapse is a recurrence of past addictive behaviours during recovery. This tends to hinder the recovery process and places the individual back in the rigorous cycle of addiction.



# BIOLOGY OF ADDICTION

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Addiction affects 10 to 15% of the adult population. Independent variables such as genetic predisposition, environmental and psychological risk factors, and the number of substances are used to determine the severity of the addiction. Drugs can use our reward system, which consists of a neural circuit that produces pleasurable feelings in response to stimuli that promote survival. Activators/stimuli can include food, sex, and social interactions. Our future behavior is modified to incorporate those stimuli in our everyday lives.

Addictions are not planned events. Some people get addicted through prescription medication for pain relief due to injury (disc herniation) or psychopathology (depression or anxiety). Others get addicted to treat their issues legally or illegally (ex. someone with low energy might try cocaine). Others participate because of curiosity or peer pressure.

Positive feelings in our reward system are reinforced by substances of abuse. These positive feelings encourage our body to keep participating in that task. Repeated exposure to these substances leads to long-term suppression of the reward system, whereby, natural activators are not working. A state of disorder/equilibrium follows, in which only a potent substance can now activate the reward system. This creates addiction and dependency which often results in relapses.



## Point to Point System

-one neuron connects with one other neuron

- Amino acids – Glutamate, GABA, aspartate, and lysine as neurotransmitters for action and sensation.

## Diverse System

-one neuron is connected to many different neurons

- Dopamine, acetylcholine, and serotonin – modulate neural responses to maintain homeostasis - is the body's ability to remain stable while staying the same, a state in which all systems are in balance, a state of equilibrium, an ideal “set point” despite alterations within the body.
- Drugs abuse both systems.

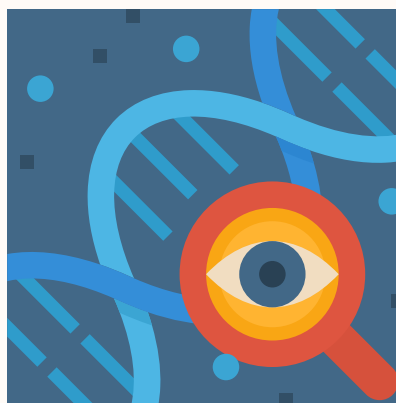
# BIOLOGY OF ADDICTION

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## Reward Circuit

Consist of the mesolimbic dopamine system, lateral hippocampus, and medial forebrain. The reward circuit promotes activities of survival by producing a pleasurable feeling. Memory centers are also activated with experiences or activities that promote the reward, this feeling can be incorporated/learned for future behavior. The neurotransmitter that is mainly responsible is dopamine. Other neurotransmitters like glutamate and serotonin regulate and modulate dopamine release in the reward system (promote drug-seeking behavior as it's associated with the hippocampus).

Abnormalities are recorded in the reward system right before substances are being taken, during the time of substance abuse, and during withdrawal (cravings). Chronic substance abusers were recorded to have decreased dopamine receptor density in the mesolimbic system. Studies have found that even planning substance intake can increase dopamine levels compared to the actual intoxication of these substances. Substances of abuse downplay normal/natural stimuli that activate your reward system, as higher dopamine levels are found after intoxication than after natural rewards.



Stress, depression, and decreased dopamine levels are seen during withdrawal, this eventually leads to the activation of the reward system by the substance abuser. Dopamine binds to D1 receptors, which leads genes like C-FosB and dynorphin to be made. These genes suppress dopamine response and inhibit the use of the rewards system for a short period (feedback loop). If these substances are used chronically, the reward system would be chronically suppressed and larger doses (drugs) are needed to obtain the positive feeling again. Dopamine receptor density also decreases as a response to overstimulation in chronic drug users' reward systems. Again, natural rewards that may not have a high dopamine response have no chance of impacting the reward system and only drugs can activate the reward system strongly enough to arouse the user. Without substances of abuse, users feel depressed, stressed, and unwilling to participate in activities.



# Considering REACHING OUT



It is incredibly gratifying to reach out to a friend to check in, connect and offer support when they need it. When someone is in need of compassion and kindness, this is a unique opportunity for us to be our most loving selves. This, in turn, can lead to making it easier to show compassion for ourselves.

Reaching out to others allows relationships to become even stronger and ultimately to have a deeper connection with the people around us helping us when we might need encouragement, a meaningful boost, or even support.

## Why Should You Consider Reaching Out?

### Reason #1: It puts things into perspective

Getting the support you need helps you put things into perspective. We tend to be emotional when things do not go our way and more chaos means more emotions. We then tend to think with our hearts rather than with our minds. Reaching out to someone gives you a different perspective that can help you put certain things in their rightful place.

### Reason #2: Dealing with feelings and thoughts

Reaching out will further help you sort out your feelings and thoughts. Talking about your feelings and thoughts has the same effect as writing them down. It can help you feel less overwhelmed and guide you to think more clearly while also allowing you to feel a lot better.

### Reason #3: Feeling safe

Feeling a sense of belonging during difficult times can be very helpful. When you go through tough times you may feel as though you are bearing all the weight alone. There are a lot of people around you that can support you. Sometimes you need to reach out in order for them to know how to better support you.

# Benefits of REACHING OUT

## Benefits of Reaching Out and Seeking Help: Mental health

By reaching out and being honest about what you are going through, you are more likely to receive the correct guidance and support you need. Every person that reaches out also helps to reduce stigmas, especially those associated with mental health and addiction.

### The benefits of seeking help

Actively seeking psychological help has many immediate and long-term benefits, such as:



#### YOU WILL NO LONGER STRUGGLE ALONE

- Seeking help ensures that you can build a supportive community that understands what you are going through. This community can offer helpful and appropriate guidance and advice.

#### YOU CAN BUILD BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

- Mental health counseling could empower you to better connect with your loved ones. You will build healthier relationships through clear and honest communication.

#### IT REDUCES YOUR RISK FOR OTHER MEDICAL ISSUES

- Poor mental health can also cause other medical issues. Sleep disorders, obesity, digestive problems, and other illnesses are all linked. Seeking help early on will minimize your risk of developing other health conditions.

#### IT TEACHES YOU TO DEVELOP COPING STRATEGIES

- Seeking professional help will give you the coping tools and strategies you need. You will be able to navigate challenging situations with a greater degree of awareness.

#### YOUR PERFORMANCE AT WORK CAN IMPROVE

- Mental health conditions have the potential to make us demotivated and despondent. Seeking help allows you to learn how to manage challenges that can affect your well-being and mental fitness. You will perform to the best of your ability, even when you are under pressure.

