

- Stress management / Health self-care

Coping strategies for managing stress and anxiety

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Self-care is very important. It means taking the time to do things that help you live well and improve both your physical health and mental health.

This can help you manage stress, lower your risk of illness, and increase your energy.

Even small acts of self-care in your daily life can have a big impact. Some of the activities include.

Get regular exercise. Just 30 minutes of walking every day can boost your mood and improve your health.

Small amounts of exercise add up, so don't be discouraged if you can't do 30 minutes at one time.

Eat healthy, regular meals and stay hydrated. A balanced diet and plenty of water can improve your energy and focus throughout the day. Pay attention to your intake of caffeine and alcohol and how they affect your mood and well-being—for some, decreasing caffeine and alcohol consumption can be helpful.

Make sleep a priority. Stick to a schedule, and make sure you're getting enough sleep. Blue light from devices and screens can make it harder to fall asleep, so reduce blue light exposure from your phone or computer before bedtime. Try a relaxing activity. Explore relaxation or wellness programs or apps, which may incorporate meditation, muscle relaxation, or breathing exercises. Schedule regular times for these and other healthy activities you enjoy, such as listening to music, reading, spending time in nature, and engaging in low-stress hobbies.

Talk to someone. Talk about your issues to trusted person. you will feel better and relaxed.

In Fiji we have lots of support for people with mental health. Counselor Mohenesh Singh there are mental health nursers in Government hospitals where people can talk to.

“With this we have lots of faithbased organisation and NGOs which promote Yoga and meditations,” Mr Singh said.

“We also have professional counsellors who can listen to your issues and work with you on goals for you to return to normal living.” Stigma

Fear and misunderstanding often lead to prejudice against people with mental illness and addictions, even among service providers.

It's one of the main reasons why many people don't consider it a real health issue.

“This prejudice and discrimination lead to feelings of hopelessness and shame in those struggling to cope with their situation, creating a serious barrier to diagnosis and treatment,” Mr Singh said. “Let's stop being judgemental. Understand and respect those people with mental help, see them as human being.

“We must educate ourselves and others in the family about mental health and how we can support if we come across any person with mental health issues.

In Most cases we see, when a family member is going through mental health issue, we start ignoring them or treating them differently and harshly.

This is not right. They still have dignity and need your best care.

“Spread love and happiness’, be a reason for someone's smile and you will see positives changes every where”.