



هيئة أبوظبي  
للطفولة المبكرة  
Abu Dhabi Early  
Childhood Authority

# Guide on Mental Health Resources for Early Childhood Development Practitioners

October 2022



This guide is dedicated to **supporting and serving the wellbeing of Early Child Development (ECD) practitioners in Abu Dhabi**. We define **ECD practitioners** as those **who work with or on behalf of young children** from the **early stages of pregnancy to the age of 8 years, parents and/or caregivers**

We understand that **working with young children, their parents and/or caregivers can be stressful, with various challenges often coming up**. We hope you find this guide informative and that it aids you in identifying **mental health challenges** on **personal** and **professional levels** while also directing and assisting you to **effectively manage your mental health**

## Objectives



Understand the meaning of mental health



Identify the causes and working environment triggers that lead to stress



Spread awareness on mental health in the workplace



Abolish stigma around mental health problems



Provide tips and instructions to deal with mental health challenges

**Note:** This guide is meant to provide support to ECD practitioners and does not constitute an exhaustive source of information on mental health. Practitioners are advised to seek support from a licensed professional in case they experience mental health symptoms



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# Introduction to Mental Health and Wellbeing



## What is mental health and wellbeing?

According to the **World Health Organization (WHO)**, **mental health** is “**a state of well-being** in which every individual **realizes** his or her own **potential**, can **cope with the normal stresses of life**, can **work productively**, and is able to **make a contribution** to her or his **community**”

## Mental health is more than just the absence of mental disorders or disabilities

The fact that someone is not experiencing a mental health condition does not necessarily mean their mental health is flourishing. Likewise, it is possible to be diagnosed with a mental health condition while feeling well in many aspects of life



# What is mental health and wellbeing?

Mentally healthy individuals typically have one or more of the following characteristics:



Are **confident** when faced with **new situations** or **people**



Have an **optimistic approach** to life



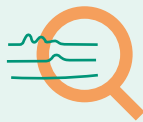
Have **positive ideas** about themselves and the world (i.e. **positive core beliefs**)



Avoid always **blaming themselves**



Have right level of **empathy**



**Set goals** in their **professional** and **personal lives**



**Feel good** about themselves

## What is mental health and wellbeing?

### What is mental illness and what are some of its symptoms?

**Mental illness** refers to a **wide range of mental health conditions** that affect our mood, thinking and behavior such as...

Depression

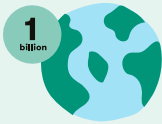
Obsessive-compulsive disorder

Anxiety

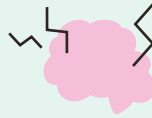
Eating disorders



### According to the World Health Organization and World Bank:



In 2021, nearly **1 billion** people around the world had a **mental health disorder**



**Anxiety** is the **most common mental illness** in the world, affecting **284 million** people

### Symptoms of Mental Illness could be...

Sleep or Appetite Changes  
Social Withdrawal  
Problems Thinking  
Apathy  
Illogical Thinking  
Loss of Interest

Mood Changes  
Drop in Functioning  
Increased Sensitivity  
Feeling Disconnected  
Nervousness  
Unusual Behavior

## Key Mental Health Statistics

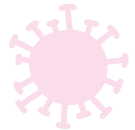
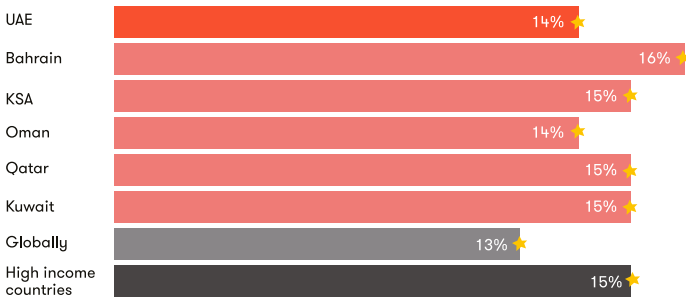
You are not alone



**15%** of the population in the GCC suffers from **mental disorders** (IHME, 2019)

According to a survey by the University of Sharjah, **~60%** of survey-takers suffered from at least one mental disorder. **Common disorders** were **anxiety** (~60%), **depression** (~30%), and **post-traumatic stress disorder** (~20%)

### Prevalence of mental health disorders in the general population (IHME, 2019)



### The covid-19 pandemic further exacerbated mental health issues...

According to a local study in the UAE with ~4.5k participants (Frontiers in Psychiatry, 2021):