#### IT IMPROVES YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE

- Acquiring help will assist you in strengthening your relationships and meeting new friends. You will also learn how to cope with challenges that arrive on a daily basis while discovering what does and does not work for you.

# REACHING OUT

*8 signs that you should seek help*

It is not always easy to know when to start seeking professional help. It is also important to mention that everyone's mental health journey is different. Below are just a few signs to be aware of.

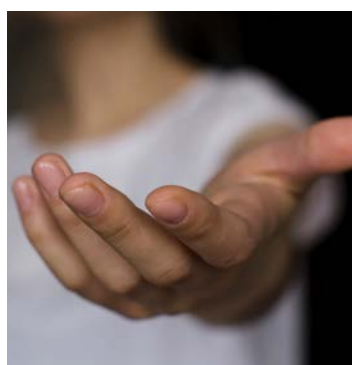
- You are finding it difficult to concentrate
  - Changes in performance at work are common among those battling poor mental health. This includes a lack of concentration and poor productivity levels.
  - You may feel disconnected from a job that once made you happy. You may even receive feedback from your managers on your work quality and concentration.
- Your friends and family are concerned about you
  - Friends and family members are sometimes (but not always) equipped to notice patterns from the outside that are difficult to see on the inside. If your loved ones have voiced concerns about your mental health, try and listen because they may have noticed something in you that you are not yet able to see.
- You are having difficulties sleeping
  - Depression and anxiety can both cause insomnia. Persistently struggling to sleep and poor sleep can interfere with your ability to function in your day-to-day life.
  - If you are not getting enough high-quality sleep, it could be time to seek help. Remember, a lot of things can affect your sleep, so it is best to speak to a medical or mental health professional.
- Nothing excites you
  - Losing interest in activities you once enjoyed, and in life in general, may be a sign you should reach out and speak to a professional.
- You're feeling isolated and alone
  - Poor mental health can isolate us. They can make us feel alone, distressed, or uncomfortable around other people. A lack of understanding from your peers about what you are going through may compound the problem.
- You keep getting ill
  - Emotional distress and stress can affect your body. It can manifest as a wide range of ailments, from chronic stomach issues to frequent colds, headaches, and general physical pain. If you are physically not feeling well and your medical doctor cannot find the cause, ask them to recommend a mental health professional for you to speak to.
- You are abusing substances to cope
  - If you find yourself abusing drugs or alcohol, or even eating too much or too little, this may be a red flag.
  - Using these crutches to cope with poor mental health may numb you in the present but it may be a symptom of a larger cause and time to reach out for help.
  - Reach out to the following organizations if you find yourself abusing substances to cope:
    - [Alcoholics Anonymous \(AA\)](#)
    - [Narcotics Anonymous \(NA\)](#)
    - [National Eating Disorders Association \(NEDA\)](#)
    - [Get help with substance use](#)
- You have suffered a traumatic event
  - Traumatic events such as deaths, breakups, divorces, and job losses, just to name a few, can all require counseling to address.
  - These traumas and associated grief do not always resolve on their own. They can impact your daily functioning if they persist.
  - If you notice that you are not engaging in life or you are pulling away from your loved ones, it might be time to seek professional help.

# REACHING OUT

*How to help someone else*

It is important to seek out help when you are struggling. It is equally important to try and support those in your life who you notice is struggling.

Here are some actionable tips you can use to help someone else:



- 1** **Let them know they are heard**  
 Many people are hesitant and even scared to reach out. It is crucial not to dismiss their concerns. Listen to their concerns and offer advice only if they are receptive to it.
- 2** **Listen without making judgments**  
 You do not know what someone with mental health issues is going through or how they perceive their own traumas and struggles. Remain empathetic and refrain from judging their actions or coping methods.
- 3** **Suggest seeking professional help**  
 Gently advise your friend or colleague to start seeking help for their mental health issues with a trained professional.
- 4** **Validate their feelings**  
 You can validate someone's feelings by telling them that you believe them when they say that they are struggling.
- 5** **Seek professional guidance yourself**  
 It is crucial that you do not try to give mental health advice to your friends and acquaintances yourself. Seek guidance from a professional to provide your peers with accurate advice that will help instead of harm them.

## Focusing on Addiction

### How to Reach out

There are several ways that you can reach out for help. The first is by doing a simple online search for treatment centers. Many treatment centers have addiction specialists standing by waiting to take your call.

The next thing you could do is contact those around you who can offer you support and help. Often, the stigma and shame that comes along with addiction cause us to isolate and perhaps even try to do things on our own. Reach out to your supportive family, or friends.

Do not despair if you do not find something immediately but be patient and continue your search. Making sure that you follow through and get yourself the treatment you need and deserve is the most important and responsible thing you can do for yourself.

## Try Not to Be Afraid

Going into drug and alcohol treatment for the first time can be very intimidating but it is extremely helpful.

For many struggling with drug and alcohol addiction, recovery was not successful on the first go-around either. The most important thing you can do is be courageous, and brave, and give it another shot! Getting help for an addiction is scary, but it is nothing in comparison to what your life will be like if your addiction to drugs and/or alcohol continues to progress!

## **A SMART GOAL IS A SPECIFIC MEASURABLE ATTAINABLE RELEVANT TIME-BASED GOAL**

It is a very effective way to set clear goals and actually, achieve them.

### *S: SPECIFIC*

When setting a goal, you want to specify what exactly you want to achieve. For example; I want to exercise more.

This is NOT a specific goal, at least not specific enough. Why do I want to exercise? How much do I want to exercise in a day, a week, or even a month? What time of the day do I want to exercise? What days do I want to exercise? So to make this goal more specific how would I word it?

For example; I want to exercise 3 times a week in the morning for 1hr. On Mondays Tuesdays and Wednesdays, because I want to be more active. This is a SPECIFIC goal.

# *SMART GOALS*

# SMART GOALS

# SMART GOALS

## *M: MEASURABLE*

Now we've made the goal more specific, how are you going to measure your success? When attempting to achieve a goal you want to be able to see how close or how far you are from achieving it. You want to know how to measure your progress.

For example; I want to exercise 3 times per week in the morning for 1hr on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays because I want to be more active.

If we want to make this goal measurable we could say; In three weeks, I will exercise for 30 minutes, and in six weeks I will reach my goal of 1 hour, exercising 3 days a week.

