



Rural
Response
for Healthy
Children

Growing
Resilience
to Cope
with Stress



Notes....

Health is a state of physical, mental and social well-being.

Mental health and physical health are connected; our mental health impacts our physical health, just as our physical health can impact our mental health.

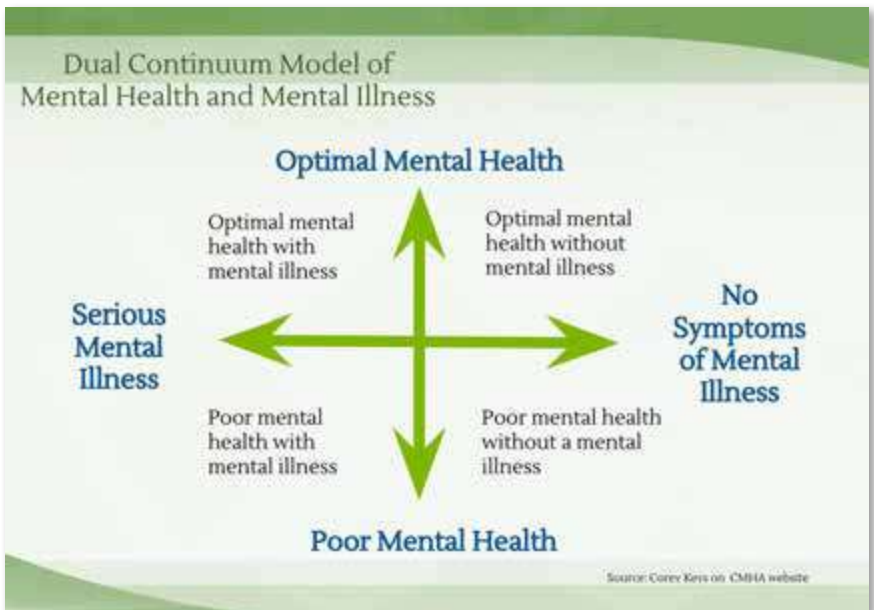


Every person has mental health.

Mental health is a state of well-being. It is enjoying life, having a sense of purpose, and being able to manage the highs and lows of life. Good mental health includes a sense of purpose, strong relationships, feeling connected to others, having a good sense of self, coping with stress, and enjoying life.

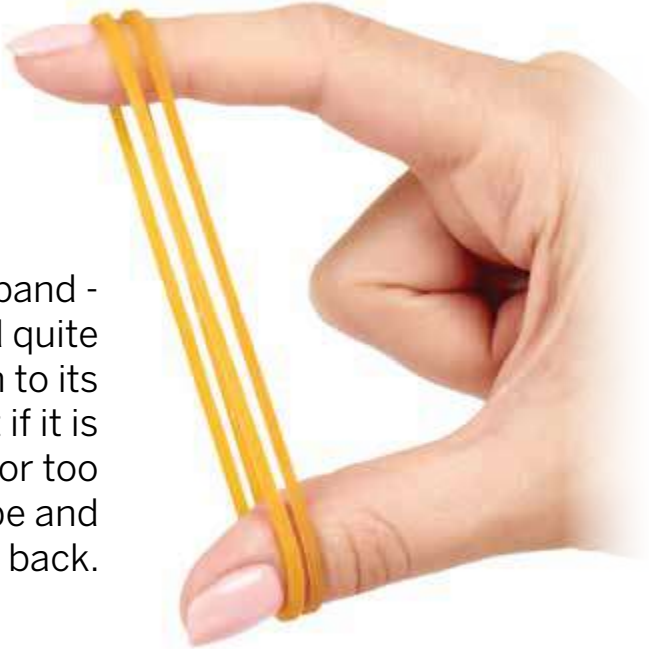
- Canadian Mental Health Association <https://cmha.ca>

It is helpful to think of mental health and mental illness as separate but interconnected concepts on a continuum.



Are you feeling stretched by everything going on in your life, and around you?

We take care of our mental health, just like we care for our physical health. One way to care for our mental health is to build our resilience.



Think of a rubber band - it can be stretched quite far, and it will return to its original shape. But if it is stretched too much or too long, it loses its shape and ability to bounce back.

Resilience is like a rubber band. It helps us stretch and come back after challenges and stress in our lives. There are ways to increase resilience to maintain wellness - to be able to stretch without being overstretched.

Consider how a vehicle is maintained.

A vehicle needs gas in the tank, air in the tires, regular oil changes, a gentle wash and a walk-around to make sure everything is intact.

