



Caregivers Guide To Helping Loved One With Mental Illness



Local Motion

WALKING TO EMPOWER

HUMOR

Many of us struggle to differentiate between laughter versus humor. **Humor is a psychological phenomenon; not universal.** It is personal and subjective and the ‘funniness’ is subject to culture, language, intelligence, tastes, preferences, values, and the mood of the moment. **Laughter is a physical act; it is universal.** Only 10% - 20% of human laughter is in response to jokes. Shocking, huh! Using jokes to evoke laughter can run the risk of being offensive or hurtful to others, so always be mindful of your words. Humor ought not to be used to degrade, to embarrass, and/or to discriminate.

One does not need to have a sense of humor in order to laugh. In fact, humor acts as a major coping mechanism such as relieving anxiety/tension, provide a healthy escape from reality for some, and lightens the heaviness related to critical illness, trauma, disfigurement, and death. In addition, humor is helpful to establish rapport while meeting others in social situations as it can open the door for meeting new people.

<http://www.lilposies.com/6-fun-ways-to-be-silly-with-your-kids/>

<http://www.humormonth.com/assets/30-ways-in-30-days-2017.pdf>

<http://downloads.hindawi.com/journals/ecam/2011/342837.pdf>

<https://youtu.be/6iFCm5ZokBI>

GRATITUDE

“Cultivate the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to you, and to give thanks continuously. And because all things have contributed to your advancement, you should include all things in your gratitude.”— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Gratitude is an emotion, a powerful one at that, you can use to bring positivity into your life when life becomes difficult. Gratitude is the goodness in our lives, and the goodness that lies outside of ourselves. When in gratitude, we recognize everything and everyone that makes us who we are in our best moments. Acts of gratitude can be used to apologize, make amends or help others solve problems they may facing.

https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/gratitude_journal#data-tab-quiz

https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/gratitude_journal

<https://www.psychpoint.com/mental-health/worksheets/gratitude-worksheets/>

Gratitude – Happiness Journal (Journal & Affirmation) App

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_gratitude_changes_you_and_your_brain/

<https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/gratitude-exercises/>

<https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/gratitude-appreciation/>

MINDFULNESS

What is mindfulness you ask? Mindfulness is the ability to be fully present, aware of where you are and what you are doing, and not to overreact or become overwhelmed by what is going on around you. Mindfulness practice is like growing a garden: a garden grows well when certain conditions are present. Regarding mindfulness, there are eight conditions that are essential to the growth of mindfulness practice: beginner's mind, nonjudgmental thoughts, acknowledge things as they are, nonstriving – not trying to get anywhere other than where you are, equanimity – awareness of balance and fosters wisdom about change, letting be – let things be as they are in the present, self-reliance – see what is true or untrue from your own experience, and self-compassion – cultivate love without self-blame or criticism.

<https://bemindful.co.uk/evidence-research/>

<https://www.mindful.org/mindfulness-mental-health/>

<http://www.mindfulness-solution.com/DownloadMeditations.html>

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Individuals living with a mental health diagnosis such as depression or anxiety, their go-to treatments are typically being prescribed medications and/or meeting with a therapist to help manage their symptoms. Although these traditional treatments can be beneficial, they are not always effective for everybody in reducing mental health symptoms. According to a review from Harvard University, regular exercise is shown as an effective treatment and can work as well as an anti-depressant. In addition, exercise improves self-esteem and cognitive functioning and reduces social withdrawal. Overall, regular exercise helps to improve physical health and mood, especially when exercising with others.

https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/in-depth/walking/art-20046261?_=1

http://trap.ncirl.ie/1406/1/A_review_of_the_beneficial_mental_health_effects_of_exercise_and_recommendations_for_future_research.pdf

<https://daringtolivefully.com/more-fun-and-play-for-adults>

<https://www.simplemost.com/best-exercises-relieve-anxiety-depression/>

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/the-mental-health-benefits-of-exercise.htm>

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/exercise-is-an-all-natural-treatment-to-fight-depression>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1470658/>

SELF-COMPASSION

To have self-compassion means to respond to yourself with kindness and to have feelings of being connected with others. According to Kristin Neff, “the word ‘passion’ means ‘suffering,’ and ‘com’ means ‘with.’” To give yourself compassion, is being aware of your suffering, which is being mindful of yourself. Most of us do not like to suffer so when we do, we either problem-solve the issue or try to silence it, or we simply get lost in the suffering and over-identify with it. This is the time we need STOP and step out of ourselves and say, “Boy, I am struggling right now” and this does take courage to own your own pain. Once in the middle of your struggle/pain, respond to your pain using the same type of kindness you would show towards your friend or your loved one. The good news is learning how to hold your pain with a sense of care and kindness has shown to reduce symptoms related to anxiety, depression, and chronic pain.

