

COVID-19
Is YOUR Mental Health Under Siege?
Mine Certainly Is!!
Article #2

With Covid-19 now at the forefront of the minds of most Albertans, up to date and relevant information provided by our public health officials has jumped to a much higher level of importance and significance. Accurate and vital information is driving home an increased sense of urgency to take preventative measures and to put these measures into action...NOW!

Because the media is heightenedly aware of everyone's increased sense of urgency, we are now seeing alarming news stories of peoples' hoarding behaviours at grocery stores, and watching on the street interviews of people experiencing tremendous levels of anxiety. The media is also strongly advising everyone to not move to a state of panic.

Hoarding behaviours? Anxiety? State of panic? Access a reputable and trusted health care resource and you will see that these 3 conditions are recognized as mental illnesses. Are you surprised? Is this something that you already know? Is this new information?

So, as you continue to monitor the situation through timely updates, constant changes in information, and ongoing directives from public health officials, what impact might this be having on your daily mental health, your daily mental wellness and well-being?

With growing global concerns around COVID-19, our health, safety and well-being is a top priority. I encourage everyone, myself included, to follow guidelines from local public health officials.

I also encourage everyone, myself included, to embrace a little bit of ***Positive Mental Health Self Care***. After all, ensuring the highest quality of our ***daily positive mental health*** during these most interesting times is equally as significant as ensuring the highest quality of our ***daily positive physical health***. NOW is the best time to start having real conversations about the impact that this situation is having on our psychological health and safety.

- ***The Canadian Mental Health Association*** www.cmha.ca - Do everything you possibly can to ensure that you are receiving daily posts from either the National Office or it's divisions and branches/regions all across Canada. LinkedIn is the best place to receive these daily posts.

Let me quote the National Office website: “Founded in 1918, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) is the most established, most extensive community mental health organization in Canada. Through a presence in more than 330 communities across every province and one territory, CMHA provides advocacy, programs and resources that help to prevent mental health problems and illnesses, support recovery and resilience, and enable all Canadians to flourish and thrive.”

As a Mental Health Champion, I cannot say enough great things about the daily posts that I have read on LinkedIn from CMHA Branches all across Canada. Being Canada's most established, most extensive community mental health organization, CMHA is, without a doubt, the most trusted source for information to help all of us during these unprecedented times.

- Mary Ann Baynton, Director of Strategy and Collaboration for Workplace Strategies for Mental Health, recently shared the following post on LinkedIn. “What would be helpful? Many of us are working from home and trying to deal with stress about the world at large, concern for our family and friends, and work demands. How can I help?”

This leads me to yet another trusted source for mental health information to help all of us during these unprecedented times; a source that you're probably not aware of at this time but really need to be aware of...today. Trust me.

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health, Compliments of Canada Life
www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com - From my experiences as a Mental Health Champion, I want to say how fortunate we are here in Canada to have this one of a kind, amazing and informative free resource available to us!

Please sign up to receive their newsletter, just like I did many years ago!

Before we move on any further and provide you with one last trusted source for mental health information, have fun here with Dr. Chris Williams' ***“Small Easy Changes To Do Each Day”*** published by The Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division for their “Mental Health For All” program.

Small, easy changes - a big part of your commitment to your daily mental health, your daily mental wellness and well-being to best manage your concerns around Covid-19.

1. The World Is Amazing When You Really Look At It – People who live with and best manage times of uncertainty often say that they appreciate things they tend to take for granted. So, put on your special glasses and see the world, our planet, for the amazing place it is.
2. Make A Note Of This – Music cheers you up. Obvious? So, why are you sitting there in silence? Silence is just a space for you to think about your Covid-19 worries!!
3. Do The Oatmeal – Eat a bowl of oatmeal or granola each morning. Both work like “drain unblockers”. After a few days, they clear out your system and guess what? You feel better all around.
4. Faster, Faster – When you find yourself doing housework, the best way to produce happy chemicals in your head is when you get out of breath and your heart starts pumping harder. We call this “Heavy Breathing”.
5. It's Not What You Do, It's Who You Do It For – It doesn't have to be a big thing, so do a random act of kindness for someone. You just may feel even better than they do. Plan one or two random acts of kindness you're going to do today.
6. Monkeys Aren't Stupid - Not many people know this, but bananas can help produce the same happy chemical in your head as a pill. And bananas are available without a prescription. Eat a banana. That's it!

Bonus Point: Thank You Martin Kerr, Award-Winning Singer and Songwriter from Edmonton, for this link to your new video and song, “Isolation Groove”.

“This video is not intended to poke fun at the severity of the situation in the world right now. Just to make you smile as we persevere together. Enjoy, sing, dance and share - remotely!” Martin K.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mW2GJ1vIns>

So, let's begin to wrap up "COVID-19. Is YOUR Mental Health Under Siege? Mine Certainly Is!! Article #2".

- Be your very own trusted source to help YOU during these unprecedented times. Be your very own trusted source to help OTHERS during these unprecedented times. ***BE A MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPION!!***

Quite recently, a colleague of mine in the Field of Career Development facebooked me. Cindy, who lives with and manages depression and anxiety, wrote a most poignant definition of a Mental Health Champion. "Defining the Mental Health Champion! We face adversity. We find ways to deal with it. We use the support we have around us. We speak our truth when things don't go well. We function in the wacky world of work where disappointments can be inevitable. We move on. We validate our feelings. We look for ways to maintain our daily personal wellness. Yes, We are GREAT! We are Our Own Designated Survivors!"

Poignant, to say the least! Please share this message with your loved ones, friends and neighbours. ***BE A MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPION!!*** And please share this message with the same vigilance and sense of urgency as the message to ***HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD!!***

Saturday morning, March 21, the provincial government released a video online that featured some of the most prominent people who call this province home, both past and present. They all have one message. ***HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD!!***
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3RAEHCD47jk&feature=share>

By sharing both messages, we ensure that an equal balance between our need for physical health and safety, and our need for psychological health and safety is top of mind with everyone.

ALBERTA! WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER!
