

Good health isn't just about nutrition and exercise; it's also about the state of your emotional health. This means being aware of your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and how they can affect both your mind and your body.

Lots of things can disrupt our emotional health. Divorce, losing a job, illness, grief, moving, having a baby and money problems are just a few of the ways that we can lose our equilibrium. Poor emotional health can weaken the immune system, making you more susceptible to getting colds and infections. And if you don't take care of yourself physically, you may not have a positive self-image or be pleased with your overall health or energy level.

How to focus on the mind/body connection:

Express feelings in an appropriate way. Whether you talk to a friend, family member, doctor, or therapist, seek out help if you are feeling depressed, anxious, moody, irritable, or tired on an on-going basis. Seeking help and support can help relieve symptoms of stress and improve not just your emotional health, but your physical health as well.

Live a balanced life: We all know the wonderful physical benefits of eating well and exercising, but we may not think about it in terms of our emotional health. Making sure that you eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains, along with drinking enough water, getting physical activity and the proper amount of sleep, and refraining from smoking and drinking are all things that can help you feel like you're living a balanced and emotionally healthy life.

Develop resilience: Those that can see themselves in a positive light, change their perspective when they need to, focus on gratitude, and lean on social supports have a better chance of aligning their overall mind/body health.

Focus on stress-reducing tips and calming exercises: Consider adding stress-reduction to your daily routine, whether it's journaling, meditating, yoga, taking a hot bath, exercising, or getting lost in a favorite activity or hobby. These self-care techniques are not a waste of time—in fact, they will boost your mood and increase your energy.

The mind-body connection means that you can learn to use your thoughts to positively influence some of your body's physical responses. According to the Cleveland Clinic, a variety of calming and empowering mind-body exercises (such as relaxation breathing, meditation, progressive muscle relaxation and guided imagery) have been proven to help people decrease anxiety and pain, enhance sleep, decrease the use of medications for post-surgical pain, and reduce recovery time and shorten hospital stays. They serve to strengthen the immune system and enhance the ability to heal, as well as increase a sense of control and well-being.

Curious to learn more? Call your EAP for support in reducing stress and increasing your awareness of the benefits of the mind/body connection.

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The Mind/Body Connection: What You Need to Know

*Employee
Assistance
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