

Pursuing a hobby can improve your mental health

Fiji Sun · 1 Apr 2024 · 15 · Source:connecthealth.org.au

It's often difficult to set aside time for ourselves and indulge in activities we enjoy. Whether it be working full time or studying full time, it has become harder and harder to simply relax.



Having a hobby is a great way to spend your spare time and unwind from your daily routine - whether this be something artistic, learning or playing an instrument, reading, photography or taking part in a particular sport. Spending time on activities that you enjoy can help improve your mental health and wellbeing. Research shows that people with hobbies are less likely to suffer from low moods, stress and depression.

There are many health benefits in setting aside some time for activities that you enjoy.

Reduce Stress:

Hobbies are a perfect way to distract yourself after a busy day.

It provides you with the opportunity to have some “me” time, and gives you an outlet for releasing stress built up from the day. In a recent survey on stress and wellbeing conducted by the Australian Psychological Society, four in five participants found activities like listening to music and spending time on a hobby was an effective way of managing stress.

So take some time out of your busy day to start painting, or go outside and take some photos.

Creativity boosts wellbeing:

Engaging in creative activities such as song writing, knitting, visual art and musical performance have all been shown to increase positive moods.

Particularly, engaging in such activities has resulted in an “upward spiral” of increase wellbeing in many young adults.

Students found that more time spent towards creative activities produced more positive emotions.

Additionally, creative activities allow you to expand neural connections in your brain, this has been linked to the release of feel good hormones such as dopamine.

Spending as little as two hours per week on a task you enjoy such as music or photography can help you lead a more positive life.

Form connections with others:

Team sports offer important opportunities for social relationships, friendship, and support that can contribute greatly to mental health.

A study found that 1.35 million Australian adults who took part in regular team sporting activities were less likely than the average Australian to experience depression, anxiety or stress.

Shared experience through sporting or musical hobbies all enhance our enjoyment of the activity and help us feel less isolated.

So if you're looking for a new hobby, try something interactive like joining a band or a new team sport.

Art has been a popular method that many individuals have chosen to unwind, it gives us the opportunity to express ourselves and relax at the same time.