~60% of participants reported increased **stress at home**



~40% felt an increased level of **stress from financial matters**

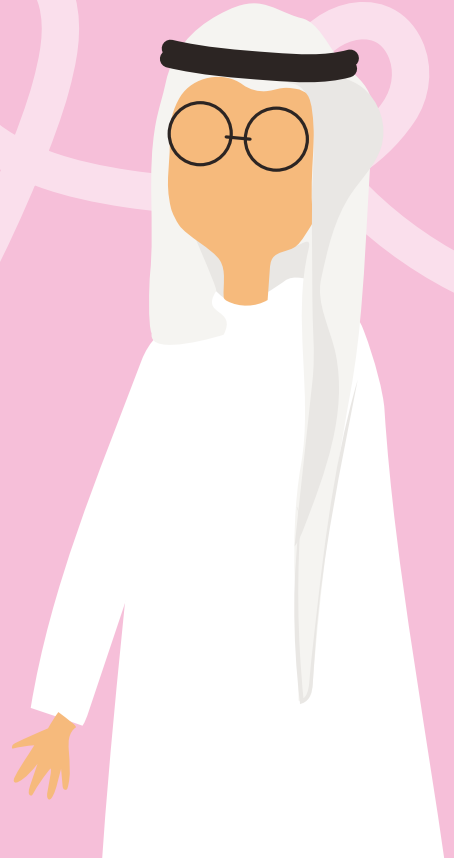


~40% reported increased **stress from work**





# Identifying the Main Causes of Mental Health Challenges



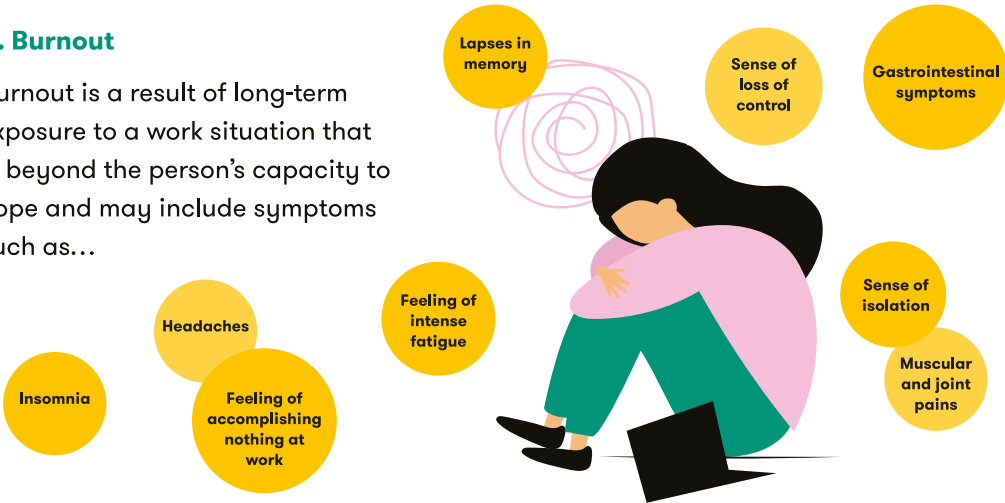
# What are the challenges in the workplace that may lead to poor mental health?

Practitioners face challenges in the workplace that in many cases contribute to poor mental health

WORKPLACE-RELATED			D. Sub-optimal physical health	E. Other lifestyle factors
A. Burnout	B. Psychological harassment	C. Compassion fatigue		

## A. Burnout

Burnout is a result of long-term exposure to a work situation that is beyond the person's capacity to cope and may include symptoms such as...



## B. Psychological Harassment

- Daily humiliations
- Subtle criticisms
- Inappropriate remarks
- Inappropriate and unrealistic demands

# What are the challenges in the workplace that may lead to poor mental health?

Dealing with trauma may sometimes lead to high stress situations and fatigue

WORKPLACE-RELATED			D. Sub-optimal physical health	E. Other lifestyle factors
A. Burnout	B. Psychological harassment	<b>C. Compassion fatigue</b>		

## C. Compassion fatigue

The **physical and emotional exhaustion** experienced by those **who care for others who are in distress**, including **young children, parents and caregivers**. This occurs when the following **triggers** start to **affect your thoughts**:

Experiencing or **caring for someone who is ill**

Providing **care under a heavy workload**, excessive demands or long hours

Providing therapy that introduces you to **extreme or severe issues**

Caring for those **copng with death of a loved one** and **bereavement**



## Signs of compassion fatigue



### Physical

- Exhaustion
- Changes in appetite
- Digestive issues
- Headaches



### Emotional / Behavioral

- Mood swings
- Irritability
- Feeling anxious
- Feeling depressed
- Addiction



### Cognitive / Spiritual

- Difficulty focusing
- Memory issues
- Poor choices
- Lack of motivation



### Relational/ Workplace

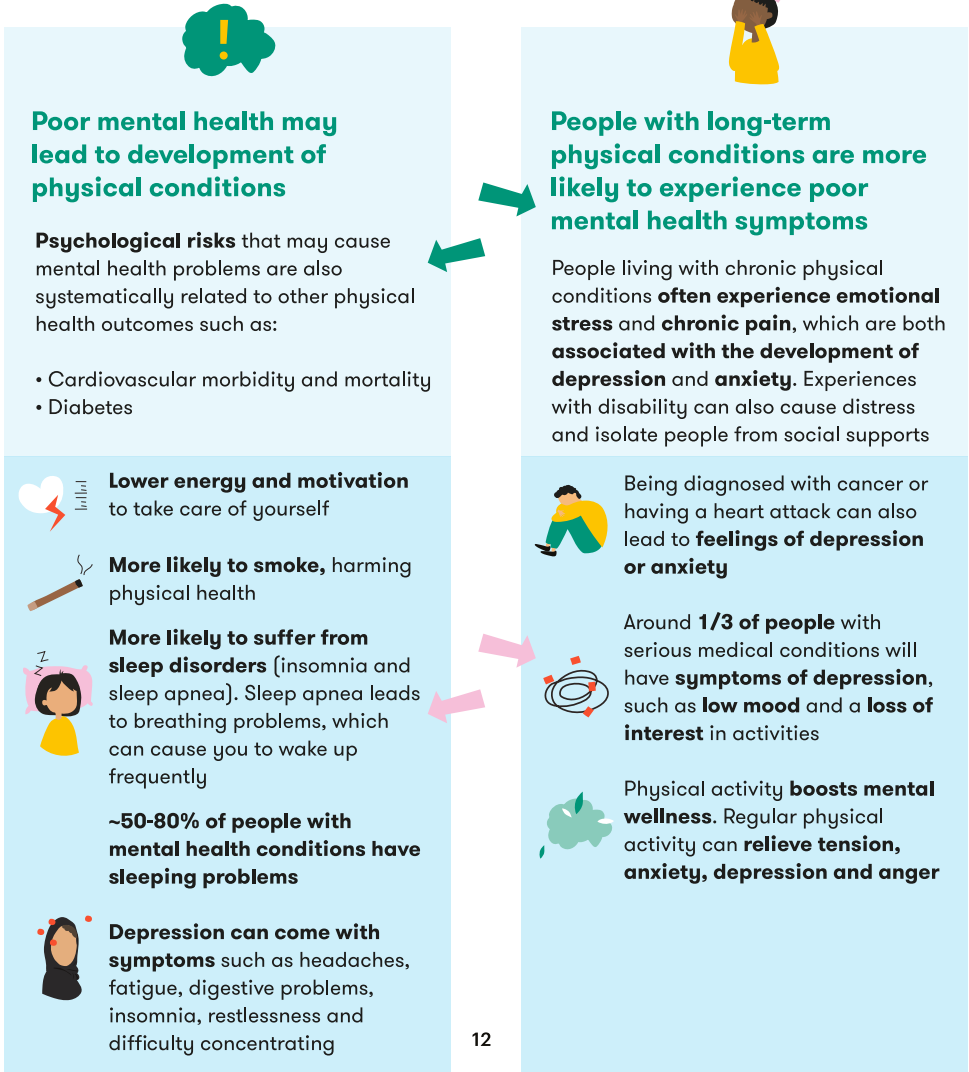
- Feeling detached/numb
- Struggling with making and keeping connections

# What are the challenges outside the workplace that may lead to poor mental health?

— Poor mental health leads to diminished physical health and vice versa

WORKPLACE-RELATED			D. Sub-optimal physical health	E. Other lifestyle factors
A. Burnout	B. Psychological harassment	C. Compassion fatigue		

## D. Physical and mental health are interrelated



## What are the challenges outside the workplace that may lead to poor mental health?

Other lifestyle factors can adversely affect wellbeing

WORKPLACE-RELATED			D. Sub-optimal physical health	E. Other lifestyle factors
A. Burnout	B. Psychological harassment	C. Compassion fatigue		

### E. Other lifestyle factors

Identify if you relate to any of the following factors, which may be impacting your mental health and wellbeing adversely

“

I have **difficulty sleeping**

I feel **exhausted** even if I sleep sufficient hours

I often eat **unhealthy food**

I have **limited “me time”** to recharge

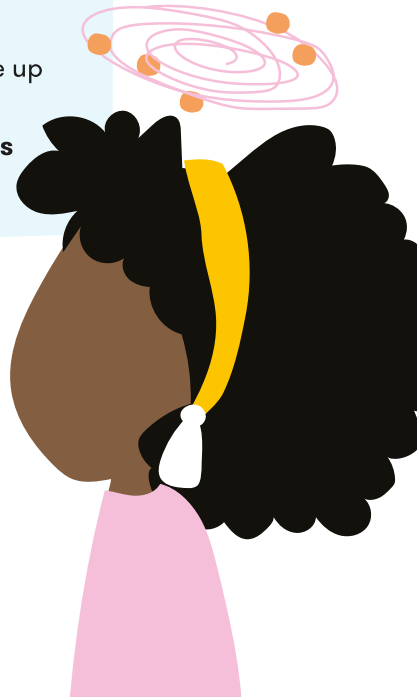
I am **not exercising** as much as I would like to

I have tried several **diets plans** but eventually I give up

I **smoke to relax** and **calm down**

I don't **engage in social** and **community activities**

”

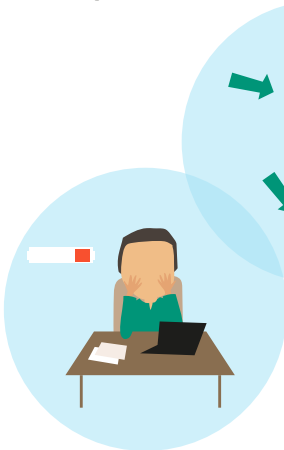


# What is the impact of poor mental health in the workplace?

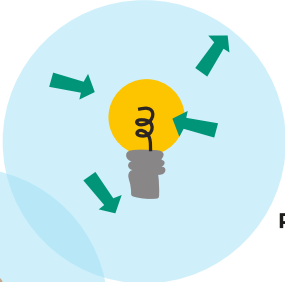
Experiencing mental health problems in the workplace can impact individuals on the job in several ways...



Poor communication



Decreased productivity and job performance



Poor decision-making



Irritability and mood swings



Reduced morale



Illness



Weakened physical capability and daily functioning



Increased absenteeism



# Managing your mental health



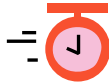
# How do we proactively manage mental health and wellbeing?

