



## Why Mental Health Wellness Matters

by Pilar Tamburrino, M.S., LMHC, CEAP

Mental health is defined by the World Health Organization as a “state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.” According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1 in 10 adults in the United States suffers from depression. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) reports that almost 3 percent of the U.S. adult population suffers from bipolar disorder. Mental health affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices.

Some individuals believe that only people with mental illnesses should worry or pay attention to their mental health. But the truth is that our emotions, thoughts and attitudes affect our energy, productivity and overall health. Positive mental health strengthens your ability to cope with everyday challenges and more serious crisis.

Here are some positive ways to maintain mental health wellness:

### CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Research points to the benefits of social connection which include increased happiness, better health and a longer life.

### STAY POSITIVE

Thinking negative can impact our moods, actions and even our health. Trying to foster optimism doesn't mean ignoring the negative, it just means focusing on the positive as much as possible.

### KEEP PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

Exercise matters for your mood too. Many people have found that it decreases stress, anger and tension. Reduces anxiety and depression while offering a greater sense of wellbeing.

### GET ENOUGH SLEEP

To sleep longer and better make sure you set a regular bedtime, lower your caffeine intake, de-stress yourself prior to going to bed and finally make your bed a sleep haven.

### EAT WELL

Good nutrition is essential for our mental health. Food is fuel, and the kinds of foods and drinks you consume determine the types of nutrients in your system and impact how well your mind and body are able to function.

### HELP OTHERS

Research indicates that individuals who consistently help others experience less depression, a greater sense of calm and better health. Doing good can make you feel connected to others, help you feel needed and effective as well as add a sense of purpose and meaning to your life.

### CREATE JOY AND SATISFACTION

Experts say positive emotions can boost your ability to bounce back from stress, solve problems, think flexibly and even fight disease. Leisure activities can boost our effectiveness, broaden our perspective, increase creativity and re-stock our energy supply. In other words, having fun also promotes our overall wellbeing and success.



HAVE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

MAKE GOOD LIFE CHOICES

MAINTAIN PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

HANDLE THE NATURAL UPS AND DOWNS OF LIFE

DISCOVER AND GROW TOWARD OUR POTENTIAL

The state of one's mental health can influence the ways in which we look at ourselves, our life and others around us. It also strongly influences our potential for achieving our goals and is an important tool in obtaining and maintaining a feeling of wellbeing.

## NURTURING AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

BY ROSARIO ZAVALA, MSW, LSCW

As summer draws to a close and we transition into the fall season here is a practice that will help you nurture a positive mindset in the new semester. Try the "5-3-2 plan" from Dr. Amit Sood, Mayo Clinic professor of medicine and author of *The Mayo Clinic Handbook for Happiness*, to start your day in a favorable and grateful fashion.

Let your first thoughts, as you wake up in the morning, be of gratitude for 5 people you are most thankful to have in your life. Picture them in your mind's eye. Relish their presence in your life. You can engage in this practice at other times of the day when you need a lift.

For the first 3 minutes you meet your partner and/or family, greet them like a long lost friend. See and enjoy them as they are. Resist the desire to change, improve or judge them. Do this when you encounter your co-workers and friends as well.

As you go through your day and you encounter others, spend 2 seconds in sending them a silent "I wish you well" message. Do this throughout your day whenever you feel safe and at ease.

Consistent use of this practice will help you to improve your outlook and will enrich the quality of your relationships with others over time.

## FEATURED SEMINAR

### *Mindfulness & Music*

This month will include a participatory workshop where attendees will learn about the benefits of mindfulness and the use of music as an excellent source of focus. Participants will experience mindfulness through simple instrument playing and music listening. This seminar will be facilitated by a Teresa Lesiuk, Ph.D., MT-BC, Director and Associate Professor of Music Therapy and John C. Britton from the Frost School of Music.

**October 27-29, 2015**

Visit [miami.edu/fsap](http://miami.edu/fsap) for complete schedule.

“  
The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change.”

- Carl Rogers

## Subscribe

*Mind and Matter* is a quarterly publication from the UM Faculty and Staff Assistance Program that provides helpful tips and articles regarding work-life balance, health and well-being.

If you would like to receive this newsletter directly in your inbox each quarter, as well as announcements about upcoming FSAP seminars, please send an email to [cbootle@miami.edu](mailto:cbootle@miami.edu).

## Did you know?

NEW

The FSAP provides free and confidential consultation and referral services to University of Miami faculty, staff, and retirees, as well as their domestic partners, spouses and dependents.

This support is offered in resolving both personal and workplace concerns. So, the next time you're feeling stressed and/or overwhelmed contact our office for an appointment.

## FSAP Team

Caliope Bootle  
Secretary

Orlando Gonzalez, MEd, LMHC, CEAP  
Director

Pilar Tamburrino, MS, LMHC, CEAP  
Assistant Director

Rosario Zavala, MSW, LCSW  
Consultant

## Contact FSAP

☎ 305-284-6604 🌐 [miami.edu/fsap](http://miami.edu/fsap)

UNIVERSITY  
OF MIAMI