## *A: ACHIEVABLE/ATTAINABLE*

The goal is specific and we've made it measurable, so how will we achieve this goal? What steps are we taking to accomplish the thing which we want to achieve? You should be able to look at your goal and break it down into smaller tasks. For example; I will exercise starting with 10 minutes, and every week I will add 10 more minutes each week.

Now that you know how you will achieve your goal, your success is more measurable and you can keep track of your success.

# *SMART GOALS*

## *R: RELEVANT*

Your goal has now become more specific, and measurable, and you have a better understanding of how you're going to achieve it, but there's more to think about. How is your goal relevant? Why do you want to accomplish this goal? Why is it important to you?

For example; I want to be more active because it will improve the state of my mental and physical health.

This increases your motivation to achieve this goal.

## *T: TIME-BASED*

The last thing you need to do in order to accomplish your goal is to set a time frame from when you start taking steps towards your goal, and when you want to have accomplished your goal.

For example; I want to start my goal on Monday, June 13th, 2022 and accomplish the goal by Monday, July 4th, 2022.

## **EXAMPLE**

**S:** I want to exercise 3 times a week in the morning for 1hr. On Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, because I want to be more active.

**M:** In three weeks, I will exercise for 30 minutes, and in six weeks I will reach my goal of 1 hour, exercising 3 days a week.

**A:** I will exercise starting with 10 minutes, and every week I will add 10 more minutes each week.

**R:** I want to be more active because it will improve the state of my mental and physical health.

**T:** I want to start my goal on Monday June 13th, 2022 and accomplish the goal by Monday July 4th, 2022.

# SMART GOALS

**WEEK 4**

**WEEK 4  
GENERAL  
LIFE SKILLS**



**A&A MEDICAL HEALTHCARE  
SUPPLIES AID**



# RESUME/COVER LETTER

## **HOW TO WRITE A RESUME:**

### **01 SET UP YOUR FORMATTING AND RESUME STYLE:**

- Start your resume by opening a new document in your preferred word processor (like Microsoft Word, Google Docs, or Apple Pages). Then use the following resume formatting:
- Set ½"–1" inch margins on all sides
- Make sure your page is set to US Letter size and portrait orientation
- Select a professional font for your resume, such as Arial or Helvetica
- Adjust your font size between 10 and 12 point
- TIP: Keep everything on one-page so you don't overwhelm the hiring manager. Only write a two-page resume if all of your information is relevant to the job, or if you're applying for a senior leadership role.

### **02 PICK A RESUME LAYOUT:**

- There are three main resume formats most job seekers use today. Each format is structured to help you lay out and emphasize different parts of your professional background.
- Those three formats include the chronological resume, the combination resume, and the functional resume.
- The right format for you depends on your work history, the job you are applying to, and your skillset.

### **03 ADD A RESUME HEADER:**

- Your resume should have an eye-catching resume header at the top of the page to quickly highlight your contact details for hiring managers.
- A resume header needs to include your:
  - Name
  - Email address (use a professional one like `firstname.lastname@gmail.com`)
  - Phone number
- You can also add these optional details:
  - An online portfolio or website (if relevant to the job)
  - Your LinkedIn
  - Your mailing address (if you want to show you are a local)
  - A resume headline (a subtitle that describes your experience)

**TIP: Your name should always be the largest element on your resume to make it stand out, so use a font size larger than 20 points.**

## **HOW TO WRITE A RESUME:**

### **04 USE A RESUME INTRODUCTION:**

- Hiring managers, especially those at large companies, have many applications to review for each job opening. With so much competition, it can be tough to make sure your resume gets the attention it deserves.
- To stand out to the hiring manager, your resume needs to communicate why you are the right person for the job as quickly as possible. That is where a convincing resume introduction comes into play.
- Your resume introduction provides a quick snapshot of your experience, skills, and qualifications at the very top of your resume. It should be 3–5 sentences and can be written in either sentence or bullet-point format.

### **05 TARGET YOUR WORK EXPERIENCE:**

- Next is your resume's work experience section, which many recruiters and employers are most interested in (so it is important to get it right).
- For each work experience entry, list the following basic information:
- How to list work experience on your resume
  - Job title – Dates employed (year and month)
  - Company name – Company location (city and state)
  - Three to five bullet points describing your achievements and responsibilities
  - Include hard numbers in your bullet points when possible
- To make your work experience section shine, target each bullet point to the specific job you want. Look carefully at the skills mentioned in the description, and showcase any of those skills you have with clear examples

### **06 USE NUMBERS AND ACTION VERBS:**

- Many job seekers make the mistake of simply listing past responsibilities in their experience section and resume introduction. Phrases like "responsible for" and "tasked with" are technically correct, but they do not do a good job of explaining what you accomplished at work.
- To make a resume better than those job seekers, instead focus on your achievements, complete with hard numbers that illustrate the impact of your work.

## **HOW TO WRITE A RESUME:**

### **07 SHOWCASE YOUR SKILLS:**

- Your key skills should be prominently displayed in your resume's skills section to give employers an at-a-glance view of the hard and soft skills that qualify you for the role.
- Hard skills are learned through specific training, workshops, work experience, or school and include the skills you need to operate equipment at work (like point-of-sale systems).
- Soft skills relate to your personality, and you develop them by simply dealing with people and daily tasks while at work. Organizational skills like coordination and self-management are good examples of soft skills valued by employers.
- Include a mix of hard and soft skills on your resume to show employers you have a balance of technical savvy and the ability to work well with colleagues and clients.
- TIP: have a lot of skills? Consider adding a technical skills section to your resume so employers know where to look for those skills. Adding a technical skills section is especially useful if you work in medicine, engineering, or marketing.

### **08 HIGHLIGHT YOUR EDUCATION:**

- Your education section should normally come after all of your work experience, but you can place it first if you have never held a full-time job or you are currently a student.
- An effective education section on a resume includes only your highest degree. If you did not go to college, add your high school diploma instead.
- TIP: The exception is for teaching jobs in higher education and college applications. For these roles, you need to write an academic CV and list all of your degrees, including high school diplomas, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and PhDs.

# RESUME/COVER LETTER

## **HOW TO WRITE A RESUME:**

### **09 ADD OTHER OPTIONAL SECTIONS:**

- Depending on your experience and background, consider adding optional resume sections. For example, certifications and awards are great if they are relevant to your chosen career, while hobbies and volunteer work are useful if you are writing a resume with no experience.