## Proactively managing our mental health will lead us to healthier and happier lives

In today's world, many people are often reluctant to address their mental health needs. This can stem from a variety of reasons:



Sometimes mental health is seen as less legitimate than physical health, and mental health challenges perceived as a sign of weakness



In our fast-paced world, people prefer to seek quick answers to complex problems, instead of tackling the underlying issues



In many cases people are not aware that there are simple and practical ways to boost one's mental health

**In reality, whether you're looking to cope with a specific mental health problem, handle your emotions better, or simply feel more positive and energetic, there are steps you can proactively take to experience greater mental well-being, both in the workplace and outside of it:**

### Workplace related efforts

1



Manage your mental health and wellbeing at work

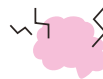
2



Manage your work-life balance

### Non-workplace related efforts

3



Manage your stress effectively

4



Adopt a positive mindset



# 1 How do we manage our mental health and wellbeing at work?

Healthy social dynamics at work positively affect your mental health

The average person will spend ~90k hours at work in a lifetime



Healthy workplace dynamics have a deep, lasting effect on our well-being and career trajectory

## Healthy social dynamics at work require

### TRUST

Employees in high trust environments report less stress, more energy, higher productivity, fewer sick days, and less burnout

### COLLABORATION

Employees are more productive and more likely to persevere through challenges when they work with others

### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Employees need to understand the benefits of unique perspectives, and a culture that accepts differences

### RESPECT

Employees who get respect from their leaders report ~60% better health and well-being

### COMMUNICATION

Employees should feel comfortable voicing concerns, asking questions, and contributing their ideas

### EMPATHY

Employees that are able to establish true connections with one another experience improved workplace dynamics

## Tips for building good work relationships

Practice active listening

Make time for your coworkers

Set clear boundaries

Show gratitude

Follow through on your commitments

Know when to ask for help

# 1 How do we manage our mental health and wellbeing at work?

Responding to bullying appropriately will improve mental health

## How can i respond to being bullied in the workplace?

Sequential steps to follow



STEP 1



**Remove yourself from the situation** and **seek assistance** from your supervisor, HR, or any person who may be able to assist



Seek **support and viewpoints** from **trusted colleagues**



**Speak to other staff members** who may have left the area but have **worked with this person**, to see how they managed the situation



**Keep a diary** detailing the nature of the bullying (e.g., dates, times, names of witnesses etc.)



If you feel confident and able to speak assertively with the perpetrator, **ask that they stop and name the behavior**

STEP 2

STEP 3



**Report all incidents promptly** so that action can be taken

STEP 4



**File a complaint** with the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (MOHRE). There is a helpline (600-590-000) that advises on how to file a complaint

STEP 5



**File a complaint** with the police

# 1 How do we manage our mental health and wellbeing at work?

## Treating compassion fatigue will improve your thoughts, mood and well-being

Three strategies to **prevent and address compassion fatigue** and to **help you FEEL and BE at your best**

### 1 Self-care strategies



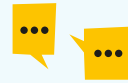
#### Awareness

Determine **how you are feeling** and whether your **behaviors are consistent with who you want to be**



#### Balance

**Balance among different activities** including work, family rest, and leisure



#### Connections

**Build social connections and supportive relationships** with co-workers, family, and community

### 2 Health strategies

- **Keep moving (doesn't need to be fast paced!)**

#### KEY TIPS

- **Create a good sleep routine!**

**Avoid** devices (phone, TV) in the bedroom, higher energy activities or caffeine right before bed

Establish a **bedtime and wake-up routine** and stay consistent on the weekends

Be aware of your **sensory stimuli** (smell, sounds, breeze, amount of light, etc.)



### 3 Behavioural strategies

**Practice mindfulness** by **paying attention to the things you usually do** (e.g., eating, walking, sitting, interacting, observing) in a particular way: on **purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally**

**Key benefits of mindfulness:** Reduces blood pressure, decreases stress & anxiety, increases impulse control and treats depression

#### How to enjoy a soft mindful moment?

**Relax** and **take** a deep breath!

## How do we manage our work-life balance?

There are techniques to implement at your workplace that will improve your work-life balance

LEARN TO SAY “NO!”

First, **assess the typical demands** of your day and learn to **prioritize** what you have on your plate

It can be helpful to recognize that **saying “no” to lower priority tasks frees up time and energy** to attend to other activities that are **important to you**



### MAKE THE MOST OUT OF YOUR LUNCH BREAK

• You can take this time to **enjoy your meal mindfully.**

You can also do **short meditations, breathing exercises** and **listen to inspirational podcasts.**

Going for a short walk when the weather is better is also another option



### ADDITIONAL TECHNIQUES

- **Sharing personal experiences** with others will help nurture healthy relationships
- Taking care of your **physical health is critical**

### COMMUNICATE BOUNDARIES YOU CAN TRULY UNPLUG

- Set and agree on your work hours with your employer so that **you have clear boundaries** between **work and personal time**

### TAKE BREAKS

Taking **breaks every 75-90 minutes** for 15 minutes can help you to:

- Improve **concentration**
- Reduce **stress**
- Keep you **feeling engaged**
- Make your **work** feel **more enjoyable**



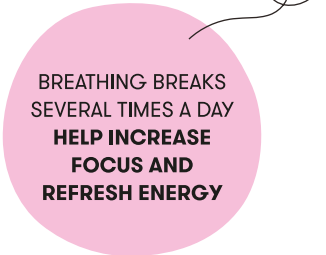
## 2 How do we manage our work-life balance?

