

May is Mental Health Month and I wanted you to really take a look at doing the things that make you happy. Too often we often focus on the negatives or the mental health problems, but I wanted you to focus on the things that make you happy or the positive part of mental health.

1. Laugh! Don't think laughing is a waste of time. It produces endorphins and can change your mood or mindset very rapidly. Watch an old sitcom, watch kids play, hang out with fun people.
2. Connect with your spirituality. Many research projects show that people who pray and have strong spiritual connections have more peace and less worry. Even if you are struggling with organized religion don't throw the baby out with the baptism water. Find the core of your beliefs and lean into them.
3. Exercise. No matter where you start, start! The physical exertion helps with the mental stress and worry. The adrenaline and energy can last for a few hours and give you more creative ideas and drive.
4. Journal. Write things down. Stuff often goes around and around in our brains without coming out with a place to process it. Writing things down allows you to get things out of your head and then you can look at it all in an organized manner.
5. Try something new or even something you used to really enjoy doing. It can lead to distraction or even better, a new sense of challenge or even mastery. Mastery of a skill is a true way to gain self-esteem.
6. Replace negative words with positive messages. Nope, you are not perfect. Get over that thought. Are you good enough, probably, are you trying your best under these circumstances? I would be pretty sure this is true! Remember, the words you say about yourself do sink into your brain.
7. Keep educating yourself. Brain cells keep reproducing, new pathways can be made across your brain. Educate yourself through reading, watching TED Talks, what you play on your car stereo, listening to podcasts, take an online class, the opportunities are endless!
8. Hang around positive people and walk away from the Negatrons (Super Negative People). You really can just walk away from them, no explanation needed.
9. Breathe. Having a time to breathe or meditate has shown to actually shrink the anxiety (fight or flight section) of the brain! Try finding time to breath in for 4, hold for 6 and exhale for 7 for ten minutes at least two times a day for optimal improvement.
10. DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT! You are stuck like a duck in the muck because you are stuck doing the same ol', same ol' and getting the same ol' results! Do something different to get different results!