

PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK FOCUS:

POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

April 2, 2018 - Change is possible!!

Have you ever wanted to make a change but just didn't know where to start? What changes would you make? A different job? A healthier lifestyle? A more positive attitude?

This is National Public Health Week and we are here to remind you that focusing on positive mental health can assist with making changes. Where we live, learn, work, worship and play impacts our health and our opportunity to ward off disease and injury. When we are thinking positively and coping well with stress then we are more likely to be able to focus on positive changes. Try some of these techniques to help promote positive mental health and reduce stress:

DEEP BREATHING - Get comfortable. You can lie on your back in bed or on the floor with a pillow under your head and knees. Or you can sit in a chair with your shoulders, head, and neck supported against the back of the chair. Breathe in through your nose. Let your belly fill with air. Breathe out through your nose. Place one hand on your belly. Place the other hand on your chest. As you breathe in, feel your belly rise. As you breathe out, feel your belly lower. The hand on your belly should move more than the one that's on your chest. Take three more full deep breaths. Breathe fully into your belly as it rises and falls with your breath.

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION - Lie comfortably on the floor. Take a few deep breaths to relax. Breathe in. Tense the muscles of your feet. Breathe out. Release the tension in your feet. Breathe in. Tense your calf muscles. Breathe out. Release the tension in your calves. Work your way up your body. Tense each muscle group. This includes your legs, belly, chest, fingers, arms, shoulders, neck, and face.

GO FOR A WALK – Studies show that exercise and getting active can have a positive effect on our thinking patterns and mental health.

MEDITATION - There are many ways to meditate. Some need to be taught, but others you can master on your own. Try to clear your mind by focusing on one thought or word or phrase, or imagining yourself in a peaceful place, like on the beach or in the woods. Or you could focus on sensations you feel.

With these suggestions in mind, let's partner together to create healthier people, families, communities and, eventually, the healthiest nation. We can do it — if we work together. Pike County Behavioral Health Services is a service of the Pike County Health Department, for more information please call our office at 573-324-2111.



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