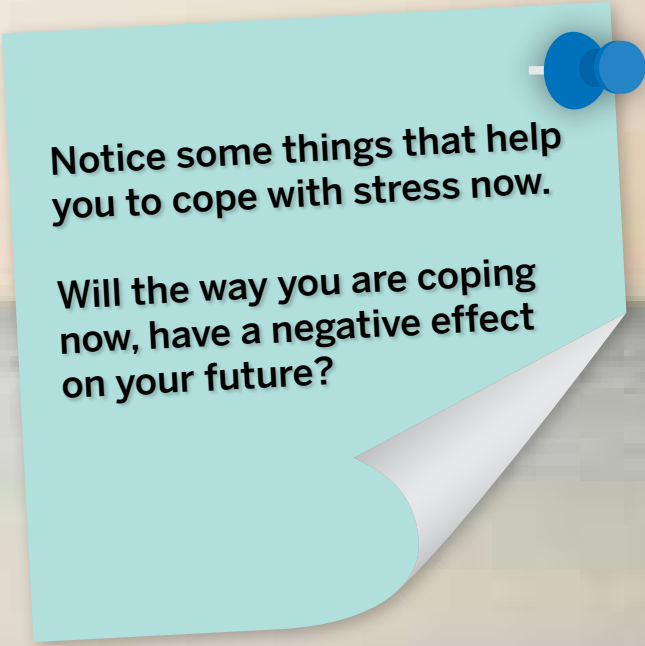
We also need to maintain our minds and bodies to help us restore and replenish.

Practicing resilience is like putting fuel in the vehicle. It helps keep us moving, even through rain, snow storms and up hills or over bumpy terrain.



Building Resilience

Every day, each of us support our brain and body to recover from stress. Healthy practices help us stretch when we need to and return when the stress has passed.



Notice some things that help you to cope with stress now.

Will the way you are coping now, have a negative effect on your future?

So many things are shifting in our lives. What you normally did and who you connected with may have changed.

The 3 R's of Resilience

Take a moment to remind yourself about the 3 R's that you can choose to support your mental health.



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- **1. Replenish**
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- **2. Routine**
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- **3. Relationships**
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REPLENISH



Physical activity, eating healthy food and sleeping enough hours nourishes and supports our minds and bodies.

Be your own best friend. Give yourself a hug. Realize thoughts are just thoughts. Be kind. Making mistakes and facing challenges is normal for everyone.

Pause throughout the day: watch a sunset, take a walk, read a book, play, garden, try something new, take a nap, meditate or practice prayer.

Replenish Check List

Physical Activity

Eating Healthy Food

Sleep

Love Yourself

Take a Break

Physical Activity

The body likes to move.

Consider how you feel sitting all day versus taking a break to stretch the muscles.

There are so many fun ways to move!

Our favourite is taking a long walk outside or a bike ride with friends and family.

What time of day do you like to be on the move?

Visit Ontario's West Coast for a list
of hiking trails and cycling routes!
<https://www.ontarioswestcoast.ca>



Eating Healthy Food

There are no fixed rules for eating.

What is your favourite healthy fruit or vegetable?

Does your family have a healthy after-school/work-snack?

What is one thing you can do to increase the amount of healthy food put into your body?

During the growing season, visit a local farmer's market. It is a fun outing to learn what is growing in the County and try some new foods. Visit the producers page at <https://www.tasteofhuron.com> for a list of markets.

Food banks also offer fresh fruits and vegetables. Call 2-1-1 to find out where your nearest food bank is located.

Sleep

Are you resting well?

Consider tracking your sleep and energy level for a week.

- What did you notice?
- Is there one thing you can change to help gain more sleep hours?

Need a little helping to calm your mind and body before sleep?
Practice listening to this guided body scan by Jennifer Reaburn
<https://bit.ly/3xNhmFB>

Love Yourself

Love yourself no matter what! Laugh and learn from mistakes. Practice kindness. Thoughts are just thoughts so challenge your self-talk.


Try a self-talk check-in with these questions:

1. Am I falling into a thinking trap?
2. What is the evidence that this thought is true or not true?
3. Did I confuse a thought with fact?
4. What would I tell a friend if they had the same thought?
5. Is my judgement based on how I feel instead of facts?

Take a Break

Scheduling a healthy break for yourself is a necessity in this busy world.

It may seem silly that we need to schedule a break, yet for many of us it is reality.

A teal sticky note is pinned to a person's hand. The note contains text about a guided meditation. The person's hand is holding a wooden sign that says "FREEDOM AND FUN".

Treat yourself to a
guided meditation by
Mike Masse

[https://youtu.be/
l_3POpm-lBw](https://youtu.be/l_3POpm-lBw)

FREEDOM
AND
FUN

ROUTINE



Healthy routines decrease stress. Think of it as the brain of an air traffic controller. An air traffic controller constantly monitors all incoming and outgoing flights, organizes what happens in which order, responds to changing circumstances and focuses attention.

Without routine, or procedures, our brains can have difficulty making decisions and paying attention.

We all have times when we feel more distracted, have trouble focusing, or are unable to remember just what it is we are supposed to be doing. These moments are completely normal.

