

Huron County Board of *Mental Health* and *Addiction Services*



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Who is MHAS?

The Huron County Board of Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS) was established in 1984. MHAS is a public body made up of volunteer Board members including clients, family members, and other community leaders representing the residents of Huron County. The primary role of MHAS is to monitor, evaluate, assess, prioritize, and plan for mental health and addiction services throughout our county. The Board does not directly provide mental health and/or addiction services. The Board contracts with various agencies for mental health and/or addiction services including prevention, treatment, and recovery support services.

It's been said that the measure of a community is the manner in which it cares for its most vulnerable citizens. Indifference is not an option. We all share in the responsibility to provide help and hope when our citizens need it.

Below is the MHAS Mission, Vision, and Values:

MISSION

Provide access to mental health and addiction services and resources for prevention, treatment, and recovery supports while educating and advocating for community members.

VISION

For Huron County to be a community where all individuals are mentally and emotionally healthy and addiction free.

VALUES

- Transparency
- Integrity
- Respect
- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Responsiveness
- Service

The purpose behind the creation of this Virtual Wellness Fair is to provide the community with the tools necessary to take care of their mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual wellbeing. Please note, always consult your physician before beginning utilizing the physical wellness tools listed in this document.

This document is simply a snapshot of topics and tools available for anyone to utilize, however, we want to make you aware that there are more supports, services, and information available. For more information please feel free to contact our office at 419-681-6268.

We are grateful for the opportunity to help and support our incredible community in any way we can and we are hopeful the resources contained below will be a great benefit to you and your family.

To meet the MHAS staff and learn more about what MHAS does click the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YoiV0uy4eUM&t=4s>



The Importance of Wellness

The words health and wellness are marketed all over the place! And while the word health is generally well understood, the word wellness is not. Wellness is important because it impacts so many areas of life. Honestly, everyone wants to live their life to the fullest potential. Unfortunately, this is not easy as life often comes with challenges and things we cannot control. Fortunately for you, optimizing your overall well-being is something you can control and upon doing so, you'll notice significant benefits!

Wellness is something that you choose to pursue. It's a choice you make in life that requires constant effort to achieve. While associated with a healthy lifestyle, wellness goes beyond the confines of general health. It encompasses a positive outlook on your mind, body, and soul and is something we often have more control over than health.

The word wellness may seem overwhelming but it doesn't have to be. You should think of wellness as a series of positive choices you make to live your life to the fullest! Below we will dive further into the different dimensions of wellness and how to apply them to our lives.



Dimensions of Wellness

Emotional Wellness

Emotional wellness has to do with your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. It allows you to clearly recognize and accept your feelings, both positive and negative. This includes adapting to stress, life changes, and difficult times.

Ways to improve your emotional wellness include:

- Being optimistic and focusing on the positive aspects of life
- Learning to accept your emotions, whether good, bad, or ugly
- Building and maintaining strong relationships
- Staying in the moment
- Practicing mindfulness
- Smiling as much as possible
- Maintaining a good work/life balance
- Getting enough sleep at night
- Seeking professional support when necessary
- Managing stress through positive coping methods
- Incorporating gratitude into your daily life

Spiritual Wellness

Spiritual wellness is the process by which you seek meaning and purpose in life. This can be achieved in a variety of ways including fellowship, religious and spiritual activities, prayer, meditation, yoga, as well as identifying your morals, values, and beliefs.

Ways to improve your spiritual wellness include:

- Engaging in fellowship activities
- Becoming actively engaged in religious or spiritual activities
- Volunteering for a cause that is important to you
- Performing daily positive affirmations
- Taking time to appreciate the natural forces of the universe
- Practicing yoga
- Forgiving and forgetting the actions of those who have wronged you
- Meditating
- Reflecting on the meaning of past events that occurred in your life
- Taking the time to think about who you are and exploring your inner self
- Digging deeper and exploring things you're curious about
- Practicing acceptance

Physical Wellness

Physical wellness has to do with keeping your body in optimal condition and health. It can be achieved through a well-balanced diet, various forms of exercise, and practicing self-control.

Ways to improve your physical wellness include:

- Exercising for at least 30 minutes a day
- Consuming a well-balanced diet
- Practicing portion control
- Eating breakfast every day
- Practicing safe sex
- Scheduling routine physical and wellness exams with medical professionals
- Getting enough sleep at night
- Committing to a smoke-free and drug-free lifestyle
- Limiting the consumption of unhealthy fats, sugar, salt, and alcohol
- Learning to listen to your body and recognize early signs of illness

Social Wellness

Social wellness is your ability to connect with others and maintain strong relationships. It can be achieved by surrounding yourself with positive people and being comfortable with who you are in social environments.