### **10 PROOFREAD YOUR APPLICATION:**

- Spend some time reading through it at least a couple of times. You would be surprised how easy it is to make a typo and how hard it is to spot them in your own writing.
- Software tools you can use to check your resume for grammar or spelling mistakes include:
  - Microsoft Word's spell checker
  - Grammarly
  - Hemingway

### **11 SAVE YOUR RESUME AS A PDF:**

- When you are sure your resume is finished and you have checked for errors, you can save it. The best option is to save your resume as a PDF. PDFs save your formatting even if you use fonts that are not installed on the hiring manager's computer, so they will appear exactly as you want them to appear.
- However, if the job ad specifically asks for your resume in Microsoft Word (DOCX) format or some other format, follow those instructions.
- TIP: Your resume's file name should be simple and clear and make it easy for the hiring manager to find it later. For example, Gloria-Chen-Resume.pdf is a good file name because it contains the applicant's name and the word "resume."

## 1. NOTE THE DATE

- Document the date you are sending the letter. The date line is usually in between your address and the address to which you are sending the letter.

## 2. INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS

- It is standard practice to begin with your name and address at the top of your cover letter. Some people use this information, reflecting the way it appears on their resume:

- Example:

Gilbert Swann

533 Sym Blvd, Edmonton, AB (555) 668-4100 |  
GS334@email.com

## 3. INCLUDE THE RECIPIENT'S NAME AND ADDRESS:

- You can find this information in the job description or on the company's website.
- The beginning of the letter will often look like this:

SENDER: Gilbert Swann

533 Sym Blvd, Edmonton, AB

(555) 668-4100

GS334@email.com

May 5th, 20XX

TO: Tonya Wilcox

Equate Systems

123 Root Street, Edmonton, AB

## 4. INTRODUCE YOURSELF:

- Begin with a standard greeting like "Dear", or "Hello".

## 5. MAKE YOUR OPENING PARAGRAPH ABOUT YOUR INTEREST IN THE POSITION:

- Your first paragraph ought to include the position you're applying for. Be enthusiastic about the position and company.

# HOW TO WRITE A COVER LETTER:

## **6. INCLUDE YOUR BACKGROUND:**

- The second paragraph may be a synopsis of your relevant experience. Include key achievements and expertise that relate to the position. Provide details about your successes and positive outcomes.

## **7. FOCUS ON YOUR QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Focus on another key achievement or skill, especially if it links to a keyword in the job description.

## **8. END WITH THE THINGS YOU BELIEVE DISTINGUISH YOU FROM OTHER CANDIDATES:**

- Your last paragraph should reiterate the reasons that you are suited for the role. Here is where you can underline why you are especially ready to take on the job and what sets you apart from other candidates. You can also use this opportunity to express your desire to know more about the role.

**PLEASE CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE THOROUGH DETAILS!**

## **9. SIGN WITH AN APPROPRIATE SALUTATION INCLUDING YOUR SIGNATURE:**

- Sign your name following a closing salutation like "All the best", or "Sincerely".
- Following these steps will help you create a cover letter that shows employers why you are uniquely qualified for the position.

# **HOW TO WRITE A COVER LETTER:**

# INTERVIEW

## DO'S AND DON'TS



- TAKE DEEP BREATHS BEFORE ENTERING, IT IS NORMAL TO BE NERVOUS
- FIRM HANDSHAKE, FRIENDLY GREETING
- POSTURE: HEAD UP, SHOULDERS PULLED BACK
- IT IS GOOD TO HAVE A FEW PREPARED ANSWERS TO COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS. E.G., "WHY DO YOU WANT TO WORK HERE?", OR "WHAT MAKES YOU UNIQUE?"
- EXPLAIN HOW THE JOB LINES UP WITH YOUR FUTURE GOALS



- DO NOT OVERTHINK OR DOUBT YOURSELF. YOU WERE CHOSEN FOR THIS INTERVIEW FOR A REASON
- DO NOT AVOID EYE CONTACT OR SIT DOWN IN THE INTERVIEW SEAT WITHOUT SHAKING THE INTERVIEWER'S HAND
- DO NOT SLOUCH OR LEAN ON ANYTHING, AS THIS SHOWS DISINTEREST AND LAZINESS

# INTERVIEW

## DO'S AND DON'TS



- BE YOURSELF, BE AWARE OF YOUR BODY LANGUAGE AND STAY PRESENT
- MAKE SURE TO HAVE A SHORT LIST OF QUESTIONS, SHOWING INTEREST IN THE POSITION THAT YOU ARE BEING INTERVIEWED FOR. E.G., "WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT WORKING HERE?", OR "HOW WILL MY PERFORMANCE BE EVALUATED?"
- FOLLOW UP WITH THE COMPANY IN ABOUT A WEEK OR SO AFTER YOUR INITIAL INTERVIEW

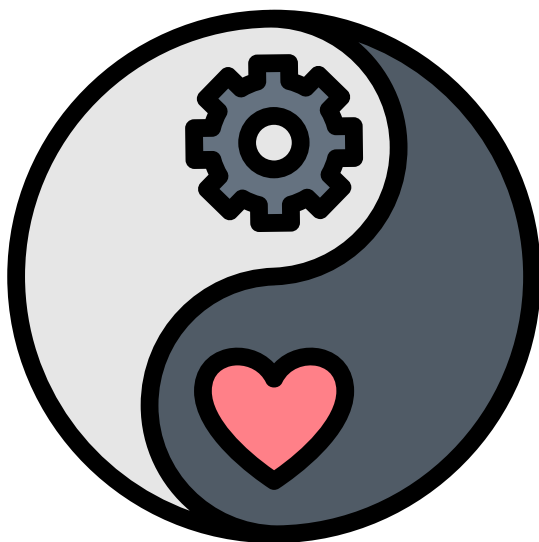


- DO NOT ENTER THE INTERVIEW WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE COMPANY AND POSITION THAT YOU ARE APPLYING FOR
- DO NOT EVER SPEAK NEGATIVELY ABOUT PREVIOUS JOBS, INSTEAD SPEAK ON WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED



# MAINTAIN A WORK/ LIFE BALANCE

**HOW TO HAVE A GOOD  
WORK-LIFE BALANCE -  
IT IS NOT JUST ABOUT  
TIME:**



1. Plan ahead to combine work activities with leisure, social, or fitness activities. If you find yourself with several virtual meetings back-to-back, try taking them while you go for a walk.
2. Embrace the way your brain works. Use productivity hacks like a Pomodoro timer to work in short, focused bursts. Block out all other distractions so you can make the most of your time.
3. Set blocks of time for different tasks. Have a time where you check (and respond to) messages, a time when you take meetings, and time to do mentally-intensive work.
4. End work at a certain time. There is a saying that “work expands to fill the time allotted,” and when you work from home it is even easier to let work spill over into personal time. Set a time to end work for the day, and reinforce it by powering down work-related devices, locking your office, or scheduling something afterward.
5. Enlist technology to help you unplug. Use an app to block distracting websites during the day, and then block work tools after hours. If you can, restrict work to one device, or try to keep one work-free device so you can disconnect completely.
6. Go out for lunch, or enjoy lunch with coworkers. Even if you are working from home, you can go out for your lunch break or connect with colleagues. The change of pace will be refreshing — and, of course, will remind you to actually eat something.
7. Take time off. When you are home all the time, you tend to try to work through illnesses that certainly would have kept you home from the office. Time off, including sick time, personal time, vacations, and bereavement, are important ways to nourish your well-being.