### Incorporating breathing exercises into our daily routine has several benefits

Studies have shown that practicing breathing exercises can lead to **better mental health** and **positive emotions**, and **alleviate stress** and **depression**. Below you can find some options:

#### Breathing breaks


- Stand and take a deep breath while raising your arms slowly over your head
- Exhale as you lower your arms. (Repeat 3 times)



BREATHING BREAKS  
SEVERAL TIMES A DAY  
HELP INCREASE  
FOCUS AND  
REFRESH ENERGY

#### Paced breathing

- Inhale for 2-4 counts slowly through your nose and exhale for 4-6 counts through your mouth with a swooshing sound
- Free your mind from distractions by focusing on an object, image or sound
- Start by taking a normal breath and then a deep breath



BREATHING APPS  
CAN HELP SERVE  
AS A COACH UNTIL  
IT BECOMES  
SECOND NATURE

(some free applications:  
iphone: breathe deep  
android: paced breathing)

#### 4-4-8 breathing

- Breathe in through your nose for 4 counts whilst sitting, taking the breath into your stomach
- Hold your breath for 4 counts, then release your breath with a whooshing sound for 8 counts
- Repeat entire technique 3-4 times without a break

#### Simple yoga breathing

- Sit or lie down, resting your hands below your navel
- Inhale and exhale through your nose for a few minutes
- Start to count up silently, then backward as you breath in and out slowly, humming each time you exhale
- Gradually make each exhalation twice as long as each inhalation

## 2 How do we manage our work-life balance?

There are also techniques that can be implemented outside of work to promote a better work-life balance



### PRIORITIZE YOUR HEALTH

- Consider habits like:
- Daily meditation
    - Exercise
  - Social connection
  - Committing to using your paid time off



### MAKE SPACE IN YOUR SCHEDULE FOR FAMILY TIME

- Block out time that is devoted entirely to your family
- You can also set this time apart to call family members or other loved ones who live far away

### START SMALL

- Healthier behaviors such as staying active or improving your eating habits can support your sense of well-being
- Make something so simple and so tiny that you have no excuse not to do it, even when you're in a rush

### INVEST IN RELATIONSHIPS

- Solid connections and social support can improve health and increase longevity
- Make sure to spend time nurturing relationships that matter to you

### PRIORITIZE QUALITY TIME

- Identify what is truly important to you. Which activities and relationships are life-enhancing and which are draining?
- When you have downtime, allow yourself to enjoy that quality time to re-energize

### ASK FOR HELP

- Consider that asking for help gives other people the gift of giving and being part of a support system instead of considering it a burden

### 3 How do we manage stress effectively?

#### Managing stressful situation requires identifying the cause and utilizing the appropriate coping strategy

Stress is **how we react** when we feel **under pressure**. Our bodies **release hormones**, which help us accomplish assignments and enhance our performance. There are two different types of stress:

##### Acute Stress

Stress that helps us stay more alert is known as **acute stress**. Acute stress **doesn't last for long** and **should not always be perceived as a bad thing**

##### Chronic Stress


For some people, **stress is constant**. The body reacts as if bracing for danger, but that danger never comes. This is known as **chronic stress**, it is **not healthy**, and can be **overwhelming**

While it is critical to understand stress, it is even more important to know what to do about it

- Why did I get stressed?
- Which factor (stressor) affected me?
- How to cope with the situation?



Coping strategies refer to conscious strategies used to reduce unpleasant emotions and stress

A. Short Term	B. Long Term	
<p><b>Reactive strategies</b></p> <p>Techniques that can provide <b>immediate but temporary relief</b></p>	<p><b>Proactive strategies</b></p> <p>Strategies that take <b>more time to implement</b> but have longer-lasting and <b>more sustainable impacts</b></p>	<p><b>Enactive strategies</b></p> <p>Strategies that can be <b>difficult or time consuming</b> to implement, but provide long-term, <b>permanent impacts</b></p>

Research identifies 3 types of strategies available for managing stress



### 3 How do we manage stress effectively?

#### A. Short-term coping strategy: Six steps towards dealing with stress

Most of the advice on how to reduce stress is for the long-term. **But what do you do when you are overcome with stress in the moment, for example** at your desk or in a meeting?

#### In the moment of stress...



##### Recite

Memorize a **phrase that brings you peace and comfort**. It can be words of wisdom from a person you admire, or a poem verse



##### Pause

Close your eyes and **take five deep breaths**, count to ten, or **think through three different possible responses** to a stressful situation before reacting



##### Excuse yourself

Sometimes just removing yourself from a stressful situation and **giving yourself the space to think clearly** can help defuse a stressful moment



##### Choose joy

**Think of things that make you happy:** a funny memory, your favorite vacation, the most beautiful place you've ever been



##### Be calm

Try to **act and respond in a calm, collected manner** even if you are upset. Staying calm will be more natural and feel like less of an act over time



##### Be aware

**Recognize that you are under stress.** Identifying that you're stressed can help you adjust your response

### 3 How do we manage stress effectively?

#### B. Long-term coping strategies

##### Time-out

#### Long-term stress management

The best way to cope with stress is to develop long-term strategies, some strategies include:



##### 1. Time-out

In order to **identify and evaluate the situations** that stress you, **you need some time to figure out what** is it about them that is **activating your stress response system**

#### Tips

Taking **1 hour a day to be alone with your thoughts** will enable you to **truly figure out what is stressing you**. During that hour, you may notice that your mind is blank and nothing happens. That is fine, **use the time to relax!** You will see soon enough that things will start popping up in your mind. Ways of spending one hour alone everyday could be **painting, walking, swimming, praying, meditating, running, walking the dog, etc...**



Spend time alone, without TV, books, or computers. In other words **no outside sources of stimulation**