Ways to improve your social wellness include:

- Getting involved in your school, workplace, or community
- Scheduling time to be with family or friends
- Reaching out to friends you haven't talked to in a while to see how they're doing
- Practicing active listening when others are talking
- Being respectful in the way you communicate with others
- Practicing self-disclosure to those you trust
- Embracing laughter
- Making an effort to build new relationships
- Refraining from blaming, judging, or criticizing others
- Being confident in yourself in social situations

Intellectual Wellness

Intellectual wellness has to do with participating in mentally stimulating activities that challenge your overall knowledge and skillsets. It can be achieved by committing to lifelong learning and being open to trying new things.

Ways to improve your intellectual wellness include:

- Traveling the world to experience and learn about different cultures
- Trying out new hobbies
- Cultivating your own views, opinions, and ideas
- Being open-minded about the views, opinions, and ideas of others
- Learning a new language
- Reading fiction and nonfiction books to spark your imagination
- Learning a musical instrument
- Exploring your creative side
- Mastering time management with to-do lists and priority systems
- Taking an online course on a subject of interest

Occupational Wellness

Occupational wellness has to do with maximizing your workplace happiness by focusing on work that brings you a sense of joy, satisfaction, and accomplishment. It can be achieved by exploring various career pathways and successfully managing working place stressors.

Ways to improve your occupational wellness include:

- Thinking about the types of work that brings you joy and satisfaction
- Shadowing or volunteering for professionals in various lines of work
- Role playing conflict management with friends or coworkers
- Establishing a good work/life balance to avoid burn out
- Building strong relationships with co-workers, colleagues, and executives in your industry
- Setting career goals that foster positive growth and professional development
- Focusing on the positive aspects of your career and finding ways to minimize or remove the negative aspects
- Establishing strong workplace habits to maximize productivity
- Scheduling time for innovative thinking and professional development
- Attending industry conventions
- Research going back to school to change careers, if desired

Wellness & Mental Health

The pursuit of health and wellness can be stringent at times but if we take a multi-faceted approach, we may find that we are covering all of the bases. However, if we focus on one area of our health and wellness and neglect others, then we may find that we are missing out on significant opportunities to improve our health and wellness holistically.

One area of our health and wellness that tends to be overlooked is our mental health. We need to realize that while eating a healthy diet, getting enough exercise, or fixing our sleeping patterns can improve our physiological health, these behaviors can also improve our mental health dramatically.

In a country where depression has an estimated prevalence of 8.1% (<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db303.htm>) and where millions of people encounter some sort of mental health problem at some point in their lives, the importance of mental health and wellness promotion that encompasses all aspects of the body and mind cannot be understated. When we are trying to improve our health and wellness overall, we must keep in mind that these efforts apply to our minds as well.

It is important to note that all dimensions of wellness mentioned above positively affect our mental health. From the foods we choose to eat, to the amount of exercise we incorporate into our day, or the 30 minutes taken daily to disconnect and read a book, all of these actions affect the state of our mental health. This guide will help you identify and incorporate different techniques and tools, as well as provide you with important information to boost your overall wellness and live the best life you can!

Self-Care

You may be asking yourself, “what is self-care”? Self-care refers to anything you do to improve your wellbeing and overall health. This can include anything from regular exercise to the occasional bubble bath. It is vital to our mental and overall health and, ironically, it’s something we frequently neglect to practice.

Some forms of self-care are incredibly helpful for mental health. Exercise, eating well, and sleeping well, all affect our physical health as well as giving us energy to do what needs to be done every day. Everyone has mental health, so self-care isn’t only for those who struggle with mental illness. It is important that we all take the time to do things for our own well-being because it will refresh and recharge us so that we can feel and be at our best.

Benefits of practicing self-care

Self-care improves our lives in different areas and in different ways, all of which are important to our overall health.

Practicing self-care can have remarkable effects on our self-esteem. When we take care of ourselves, it affirms our self-worth. With regular self-care, our self-awareness is greatly enhanced. Our go-to activities will usually be something that we already enjoy, but it also gives us the opportunity to branch out and try new things. This enables us to figure out what we do and don’t like and, if we discover new interests, it can potentially lead to new passions and goals.

Self-care encourages self-improvement. It promotes rest and relaxation, which benefits our overall health and wellness, and it also promotes healthy relationships. When our self-esteem and self-awareness improves, it has a positive effect on our overall mindset. This, in turn, enables us to care for our friends and loved ones in a way that we might not have been able to do before.

Start today taking care of yourself! Click the link below for a customizable Self-Care Plan created by MHAS.