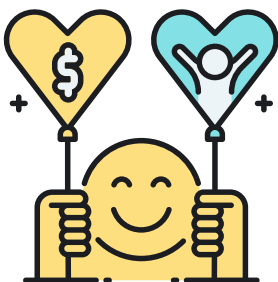
8. Mindfulness makes imbalance hard to ignore. When you practice mindfulness techniques, like meditation or breath awareness, you become more in tune with your emotions and physical sensations. Paying attention to these feelings helps you learn how to notice when you might be suppressing a need in order to work.
9. Find something you love outside of work to engage in. If you have something that you are excited about doing after work, it will make it easier to disconnect from work messages or end your day at a predetermined time.
10. Reconsider work that makes you yearn for balance. If your work feels completely unrelated to the activities that stir your interest, enthusiasm, energy, and sense of meaning, you may need to look at how you can change the work you do or the way you do it. While work does not need to (and cannot) satisfy all of your needs for purpose, meaning, social connection, and challenge, we can expect work to provide moments of satisfaction, accomplishment, and connection.
11. Communicate with your manager. Poor work-life balance is often exacerbated by the fear that we are not doing enough. Talking to your leaders can help you prioritize where to spend your time. If there really is too much to do, it might be time to talk about hiring additional help or streamlining certain tasks.
12. Work with a coach or therapist. If you feel overwhelmed, stuck, or do not know where to begin to disconnect, working with a professional can be invaluable. A coach or counselor can help you identify which changes will make the biggest impact and how to get started.

# MAINTAIN A WORK/ LIFE BALANCE

**HOW TO HAVE A GOOD  
WORK-LIFE BALANCE -  
IT IS NOT JUST ABOUT  
TIME:**



# WORK/LIFE BALANCE



*Some tips:*

TO MAINTAIN A  
WORK/LIFE BALANCE

## PLAN FOR REAL LIFE

Be realistic about what you can accomplish each day. For example, make sure you have some gaps between activities to allow for downtime, eating, and travel.

## GIVE YOURSELF ENOUGH TIME

Budget at least 1 hour of homework for every hour of class time.

## PLAN STUDY TIME

Plan blocks of time when you can study and work on assignments, and then figure out what work you need to do in each time slot.

## PLAN TIME FOR FUN

Leave time in your schedule for the things that make life worthwhile, such as hobbies or time with friends.

## DON'T OVER COMMIT

Try to avoid cramming your schedule with activities and tasks. Leave some free time for flexibility. Remember: you are not going to be able to predict all of the unexpected events that can and will happen.

## SPREAD THINGS OUT

Try to spread activities without fixed times across the week so that they are not all concentrated on already busy days.

## CREATE WEEKLY SCHEDULES

# HOW TO CREATE A BUDGET?

Creating a budget is really important to track expenses and to see how much you are spending each month! But first, what is a budget? A budget is a way to track expenses so that you know how much money you have after each month and if you are spending responsibly.

We recommend some apps that you could potentially use to budget, which are shown below. Know that this is not a one size fits all model. Choose what you think would work best for you. If you prefer paper, then use that. Alternatively, if you like some apps, then use the ones that work best for you.

## **MINT: BUDGET & EXPENSE MANAGER** 01.

This is a free app that has in-app purchase options. Mint will help you create a budget for that month and is very easy to set up and use. It has access to an exceptionally large number of financial institutions in both Canada and the USA.

## **YNAB** 02.

This is a paid app that has a free trial period for those who want to try it. This app has a proactive approach in letting you learn how to budget and a well-designed web interface. It also lets you plan your budget many months in advance.

## **GOODBUDGET BUDGET PLANNER** 03.

This is a free app that has many features that are updated regularly. This includes an interactive forum to communicate with other users, resources such as apps and courses to help users along the way, and more!



# CREDIT CARD

# 101



A credit card involves your ability to borrow money and pay it back on time, whether it's monthly installments or lump sums. Maintaining a credit balance determines your relationship with you (borrower) and a financial institution (the bank).

A common mistake people make is overspending on their credit cards, people assume that the borrowed money (credit) is free or without consequences. Essentially a credit card determines your ability to borrow funds and pay them back on time. The goal is to have a good credit score/history; to be known as someone who makes regular on-time payments. People with bad credit histories make late payments or completely miss their deadlines.

## HOW TO MAINTAIN A GOOD CREDIT SCORE

- Pay bills using a credit card
- Pay loans on time
- Regularly using your credit and maintaining a **low balance**
- Invest in your relationship – **USE CREDIT CARD WISELY**

# CREDIT CARD

# 101



## **CREDIT CARD HISTORY:**

Credit card history is the history of the money you spend, borrow, and pay back. A credit card history is a track record of spending habits that determines if you are financially responsible with the money you've been given. Also, it determines

- How many credit cards you've opened.
- Balances on each credit card.
- Payments made, including the amount and time of payments.

A credit report contains your credit history to determine whether lenders want you to borrow money from them. Lenders need to know if they can trust you with borrowed money and can manage debt.

## **CREDIT SCORE:**

Think of your credit scores like a grade you get for maintaining a good/bad relationship between you and your credit card. Good credit comes from paying your bills on time and utilizing your card appropriately. Bad credit comes from not paying your bills, opening too many credit accounts at the same time, and constantly missing payment deadlines. A low to high credit score ranges from 350-800; financial institutions will reference your credit score and may generate a personal score.

