

# MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

We all have physical health. We all know that. But similarly, we all have mental health too. And just as we can become physically unwell, we can also become mentally unwell, which can fluctuate throughout our lives. There exists numerous preventative strategies that we can take on board in order to look after our wellbeing and mental health. At the core of it, it's about engaging in regular healthy habits. We can't expect things to change or to improve over night, just like with our physical health – no one gets into great physical health after one run around the park.

Mental Health is a state of wellbeing, which encompasses a broad range of components. A few tips to consider for managing your mental health are summarised below.

## Physical Wellbeing

Our minds and bodies are interlinked, such that looking after our physical health will have numerous benefits for our mental health too. Furthermore, the core of wellbeing – sleep, nutrition and movement – are essential for both physical and mental health. Creating healthy habits such as eating a balanced diet, drinking lots of water, staying active and prioritising good sleep (quality and quantity) will work to make you feel more energised and well, which will in turn facilitate your social and occupational functioning.

## Relationships

Our social support networks are vital in looking after our mental health. It is important to feel heard, to be listened to and supported, especially during times of distress. Additionally, social interactions should be fun and enjoyable. With social media it's easy to believe we're connected, but as a society we're actually lonelier than ever. Make a conscious effort to connect with the people close to you on a regular basis.

## Positivity

Regularly engaging with positive feelings and experiences can help boost our mental health. Ten key positive feelings include; joy, amusement, love, pride, gratitude, awe, interest, inspiration, serenity and hope. Find ways to connect with them (read an inspirational story), be aware of what's going on around you (watch a sunset) and savour positive experiences when they occur (a hug from a child). As small as they seem, these micro-moments of positivity are good for mental health.

## Manage Difficulties

Stress is inevitable; we have all experienced it at some point and we will no doubt experience it again in the future. But stress doesn't need to be detrimental. In fact, stress can be good for us and can be used as an enhancing motivator in some instances. But we need to be mindful of when we aren't coping well with stress, so it doesn't impact negatively on our mental health. Everyone responds differently when they aren't coping. These signs may be physical, emotional, behavioural, or in the way that we think. Become aware of the signs so that you can effectively manage unhelpful stress as early as possible.

One of the most effective strategies to manage mental health is to get support when we need it. Nobody tries to mend a broken leg on their own, and similarly, mental health doesn't need to be managed alone. Some options include speaking to a trusted friend, family member or colleague or seeking help from your GP or your EAP.

*For more information on our services, contact us on **02 8243 1500** or at **admin@cfch.com.au***