

30-day Mental Health Challenge

Day 1 Create a Schedule

Today's challenge is to create a daily/weekly schedule for yourself. It can be as thorough and strict, or simple and flexible as you'd like. And remember to consider ALL aspects of your health and well-being (spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, social) in making your schedule.

Day 2 Get Outside

Today's challenge is pretty simple, so just do it! It goes like this: Find your shoes, put them on, go to your door, open the door, step outside.

Day 3 Tips for Online School

Online school is simply just studying at home, which many of us already do! Here are some tips: Have a dedicated workspace, structure your day (see day 1), set up online study groups, and take time to relax.

Day 4 Create a Bucket List

To brainstorm ideas, ask yourself questions like: What things would I like to do... if I had more time? once school is over? that I have always wanted to do? that would connect me with my family/loved ones? Then start doing those things!

Day 5 Get a Mental Health App

What if we could use our phones to improve our mental health? There are numerous apps aimed at helping us manage stress and cope effectively. Here are some app suggestions: Sanvello, Daylio, Calm Harm, My3, Insight Timer, What's Up Mental Health App, and You Are a Survivor

Day 6 Improve Sleep Hygiene

There are things you can do to get a good night's sleep. They're simple, but they take some planning and effort. During the day: Get some sun, exercise, limit naps to 30 minutes, etc. Before bed: Turn off electronics, make your sleep environment more comfy, have a routine, and stick to a schedule!

Day 7 Manage Anxiety

One simple technique for dealing with anxiety is called thought defusion. "Defusing" our thoughts means creating distance between our thoughts and our reality. We often feel less stuck in our anxiety when we can identify our anxious thoughts just as experiences we're having, rather than as our reality.

Day 8 Take Time to Breathe

Practice this for 2 minutes now: Average around 6 breaths per minute. Inhale through your nose for 4 seconds, hold for 4, out for 4 seconds through your mouth, pause for 4. Repeat frequently.

Day 9 Watch the BYU Devotional

Today's challenge is to watch the devotional at 11am MST (if you can) and write down one thing that you learned that you think can help you find joy or peace right now.

Day 10 Serve from Home

Today, take some time to serve from home. Here are some ideas to get you started: Make a meal for your family or roommates, do the dishes or clean the bathroom, record chapters of books for LibriVox, make a piece of artwork for a friend, etc. Just serve!

Day 11 Read a Book

When was the last time you read a book for fun? The challenge for today is to read a book—whatever you enjoy reading. Take some time away from your homework and read something just because!

Day 12 Get Your Nutrients

One strategy to boost your mental health each day is to eat well. General recommendations usually include eating a mixture of fruits and vegetables, carbs, dairy, and protein. Prioritize regular meals to give your brain power to do school and work.

Day 13 Start a Gratitude Diary

Pick an empty journal or note pad. Make a list of 5 things you are grateful for. Choose 2 of those things to elaborate on a little, and be intentional throughout your day to notice gratitude.

Day 14 Call a Friend

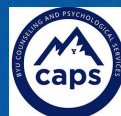
Call someone you love and talk to them. Try to help them feel loved and cared for.

Day 15 Renew Your Motivation

Watch a motivational video or two just because.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ja-n5qUNRi8>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJn075AwoCY&t=50s>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FMug2TPuWAE>
Then, channel this new motivation and use it today!



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30-day Mental Health Challenge (Cont.)

Day 16 Develop a Coping Strategy

The CAPS website has many useful and evidence-based resources. <https://caps.byu.edu/handouts> provides various handouts to help in developing coping strategies. Take a moment and reflect on your needs. Then pick one topic/handout to work on.

Day 17 Reach out to a Classmate

Reach out to a classmate and build up the virtual campus community. Work in groups via Zoom to get projects done quicker, study for finals, quiz each other, etc. No classwork? Just reach out to a classmate, say "hi," and talk for a short time!

Day 18 Practice Self-Compassion

Reflect on something hard that happened in the last day or so. Write down what it was and why it was hard. Then, offer yourself the same compassion that a good friend or family member would offer you. Write a little letter to yourself if that helps.

Day 19 Look for Humor

Look through old photos for iconic ones you've been saving and caption a meme or two, trim part of a video into a funny gif, or whatever you want. Just find a reason to laugh today!

Day 20 Befriend Stress

This challenge may feel strange, but look up and watch [Kelly McGonigal's TED Talk on "How to make Stress Your Friend"](#). This health psychologist's research will change the way you understand and perceive stress.

Day 21 Release Body Tension

Here are some tips to release tension: Get Moving!! Get creative about home-based exercise. Scan for tension in your body often and passively release it. Use daily relaxation recordings, progressive muscle relaxation, autogenics, body scan, etc.

Day 22 Be Mindful Today

Take a deep breath and see if you can notice something around you that you haven't noticed before. Use one or more of your five senses. Once you've found one thing to pay attention to, give it complete appreciation. If you get distracted, that's okay. Just acknowledge your distraction and return back to this task.

Day 23 Practice Savoring

Slow your eating down to ¼ the speed of your normal habit. Pay attention to how the food feels in your mouth, how your mouth reacts it, how the different tastes play across your senses, the sounds that your eating makes, emotions you experience with this, urges you get to chew and swallow and eat more, etc. Yum!

Day 24 Write a Gratitude Letter

Pick someone you're glad is in your life and write a letter to them. Address the letter to them and write about why you're grateful for them. Share this letter with them (over video chat or in-person) if you can.

Day 25 Go Social Media Free

Find a time to go social media free. Whether that is a break for a few hours today or planning an entire day to delete your apps, time off of social media can help relieve stress and provide positive gains.

Day 26 Improve Exercise Habits

Try running, dancing, jump-roping, walking, playing catch, doing yoga, or exercising in whatever way makes you feel good and gets your heart pumping. Try something new or do a favorite exercise today!

Day 27 Focus on Hope

What is hope? What does it feel like? What does it look like? Why do we need it? How do we get more of it? Start a conversation about hope with a few people you care about.

Day 28 Love Yourself!

Make a list of things you love about yourself. Post it somewhere (like on your bedroom mirror and read it daily). If you have trouble thinking of these things, ask a trusted friend, family member, or mentor for some ideas.

Day 29 Connect with Ancestors

Play family history games, do research, index, or share what you find with your living family members. Call your grandparents or a distant relative to see how they are doing or collect stories.

Day 30 Make a Gameplan!

Go back through the past 30 days - Which activities did you like? Which ones worked the best for you? Set a goal or two to help you continue taking care of yourself moving forward! Thanks for a great 30 days!



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