# CREDIT CARD

## 101



### WHY IS CREDIT SCORE SO IMPORTANT?

A credit card determines the ability to access money for future uses from banks, credit unions, or other lenders. As I mentioned before, credit cards determine if you are financially stable or responsible enough to borrow money, especially at times when you need it the most! Credit cards predate the approval or amount you're able to borrow. Additionally, it is also important to maintain a good credit score to avoid high-interest rates on loans. If lenders know you are financially responsible through your credit score, they're less likely to charge you high-interest rates on loans. Credits can determine...

- Auto loans
- Process of buying a house, Mortgage – line a credit
- Personal loans
- Cell phone plans
- Rent

### Tips:

- Always pay back on time!!!
- Donnot spend money you don't have!!!!
- Hold 1 or 2 credit cards at a time.

# How To Keep Your House Clean



It keeps you from collecting junk. Regularly cleaning your house helps you to get rid of unwanted or unnecessary items. By making sure your environment is clean you can avoid spreading germs and reduce allergies and breathing problems. Disinfecting, sweeping, mopping, and vacuuming will kill germs and stop them from spreading. This will prevent sickness. You want to keep out pests. Bugs and rodents are attracted to spills, food particles, and other sources of food. Pests are very unpleasant and can spread germs and allergens.

## Why Keeping The House Clean Is Important?

Keeping a clean environment is not easy, but it's a life skill that everyone needs to learn. A clean, tidy and decent environment is essential for your well-being. It keeps you organized and reduces stress, because you know where things are. You won't have to search a lot to find what you need at any given time.

A clean environment is a healthy one. It is good for your physical, mental and emotional health and well-being. Try as much as possible to do your best in keeping your house clean. Don't feel discouraged when you find it hard to stay on top of cleaning, but remind yourself of the benefits and why it's healthy.



# How To Keep Your House Clean



## How to Keep Your Fridge/Freezer Clean and Organized

Another aspect of keeping your house clean is keeping your fridge and freezer clean. This is also very important because food is an essential part of living. How you keep your food matters and is part of your well-being.

1. Empty fridge/freezer, check expiration dates, and eliminate any unwanted products
2. Prepare soapy water mixture, for the freezer prepare a mop towel to use
3. Categorize all items eg. fruits,veggies,dairy etc.
4. Remove drawers and shelves when needed, If necessary vacuum (tip wipe with alcohol first) (tip use a toothpick for tough spots)
5. wash and dry drawers and shelves
6. Create a zone for different purpose eg. meal preps, beverages, leftovers etc.
7. Fix up your fridge/freezer
8. Create a time(s) or day(s) when you will clean your fridge/freezer
9. (optional) decorate the outside

# PERSONAL BOUNDARIES : WHAT ARE THEY AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

Personal boundaries are simply the lines and rules we draw for ourselves in terms of our level of comfort within our relationships and those around us. A simple example of a healthy boundary is being able to say “no” when you want to without being uneasy. Boundaries can deal with how people physically and verbally interact with you. Like not wanting your family and or friends to speak down to you, or even not wanting people you don't know personally in your home when you are not there.

**Boundaries can also deal with specific things like your:**

- Emotions (protecting your own emotional well-being)
- Physiological (protecting your physical space)
- Sexual (protecting your needs and safety sexually)
- Work Environment (protecting your ability to work without interference)
- Possessions (protecting your personal belongings)
- Time (protecting the use, and misuse, of your time)

All this means is that boundaries can be implemented in almost any environment, whether its when you are out with friends, at work, at home, or visiting extended family. It is always advised to tell others what your personal boundaries are, so that it reduces the likelihood to be violated repeatedly.



There are 3 forms of boundaries: rigid, porous, and healthy boundaries.

## 01 Common traits of those with Rigid Boundaries

- Tend to avoid intimacy and close relationships
- They are unlikely to ask for help
- Have few close relationships.
- They tend to be very protective of personal information
- May seem detached, even with romantic partners
- Keeps others at a distance to avoid the possibility of rejection

## 02 Common traits of those with Porous Boundaries

- Overshares personal information
- Has difficulty saying "no" to other people's demands
- Overinvolved with other people's problems
- Overly reliant on the opinions of others
- Accepting of abuse or contempt
- Fears rejection if they do not cooperate with others

## 03 Common traits of those with Healthy Boundaries

- Values own opinions
- Does not sacrifice one's values for the sake of others
- Does not over share personal information
- Understands and can articulate personal wants and needs
- Accepting that others may say "no" to them

## WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

Having personal boundaries and defining them by outlining likes and dislikes; are necessary for good relationships and, therefore, a healthy existence. Therefore not only will your relationships improve, because people will be aware about how you want to be treated, thus opening more trust within your relationships.

Boundaries are you setting guidelines of how you want others to treat you, and things important to you. Thus, respecting your partner's boundaries while establishing your own is an essential component of a healthy relationship. Boundaries are what make you feel safe around others, whether they are boundaries about your time, emotions, or anything else that helps you feel at ease within your relationship.


 A photograph of several wooden blocks with black letters spelling out the word "BOUNDARY" in a row on a dark wooden surface. Some other blocks with letters like 'H', 'D', and 'B' are scattered around.
 

# BOUNDARY

## BUILDING PROCESS: RECOGNIZING AND SETTING PERSONAL BOUNDARIES!

- Setting limits in any element of your relationships is certain to strengthen them in the long run. Here's how to recognise your personal boundaries and discuss them with your spouse.
- To establish and set boundaries successfully, it is essential to first understand why they are important to you and how they will help you emotional, physical, and mental well-being. Self reflection is key, ask questions about different situations which make you feel uncomfortable and find the reason as to why. You need to be able to understand what is happening to you to better define your boundaries. Take your time in doing this as it is not a race. Going at a comfortable pace allows you to properly reflect on whether you're on the correct track or if you need to make some changes.
- It is a lot easier to work with boundaries when they are set straight away, as setting expectations from the start ensures that everyone understands where you and they stand, while reducing feelings of hurt, and uncertainty.
- There is no reason not to have boundaries that can be adapted, i.e., taking an hour of alone time every day or during the weekends. This boundary could apply whether you live with a partner, have a busy social schedule with friends, or are close with your family.
- Take note of social media as well as these platforms have enabled us with more communication than ever before, but they have also fostered significant boundary blurring. If you consider a certain activity to be border-crossing in real life, your concerns are not diminished when it occurs online.
- Communication is very crucial, especially when someone frequently crosses yours. While you may need to express your concerns, these discussions do not have to be combative. There are ways to subtly underline their behaviour while asserting your threshold.
- For boundaries to have a strong foundation, you can not have a negative mentality about yourself, such as senses of worthlessness and undeservingness. You will find difficulties putting boundaries in place that can protect you. Self-worth is the root.
- Not having boundaries can be damaging to your wellbeing, however, going too far and overloading them can also have a negative influence on your mental well-being. Have some but don't be dictated by them.