Podcast - 3 Powerful Ways to Be Mentally Strong This Year - by Shannon Kaiser:

<https://directory.libsyn.com/episode/index/id/8253950>

https://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/finding-the-friend-within-the-science-and-art-of-self-compassion?utm_source=Center+for+Healthy+Minds&utm_

Kristin Neff: The Three Components of Self-Compassion: <https://youtu.be/11U0h0DPu7>

Tedx Talk on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/iCvmsMzIF7o>

Tedx Talk on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/psN1DORYYV0>

PROFESSIONALS

Sex Trafficking:

<https://iwantrest.com/blog/6-ways-parents-can-protect-their-children-from-sex-trafficking/>

Transform Your Habits:

<https://jamesclear.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/habits-v2.pdf>

Benefits of Exercise:

http://trap.ncirl.ie/1406/1/A_review_of_the_beneficial_mental_health_effects_of_exercise_and_recommendations_for_future_research.pdf

Relationship Between Physical Activity and Mental Health:

http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/raise/publications/2012/culture_arts_leisure/19812.pdf

Integrating medical and recovery models:

<https://www.nami.org/blogs/nami-blog/april-2015/science-meets-the-human-experience-integrating-th>

Podcast - Humor That Works With Andrew Tarvin:

<https://directory.libsyn.com/episode/index/id/6008889>

BOOKS

A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook – By: Bob Stahl, PH.D.; Elisha Goldstein, PH.D

Daring Greatly - By: Brene Brown, PH.D., LMSW

I Thought It Was Just ME: Making the Journey from “What Will People Think?” to “I AM Enough” (But It Isn’t) – By: Brene Brown, PH.D., LMSW

The 5 Second Rule – By: Mel Gibbins

The Practical neuroscience of Buddha’s Brain Happiness, Love, & Wisdom – By: Rick Hanson, PH.D with Richard Mendius, MD

You Mean I’m Not Lazy, Stupid or Crazy? – By Kate Kelly and Peggy Ramundo

QUOTES

“It is not happy people who are thankful. It is thankful people who are happy.” Unknown

“The body achieves what the mind believes.” Unknown

“Find your source, live from it, keep your heart open, and laugh generously. These are the maxims of the peaceful teacher, the tools of a gentle healer.” By: Alan Cohen

“Exercise also has great benefits for mental health. It releases endorphins that make you feel happy.” By: Michelle Davis

“You have to believe in yourself when no one else does.” By: Serena Williams

“You are not your illness. You have an individual story to tell. You have a name, a history, a personality. Staying yourself is part of the battle.” By: Julian Seifte

“To appreciate NONSENSE requires a serious interest in LIFE.” By: Gelett Burgess

“One can never have too many hugs or laugh too often.” Unknown

“Laughter is like a windshield wiper, it doesn’t stop the rain but allows us to keep going.”
Unknown

For Good Hearted Living, Follow These Six Daily Practices to Prevent Hardening of the Attitudes:

Have More Positive Mindsets, Feelings, and Interactions

Based on modern science and ancient wisdom, this mood-altering program is easy and fun. Begin with mindfulness. Remember to practice every day. Whenever you see an opportunity, take action! Actions become habits, which improve the natural way you live your life. Do this for as little as five minutes every day. Keep a simple journal about it. Soon you will be amazed to find that you laugh more, while becoming more cheerful and optimistic. You will feel better overall.

Whenever you are mindful of the practices and pleasant feelings they bring, tell yourself, “Isn’t it great that I feel happy now! Right now, this is being stored in my brain, where it joins my other moments of serenity. The larger the library and storehouse of positivity in my brain, the easier it will be for me to access it at will.”

Mondays are for Compliments: This overcomes our tendency to criticize and be judgmental of others, which robs us of laughter. Look for the good in others, tell them about it, and you just might end up laughing together. Monday thought: “A kind word often goes unspoken, but never goes unheard.”

Tuesdays are for Flexibility: There is no laughter in being stubborn. We all get set in our ways and yet it is a good thing to be open to new ideas. It can be more fun than being in a rut. An open mind lets the laughter in. Tuesday thought: “The tree that bends in the wind does not break.”

Wednesdays are for Gratitude: A good way to feel miserable is to constantly think you need something more to make you happy. An attitude of gratitude brings serenity and laughter. Wednesday thought: “As you go through life, let this always be your goal: keep your eye upon the donut and not upon the hole!”

Thursdays are for Kindness: Think of ways to make another person’s life a little easier. Simple kindness may be the most vital component of human beings living harmoniously and peacefully, while properly caring for this planet we all share. Thursday thought: “The practice of kindness creates healthy relationships and community connections, while inspiring people to practice kindness with one another.”

Fridays are for Forgiveness: Forgiveness means letting go of anger. Find a way to be compassionate towards those who have hurt or harmed you. Releasing anger makes you healthier and opens up room in your heart for more laughter. Friday thought: “I never hold a grudge, because while I am being angry the other guy is out dancing!” –Buddy Hackett

Weekends are for Chocolate: Literally, remember to eat some chocolate or any other favorite food. Metaphorically, remember to take time for leisure, pleasure, relaxation, and “sweet” things. Weekend thought: “A bad day fishing beats a good day working.”

Instructions to view or save versions below:

Click on the flag image below to view a summary of Good-Hearted Living in that language.

To save the pdf file to your computer, right click on the flag image, then select ‘Save Target As’, then save to your computer.