Having a daily routine supports a sense of control, focus and organization.

Finding Your Routine

Take a few minutes to consider your daily routine? What parts of your routine are healthy and working for you?

Are there any parts of the routine you can shift to improve the day?

Consider these questions to find out if your daily routine is helping you make good choices.

I think things through and make good decisions.

Yes No Not Sure

I am able to remember instructions while I am working on a project or listening to someone.

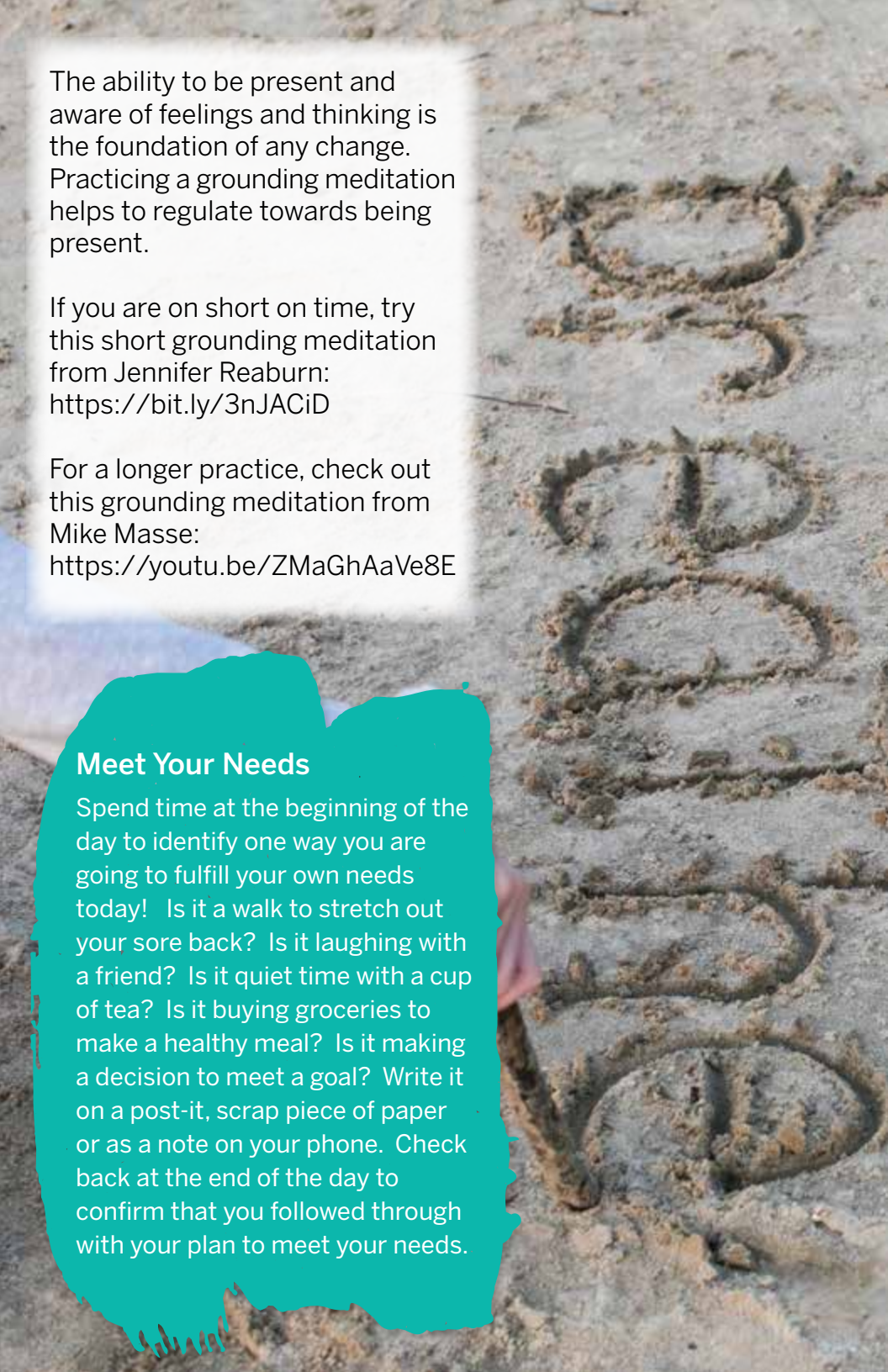
Yes No Not Sure

I feel organized and I manage my time well.

Yes No Not Sure

If you circled no or not sure, what changes can you make to be able to answer YES?

TAKE
A
MOMENT



The ability to be present and aware of feelings and thinking is the foundation of any change. Practicing a grounding meditation helps to regulate towards being present.