You might be thinking “**I don’t have a minute to spare let alone an hour per day!**”. Here lies the **difference between having the time and making the time**. Making the time is taking control over your life



### 3 How do we manage stress effectively?

#### B. Long-term coping strategies

##### Adopt a healthy lifestyle and alter a stressful situation

##### 2. Adopt a healthy lifestyle

You can increase your resistance to stress by **strengthening your physical health**. The food you eat, the exercise you get, and your sleeping habits can make a significant impact in controlling stress

##### Tips

###### Exercise regularly.

Physical activity plays a key role in reducing the effects of stress. Make time **for at least 30 minutes of exercise three times per week**



###### Eat a healthy diet.

Well-nourished bodies are better prepared to cope with stress, so be mindful of what you eat



###### Reduce caffeine and sugar.

The temporary "highs" caffeine and sugar provide often end in with a crash in mood and energy. By reducing the amount of coffee, soft drinks, chocolate, and sugar in your diet, you'll **feel more relaxed and you'll sleep better**



###### Get enough sleep.

Adequate sleep fuels your mind and body. **Feeling tired will increase your stress** because it may cause you to think irrationally

##### 3. Alter the situation

**If you can't avoid a stressful situation, try to alter it.** Figure out what you can do to change so the problem doesn't present itself in the future

##### Tips

###### Express your feelings.

If something or someone is bothering you, communicate your concerns in an **open and respectful way**. If you don't voice your feelings, resentment will build and the situation will likely remain



###### Be willing to compromise.

When you ask someone to change their behavior, **be willing to do the same**

###### Be more assertive.

Don't take a backseat in your own life. **Deal with problems head on, doing your best to anticipate and prevent them**



###### Manage your time better and plan ahead.

Poor time management can cause a lot of stress. When you are running behind, it's hard to stay calm and focused



### 3 How do we manage stress effectively?

#### B. Long-term coping strategies

##### Avoid unnecessary stress and adapt to the stressors

#### 4. Avoid unnecessary stress

Not all stress can be avoided, and it's not healthy to avoid a situation that needs to be addressed. However, **there are several stressors in your life that you can eliminate**

#### Tips

##### Learn how to say “no”.

Know your limits and stick to them. Whether in your personal or professional life, **refuse to accept more responsibilities** than you can handle



##### Avoid people who stress you out.

If someone consistently causes stress in your life and you can't turn the relationship around, **limit the amount of time you spend with that person**



##### Take control of your environment.

If the evening news makes you anxious, turn the TV off. If traffic makes you tense, take a longer but less-traveled route



##### Shorten your to-do list.

Analyze your schedule, responsibilities, and daily tasks. If you've got too much on your plate, **distinguish between the “should” and the “musts”**



#### 5. Adapt to the stressor

**If you can't change the stressor, change yourself.** You can adapt to stressful situations and regain your sense of control by changing your expectations and attitude

#### Tips

##### Reframe problems.

Try to view stressful situations from a more **positive perspective**. For example, rather than fuming about a traffic jam, look at it as an opportunity, listen to your favorite music, or enjoy some alone time

##### Look at the big picture.

Take perspective of the stressful situation. Ask yourself **how important it will be in the long run**. Will it matter in a month or a year? If the answer is no, focus your time and energy elsewhere

##### Adjust your standards.

Perfectionism is a major source of avoidable stress. Stop setting yourself up for failure by demanding perfection, instead set reasonable standards for yourself and others



## 4 How do we adopt a positive mindset and improve our lives?

### What are core beliefs and how they are related to our behaviors and mindset?

**Core beliefs** are a **person's central ideas about themselves and the world**. They act like a lens through which **every situation is seen**. Core beliefs usually **develop in childhood, or during stressful periods in adulthood**.

Because of this, **people with different core beliefs** might be in the same situation, **but think, feel, and behave very differently**

**Situation :** Two people with different core beliefs receive a bad grade on a test



I am a **failure**  
Of course, I failed,  
why **bother?**

**Person A** feels depressed, but **makes no changes**

**Harmful core beliefs lead to negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors**



I am perfectly **capable** when I give my best effort  
I did poorly because I didn't prepare

**Person A** feels disappointed, but **plans to study next time**

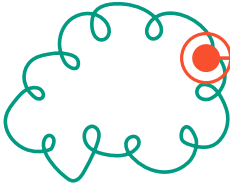
**Rational core beliefs lead to balanced reactions**

“I am weak”  
“I will end up alone”  
“People can't be trusted”  
“Nothing ever goes right”

“The world is a friendly place”  
“I can achieve anything”  
“I am confident”  
“Others will help me”

## 4 How do we adopt a positive mindset and improve our lives?

### Impact of harmful core beliefs and how to change them to shift to a more positive mindset



**Harmful core beliefs directly impact mental health**

#### Core Beliefs

- Difficulty trusting others
- Feelings of inadequacy in relationships
- Excessive jealousy
- Overly confrontational or aggressive
- Putting others' needs above one's own needs

#### Mental Health Problems

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Low confidence
- Difficulty handling stress
- Low self-esteem

**Changing harmful core beliefs is possible with patience, hard work, and self-compassion. Some steps include...**

**1 Acknowledge** that a harmful core belief exists and **give voice to it**

**2** Explore some of the **ways that a core belief affects your life** and how things would be if you didn't have that limiting belief

**3** If you're facing **difficulties identifying core beliefs** or thinking of ways to change them, **seek advice from a mental health professional**

#### EXAMPLE

You become aware that **you believe it's not possible to be successful at work and happy at home**. This core belief has inadvertently led you to **avoid certain job positions** you have the skills for. If you didn't have this core belief, you could **apply for the dream job** while confirming you've still got a **supportive and encouraging life outside of work**



## How do we adopt a positive mindset and improve our lives?

**Understanding and expressing your emotions is key to improved mental health, and a happier and healthier life**

### Identifying Emotions

Learning to identify the connection between your feelings and specific events (stressors) **can take time**, but it's **important to learn how to address emotions** in a healthy manner.