# POINTS TO NOTE

- Boundaries are necessary for a variety of reasons and appear differently to everyone. You may be scared that they will make you appear unfriendly or combative, but you may keep them without upsetting those you care about.
- Set boundaries without feeling guilty! They are essentially a type of self-care, and we deliberately seek to include other aspects of them into our daily life, such as eating a balanced diet and exercising. This is no exception!
- It may take some time and thought to determine the boundaries that are most important to you and the best ways to enforce them, but your mental health will appreciate the work in the long run.

*The  
Takeaway*

# GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY: **VOLUNTEERING**

## Why volunteer?

With volunteering can seem time-consuming, the benefits of volunteering can be enormous. Volunteering offers vital help to people in need, meaningful causes, and the community, but the benefits can be even greater for you, the volunteer. The right volunteering opportunity can help you to find friends, connect with the community, learn new skills, and even advance your career!

## Benefits of Volunteering:

1. Volunteering connects you to others.
2. Volunteering is good for your mind and body.
3. Volunteering can advance your career.
4. Volunteering brings fun and fulfillment to your life.

# GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY: **VOLUNTEERING**

## How to find the right volunteer opportunity

There are numerous volunteer opportunities available. The key is to find a position that you would enjoy and are capable of doing. It's also important to make sure that your commitment matches the organization's needs. Ask yourself the following:

- Would you like to work with adults, children, animals, or remotely from home?
- Do you prefer to work alone or as part of a team?
- Are you better behind the scenes or do you prefer to take a more visible role?
- How much time are you willing to commit?
- What skills can you bring to a volunteer job?
- What causes are important to you?

# GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY:

# **VOLUNTEERING**

## How to find the right volunteer opportunity

Using your responses, you can narrow down your volunteer prospect options. Some common places to find volunteering opportunities are:

- Community theaters, museums, and monuments.
- Libraries or senior centers.
- Service organizations such as Lions Clubs or Rotary Clubs.
- Local animal shelters, rescue organizations, or wildlife centers.
- Youth organizations, sports teams, and after-school programs.
- Historical restorations, national parks, and conservation organizations.
- Places of worship such as churches or synagogues.



# EXERCISE AND MENTAL HEALTH



In fact, for mild-moderate depression, research suggests physical activity can be just as effective as antidepressants or psychological treatments like cognitive behavioral therapy. Exercise can also be a valuable addition to other treatment options.

## Summary

- People who exercise regularly have better mental health and emotional wellbeing, and lower rates of mental illness
- Exercise is important for people with mental illness - it not only boosts our mood, concentration and alertness, but improves our cardiovascular and overall physical health.
- Exercise doesn't have to be in the gym, strenuous, structured or take a long time to have benefits.
- Any exercise is better than none, but experts recommend adults should be active most days. Experts recommend aiming for between 2.5-5 hours of moderate physical activity per week.

Research shows that people who exercise regularly have better mental health and emotional wellbeing, and lower rates of mental illness.

Taking up exercise seems to reduce the risk of developing mental illness. It also seems to help in treating some mental health conditions, like depression and anxiety.



# Why does exercise make us feel better, mentally?

Often, people who exercise regularly do it simply because it makes them feel good. Exercise can boost your mood, concentration and alertness. It can even help give you a positive outlook on life.

The link between exercise and mental health is complicated. Inactivity can be both a cause and a consequence of mental illness, for example. But there are lots of ways that exercise can benefit your mental health, such as:

- The levels of chemicals in the brain, such as serotonin, stress hormones and endorphins, change when you exercise.
- Regular exercise can help you sleep better. And good sleep helps you manage your mood.
- Exercise can improve your sense of control, coping ability and self-esteem. People who exercise regularly often report how good achieving a goal makes them feel.
- Exercise can distract you from negative thoughts and provide opportunities to try new experiences.
- It offers an opportunity to socialize and get social support if you exercise with others.
- Exercise increases your energy levels.
- Physical activity can be an outlet for your frustrations.
- Exercise can reduce skeletal muscle tension, which helps you feel more relaxed.

The physical benefits of exercise are also important for people with mental illness. It improves your cardiovascular health and overall physical health. This is important because people with mental health issues are at a higher risk of suffering from chronic physical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, arthritis and asthma.



# AT-HOME, SIMPLE EXERCISES

Exercise and  
Mental Health

Workouts don't have to involve the gym, weights, or even a track. Activities such as yoga, or dancing count as physical activity too! For simple workouts, all you need is a chair or a mat. Depending on the workout, you can build muscle, lose fat, work on cardio and more! Try spending at least 15 minutes per day engaging in physical activity.

- Workouts do not have to involve the gym, weights, or even a track. Activities such as yoga, or dancing count as physical activity too! For simple workouts, all you need is a chair or a mat. Try spending at least 15 minutes per day engaging in physical activity.
- Here are a few videos on home workouts that you can follow for guidance:
  - Muscle Building
  - Weight Loss
  - Seated Cardio
  - Chair Cardio for Fat Loss

# FOOD BANKS

## What is a food bank?

A food bank is a nonprofit organization that collects safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food, and redistributes it to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity.

## List of food banks in Ontario

- Eden Food for Change
- Food Banks Canada
- Eden Community Food Bank
- The Mississauga Food Bank
- Daily Bread Food Bank
- Muslim Food Bank Community Services
- St Mary's Food Bank
- Burlington Food Bank
- The Food Bank of York Region
- Oakville Fareshare Food Bank
- Stop Community Food Centre
- Vaughan Food Bank
- The Salvation Army Khi Community Church & Family Services
- Gleaners Food Bank
- The Food Bank of Waterloo

## Other foodbank related resources

- Feed Ontario
- Central Health Line CA
- Champlain Health Line CA
- 211 Ontario



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# THE STIGMA ATTACHED TO FOOD BANKS

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Stigmatizing individuals with low incomes perpetuates poverty and hunger through misguided policies and practices.

Stigma also ignores the broad reaches of poverty and hunger.



People often face multiple types of stigma and discrimination. In addition to the stigma associated with poverty, other types of stigma and discrimination can lead to hunger, including stigmatization on the basis of race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or weight.

