

# *Mental Wellbeing Guide:* **Mental Health**



Understand the importance  
of mental health and its  
impacts

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# Mental Health gets its own section; it's that important!

Mental health is an integral component of our overall well-being, weaving through the fabric of our emotions, thoughts, and behaviours. It influences **how we perceive the world, make decisions, and interact with others.**

There are also **two sides** to mental health:

1. building it up through everyday activities;
2. supporting it through challenging circumstances and experiences.



These two aren't always distinct, but it's a helpful way to think about how we care for our mental health.

The journey towards maintaining or reclaiming mental health begins with recognition, moves through open dialogue, and evolves with the practice of effective coping strategies.

Here are three steps to helping manage mental health challenges:



# Three steps:

## 1. Recognition

- Recognizing that you're facing a mental health challenge is a seemingly easy, but sometimes challenging step. It's about understanding that something within you needs attention and care. This acknowledgement is not a sign of weakness but rather the first step towards healing and strength.

## 2. Identifying Mental Health Challenges

- Mental health challenges express themselves in different ways, but here are some things to consider:
  - **Emotional Symptoms:** Feelings of sadness, anxiety, or hopelessness that persist over time can indicate a deeper issue.
  - **Cognitive Symptoms:** When you find it hard to concentrate or make decisions, or if you're experiencing distorted thinking patterns, it's essential to pay attention.
  - **Behavioural Changes:** Noticeable shifts in how you interact with others, your eating or sleeping habits, or increased substance use can be signs of mental health challenges.
  - **Physical Symptoms:** Sometimes, mental health issues manifest physically through aches, fatigue, or changes in energy levels.

## 3. Breaking the Silence

- Talking about mental health challenges is often seen as the most challenging step. The fear of judgment or making our struggles "real" by voicing them can be daunting. However, sharing your experiences is a crucial step toward healing.
- The Importance of Sharing
  - **Diminishes Stigma:** Opening up about your mental health can reduce self-stigma and societal stigma, creating a support network around you.
  - **Enhances Perspective:** Emotional challenges can cloud judgment, leading us to overestimate negatives and underestimate positives. Talking helps in gaining a clearer, more balanced perspective.

# Summary

- Mental health is crucial for overall well-being, affecting emotions, thoughts, and behaviors.
- It involves building resilience through daily activities and supporting oneself during challenges.
- Steps to manage mental health:
  - Recognition: Acknowledge the need for attention and care.
  - Identifying Challenges:
    - Emotional symptoms: Persistent sadness, anxiety, or hopelessness.
    - Cognitive symptoms: Difficulty concentrating, making decisions, or distorted thinking.
    - Behavioral changes: Shifts in interactions, eating, sleeping habits, or increased substance use.
    - Physical symptoms: Aches, fatigue, or changes in energy levels.
  - Breaking the Silence:
    - Reduces stigma by sharing experiences.
    - Enhances perspective and balance.
    - Talk with trusted individuals or use online platforms for support.

## Additional resources



[UNB Wellness Hub](#)