If you are on short on time, try this short grounding meditation from Jennifer Reaburn:
<https://bit.ly/3nJACiD>

For a longer practice, check out this grounding meditation from Mike Masse:
<https://youtu.be/ZMaGhAaVe8E>

Meet Your Needs

Spend time at the beginning of the day to identify one way you are going to fulfill your own needs today! Is it a walk to stretch out your sore back? Is it laughing with a friend? Is it quiet time with a cup of tea? Is it buying groceries to make a healthy meal? Is it making a decision to meet a goal? Write it on a post-it, scrap piece of paper or as a note on your phone. Check back at the end of the day to confirm that you followed through with your plan to meet your needs.

Relationships

We are wired for connection, and the quality of our relationships is a huge factor in our resilience. Relationships with family, friends, a faith or spiritual community, coaches and teachers play an important part in our mental health.

Healthy relationships are all about:

- Listening
- Cooperating
- Trusting
- Respecting
- Connecting
- Sharing
- Supporting
- Negotiating differences
- Caring
- Sharing
- Evaluating yourself without judgment or criticism

**It just takes one person.
Who is on your team?**

The Power of Kindness

We make choices every day to contribute to healthy relationships.

The best place to start is with kindness!

Kindness makes everyone feel better -- the givers and the receivers.

Here are some ideas to practice kindness:

- Be kind to yourself by avoiding judgement and criticism.
- Post a surprise note of kindness on the bathroom mirror.
- Text a message of thanks to a friend.
- Write a letter and mail it.
- Introduce yourself to someone new in the community.
- Volunteer and pay the kindness forward.
- Share art with a friend.
- Be curious with someone you care about when their behaviour changes.
- Shop local and support youth entrepreneurs.

My Resiliency Check-In

What healthy practices are you doing every day to support your mental health and help you stretch during difficult days?

List just one new thing for each “R” to add to your personal plan and do it this week!

Replenish

Routine

Relationships

Additional Resources

Support Your Well-Being Text Messages for Youth & Adults

Developed by Rural Response for Healthy Children based on evidence-based social emotional learning practices and feedback from youth about their well-being needs.
Text BEWELL to 226-909-3005

Follow prompts to subscribe to receive 4 monthly text messages with tips, strategies and ideas for your best well-being practice

What is Mental Health Video Series for Youth & Adults

<http://www.rrhc.on.ca/social-and-emotional-learning>
Developed by Rural Response for Healthy Children, in collaboration with Human Potential Plus, a video series that supports practicing healthy relationships and regulation.

Social Emotional Worksheets for Kindergarten to Grade 8

<http://www.rrhc.on.ca/social-and-emotional-learning>
Developed by Rural Response for Healthy Children and Avon Maitland District School Board for parents/caregivers to learn and practice together with their children at home.





How do I Recognize a Mental Health Concern?

Mental health concerns can have a lot of different signs and symptoms.

- A feeling/mood that seems to be stopping you from enjoying life
- Causing physical symptoms
- Having an impact on the people you live or work with
- Affecting your mood
- Causing you to use more alcohol or substances than usual
- Causing you to have thoughts of self-harm or suicide



There are several ways people access services

1. For mental health and addictions services and resource information:

- Call your family doctor or local family health team.
- Call the Principal at your children/teens school to access community supports.
- Call one of the mental health and addictions service providers in Huron and Perth. Contact information is on the next page.

2. Visit <https://www.southwesthealthline.ca> to search healthcare resources and supports.

3. Call 2-1-1 or visit <https://221ontario.ca> to search community and social service supports.

Huron and Perth Counties Mental Health & Addictions Service Providers

ALEXANDRA MARINE & GENERAL HOSPITAL

519-524-8316 or 1-877-695-2524

- Outpatient Mental Health, Huron Community Mental Health Services, Huron Perth Clinical Intensive Case Management Program, Huron Outreach Eating Disorders Program

HURON PERTH HEALTHCARE ALLIANCE STRATFORD GENERAL HOSPITAL

Mental Health Services

519-272-8210 Ext. 2205

- Outpatient Services including Prevention and Early Intervention for Psychosis, Perth Eating Disorders Program

CHOICES FOR CHANGE

Alcohol, Drug & Gambling Counselling Centre

1-877-218-0077

MY JOURNEY PROGRAM

Call or Text 519-525-6959

- Assists youth and families with system navigation while addressing mental health and/or substance use concerns.

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Stratford Office 519-273-1391

Exeter Office 519-235 0335

Goderich Office - 519-440-0450

HURON-PERTH CENTRE FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

Child & Youth Mental Health Services

Stratford Office 519-273-3373

Clinton Office 519-482-3931

Listowel Office 519-291-1088

**IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW
NEEDS HELP & DON'T KNOW
WHERE TO BEGIN,
CALL: 1-888-829-7484**



SPREAD
YOUR
WINGS

Rural Response for Healthy Children

www.rrhc.on.ca

519-482-8887

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