When learning how to identify feelings, notice:

#### Physical or bodily reaction to an emotion

For example, fear may feel like a knot in your stomach



#### Patterns indicated by bodily responses

For example, feeling jittery prior to beginning every exam



### Expressing Emotions

**Experiencing and expressing emotions are integral parts of life.** Human beings are born to feel a range of emotions, such as anger, joy, happiness and fear. Emotional expression leads to **healthier** and **happier** relationships. They also:

Reduces stress & anxiety

Eases depression

Increases resilience

Improves confidence

Helps see problems in a new light

Emotional expression is **key to a healthy life**, since it **gets bad feelings out of our system**.

Here are **5 steps** to move negative emotions quickly:

- 1 Identify the emotion you are feeling.** Is it anger, sadness, fear, disgust?
- 2 Focus on the emotion *without the reason*** you are feeling that way. This is challenging because we usually think of the reason we are feeling a certain way
- 3 Focus on *where you feel*** this emotion in your body and **what it feels like**. It might help to give it a shape or color and focus on that. If you start thinking about **why you are feeling it**, **stop** yourself and **go back** to just focusing on the basic emotion
- 4 Take *deep breaths*** and as you **exhale**, imagine the **emotion melting away**
- 5 Continue** to do this until you feel **relief**. If you leave the story out of it, the relief should come quickly

## 4 How do we adopt a positive mindset and improve our lives?

Think about the heart, the mind, the soul and the body.

### What Can I Do To Help Myself?



#### Eat well

Healthy diets **positively affect our brain**. This includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein and foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids (fish and nuts)



#### Sleep well

**Sleep and mental health go hand-in-hand**. One night of sleep deprivation can dramatically affect your mood



#### Exercise

It is important to **keep moving**. Exercise can be slower-paced activities such as walking



#### Seek help from others



#### Make an appointment with your General Practitioner



#### Give back

The very act of giving back to the community boosts **happiness** and sense of **well-being** and **broadens our perceptions** of the world



#### Stop smoking and avoid alcohol



#### Socialize

Studies show that people who enjoy close social ties have **lower rates of anxiety** and **depression**



#### Try relaxation techniques

For instance, meditation **reduces blood pressure** and **decreases stress hormones** amongst many other benefits





# Finding Support In Abu Dhabi



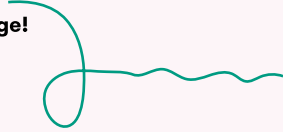
# Where Can We Find Mental Health Support in Abu Dhabi?



## Centers that provide mental health support

**Certain primary health care physicians** (GP, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine) offer psychologists or psychiatrists to help you with your mental health needs; more details in the pages to follow

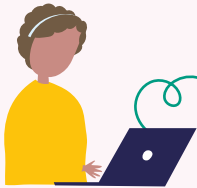
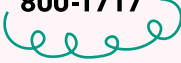
**List of primary care centers on the next page!**



## ISTIJABA helpline

ISTIJABA offers an add-on **psychological support service offered to the community at no cost**, within the COVID19 support call center brought by the Department of Health Abu Dhabi. Trained counsellors provide **psychological first aid, psychoeducation, and referral services**

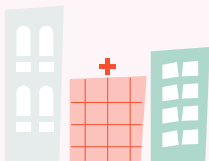
**800-1717**



## Family Services Call Center

The **Family Services Call Center** operated by the Family Development Foundation is a direct channel to answer any concerns relevant to families and guide you to relevant services

**800-33322**



## Private Psychiatric Clinics

Abu Dhabi has numerous **clinics dedicated to psychiatry, psychology and counseling** with specialists from multiple backgrounds qualified to support you

- + American Center for Psychiatry and Neurology
- + British Neurology Psychiatry Center
- + Beautiful Mind Medical Center
- + Maudsley Health

**Note:** List of mental health support resources is not exhaustive

# Where Can We Find Mental Health Support in Abu Dhabi?

## Online applications and platforms

We have selected several applications as useful resources to provide counselling services, meditation content, wellness courses, etc.



### Targeted at individuals seeking mental health support

Connects mental health professionals with individuals remotely to provide mental health support and counselling



### Targeted at caregivers of individuals with anxiety, bipolar, depression and schizophrenia

Provides detailed toolkits, training and access to professionals that help caregivers



### Targeted at individuals seeking mental health support

Provides digital wellness courses and online psychological counselling services to individuals, partnering with counselors and mental health professionals



### Targeted at Arabic speakers between the age of 21 to 35

Provides a wide library of meditation content that allows the Arabic user to reduce stress, anxiety and insomnia through instilling the practice of mindfulness



### Encourage your organization to contact Ma'an, the Authority of Social Contribution, to help get you connected to the right mental health professionals in Abu Dhabi

The authority has access to a pool of specialized volunteers that your workplace can leverage to provide you and your colleagues with the right support. This can be done at an organizational level through submitting a request for volunteers from here:

<https://www.research.net/r/maanexternal>

## Primary Care Centers In Abu Dhabi

Centers Providing Mental Health Support Abu Dhabi	Phone Number	Email Address
Health Plus Diabetes and Endocrinology	+971 600503035	info@hplus.ae
Health Plus Family Health Center	+971 600503035	info@hplus.ae
Health Point Hospital	+971 800203 +971 24929709	-
Intercare Health Center	+971 26390080	info@intercare-health.com
Medeor 24x7 Hospital	+971 80055 +971 26900600	info.auh@medeor.ae
Mediclinic - Airport Road Hospital	+971 8002000	marh-ploairport@mediclinic.ae
Mediclinic - AL Noor Hospital	+971 8002000	alnoorhospital@mediclinic.ae
NMC Royal Hospital	+971 22035000	info@nmc.ae
NMC Specialty Hospital	+971 26332255	info@nmc.ae
Newcastle Medical Center	+971 25511138	-
Novomed Centers - Abu Dhabi	+971 22222106	-
Optum - helpline	800 4446793	-
Zia Medical Center	+971 565467937	info@ziamedicalcenter.com
American Center for Psychiatry & Neurology	+971 26979999	info@americancenteruae.com
Beautiful Mind Medical Centre	+971 26212230	info@bmmc.ae
Maudsley Health	+971 26107777	enquiries@maudsleyhealth.com
Neuron Psychological Care Center	+971 26260774	info@neuronpsychology.com
Priory Wellbeing Center - Abu Dhabi	+971 26518111	abudhabienquiries@priorygroup.ae
Sno Wellness	+971 800239355	wellness@snoclinics.com

**Note:** {1} List of primary care centers is not exhaustive and does not indicate a direct recommendation of quality

## Primary Care Centers In Abu Dhabi

Centers Providing Mental Health Support Al Dhafra	Phone Number	Email Address
Ruwais Hospital	+971 8007267	-
Western Towers Al Ahlia Medical Centre	+971 28840522	-

Centers Providing Mental Health Support Al Ain	Phone Number	Email Address
Al Ain Hospital	+971 37022000	alaincontact@seha.ae
Burjeel Royal Hospital	+971 37991111	info@burjeelroyal.com
Khaybar Waziristan Medical Center	+971 37665173	-
Medeor 24x7 International Hospital	+971 80055	info.auh@medeor.ae
Mediclinic - Al Ain Hospital	+971 8002000	alainhospital@mediclinic.ae
Mediclinic – Al Jowhara Hospital	+971 8002000	aljowharahospital@mediclinic.ae
Mediclinic - Al Madar Hospital	+971 37041111	almadar@mediclinic.ae
Medstar Clinics Sanaiya	+971 37648336	-
Neima Healthcare Center	+971 37096601	-
New Medical Centre Specialty Hospital	+971 26332255	hospitalauh@nmc.ae
Optum - helpline	+971 8004446793	-
Oud Al Touba Diagnostic & Screening Center	+971 37022589	-
Tawam Hospital	+971 37677444	TawamContact@seha.ae

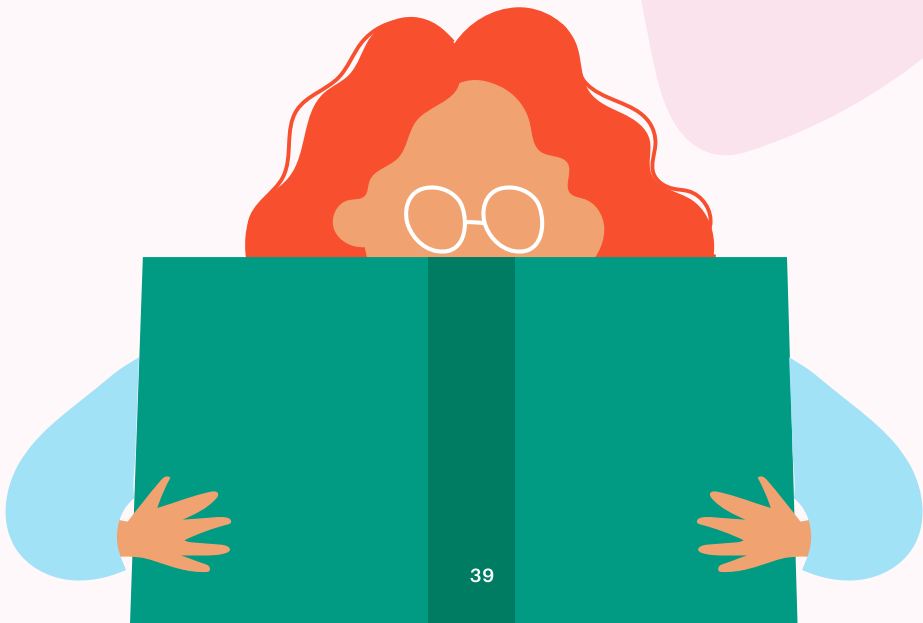
**Note:** (1) List of primary care centers is not exhaustive and does not indicate a direct recommendation of quality

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On behalf of the **~380k young children between the ages of 0-8**, their **parents** and **caregivers**, we would like to thank you for **all your efforts**, and for **keeping young children at the heart of everything you do**

**We hope you  
continue to refer to  
this guide, and find  
it beneficial!**



# thank You!



هيئة أبوظبي  
للطفولة المبكرة  
Abu Dhabi Early  
Childhood Authority