- Sixty percent of American adults will live below the poverty level for at least a year during their lifetime.
- The main causes of entering poverty are universal experiences, like the birth of a child or the loss of a job.
- Many employed people experience poverty, too often because they can only find low-wage jobs and part-time hours.
- Eighty-six percent of SNAP benefits go to households with a child, an elderly adult, or a person with disabilities.

## Stigma Impacts Program Participation

Stigma ultimately prevents eligible people from accessing government assistance out of fear that community members will know they live in poverty and will judge them for it. This comes from interactions with others as well as internalized shame.

Stigma can come from staff who are responsible for enrolling individuals in government programs, cashiers at the grocery store, "lunch shaming" at school, or friends and family.





## WHY ARE FOOD BANKS IMPORTANT?

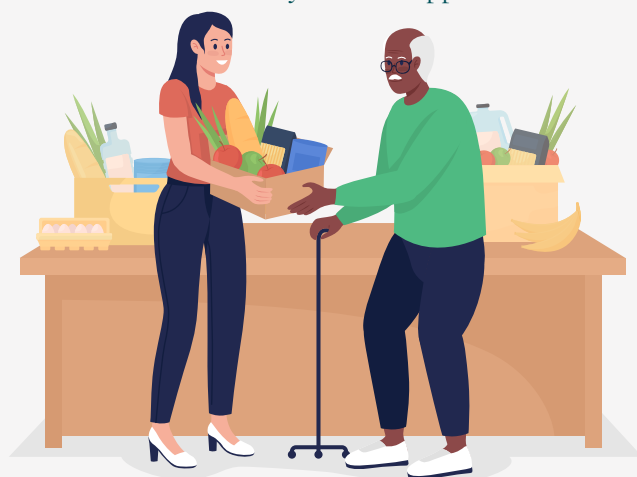
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Access to food is a human right, but as long as poverty exists, food insecurity will, too. As Qureshi explains, if you are living below the poverty line, at some point you will likely be unable to access sufficient, healthy food due to financial constraints. Many Seva clients are people on fixed incomes, like seniors. Many others work, trying to make ends meet on \$14 an hour (Ontario’s minimum wage)—a daunting challenge in the Toronto area, where affordable housing is increasingly scarce.

### Statistics on how many people use food banks

- There were a total of 1,303,997 visits to food banks across Canada in 2021 (Food Banks Canada 2022).
- 33.3% of food bank users in Canada are children, while only representing 19.1% of the population (Food Banks Canada 2022).
- 46.1% of food bank users in Canada are single adult households, while only 28.2% of the population are single (Food Banks Canada 2022).
- Seniors represent 8.7% of Canadian food bank users, with the rate of increase far outpacing other age groups (Food Banks Canada 2022).
- 50.5% of Canadian food bank users are on social assistance or disability-related support as their main source of income (Food Banks Canada 2022).
- Single adults with children represent 17.8% of Canadian food bank users while representing only 10.1% of the population (Food Banks Canada 2022).
- 1 in 8 – the ratio of Canadians accessing food banks that are currently employed (Food Banks Canada 2022).
- A total of 3,216,621 meals and snacks were served in March of 2021 (Food Banks Canada 2022).





# LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE...

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Week 5

# Mental Self- Awareness List



Self  
Awareness

- 01 I know that I need to reach others when....

---
- 02 I know that I am stressed when I...

---
- 03 I know I need to review the material from this program when..

---
- 04 I feel safe when...

---
- 05 I know when I'm being taken advantage of when...

---
- 06 I need to seek help when...

---



This activity is a list of things that indicates when you are getting overwhelmed and stressed. Self-awareness enables you to identify, clarify and accept your problems, thoughts, and feelings. Recognizing environmental or internal risk factors allows you to change your behavior to enforce a positive result. For example, individuals can ask for help or change the environment they are currently in.



# Mental Self- Awareness List



**07** The 3 steps I can take to get better are... \_\_\_\_\_

**08** One bad habit I can avoid is ... \_\_\_\_\_

**09** I feel calm when... \_\_\_\_\_

**10** Everyday I will try... \_\_\_\_\_

**11** I will take a screen time-break when... \_\_\_\_\_

**12** The Goals that I have for this year are... \_\_\_\_\_



This activity is a list of things that indicates when you are getting overwhelmed and stressed. Self-awareness enables you to identify, clarify and accept your problems, thoughts, and feelings. Recognizing environmental or internal risk factors allows you to change your behavior to enforce a positive result. For example, individuals can ask for help or change the environment they are currently in.

# GOAL ACTIVITY: MAKING A 5 YEAR PLAN

*Creating goals about the future is an important part of your journey and can help you get into the correct mindset for what you want to do. We want you to think about the following questions and reflect on possible answers for your future!*



## BRAINSTORM

1. Where did you want to be 5 years ago? Write it down.
2. Right now, are you where you wanted to be from 5 years ago? Write it down.
3. Do you know where to want to be 5 years from now? Write it down.
4. Visualize and imagine how you want to change, what you want to change, improve on, what makes you happy, etc
5. Think about the physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects
6. Think about your education, career, job
7. Think about your finances, location
8. Think about all your personal goals, fun goals, family/relationship goals
9. Don't limit yourself. Think about small changes, or big changes
10. Separate long-term and short-term goals, separate every goal and make them individual
11. Make an A, B, C list. A is the most extremely important to have/achieve, C is more of what would be nice, but not completely necessary. In between is B. Make priorities clear and be honest with yourself.
12. Do some research on things you need more information on how to achieve.

**Feel free to revise and update your goals when necessary, or even change them. Don't change them too much because you want to be consistent and see progress happening overtime.**

# CONCLUSION



A&A MEDICAL HEALTHCARE SUPPLIES AID

Thank you for taking your time out to look at the A&A Medical Healthcare Supplies Aid mental health booklet. We hope the information here has been helpful and will aid you on your journey with your next steps. If you are in need of any resources for next steps, please feel free to contact us at:

**Email:** [Medicalhealthcaresupplies1@gmail.com](mailto:Medicalhealthcaresupplies1@gmail.com)

**Phone:** +416-797-1034

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Many people experience mental health conditions and the number of cases have been slowly rising. Mental health conditions are complex and often overlap with other conditions such as drug abuse.

This app is targeted at youth to learn more about mental health. It follows the structure of the 5 week mental health program provided by A&A Medical Healthcare Supplies Aid to provide information for participants in the program. Those that are not in the program are also welcome to read over the information provided. Please visit our website for more information.

Find out more at  
<https://www.medicalhealthcaresupplies.ca/>