<http://www.huroncountymhas.org/pics/Final%20Self%20Care%20Plan.pdf>

SELF-CARE WHEEL

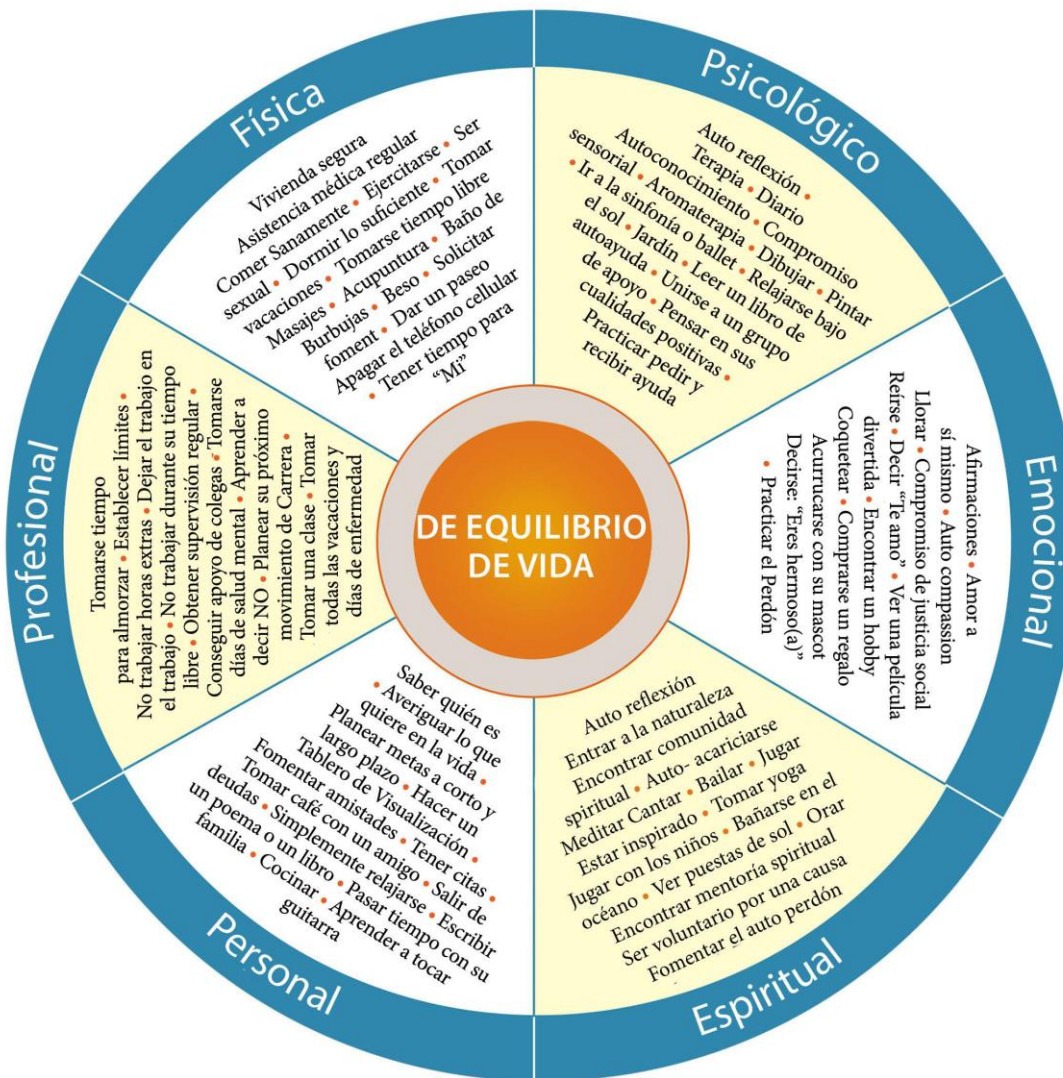


This Self-Care Wheel was inspired by and adapted from "Self-Care Assessment Worksheet" from *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* by Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Created by Olga Phoenix Project: Healing for Social Change (2013).

Dedicated to all trauma professionals worldwide.

www.OlgaPhoenix.com

RUEDA DE AUTO CUIDADO



Esta Rueda de Auto cuidado fue inspirada y adaptada de la „Hoja de Evaluación de Auto cuidado“ de *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* por Saakvitne, Pearlman y personal de TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Creado por Olga Phoenix Project: Healing for Social Change (2013).

Dedicado a todos los profesionales del trauma de todo el mundo.

www.OlgaPhoenix.com

Stress Management & Coping Skills

Stress...it is a word we are all very familiar with and in these uncertain and ever-changing times, we are all experiencing various levels of stress. Stress is how the body reacts to any kind of demand, threat, or change being experienced. It is often associated with a feeling of being overwhelmed and it is important to note that stress is not a “one size fits all” concept. What stresses one person out may not faze the next person based on the way in which they perceive the stressor. Additionally, each person may experience stress warning signs and symptoms differently and it is important to learn to recognize your personal stress warning signs and symptoms

(<http://huroncountymhas.org/pics/Stress%20warning%20signs%20and%20symptoms.pdf>).

When chronic stress is not properly managed it can cause serious health effects including; increased blood pressure, suppressed and weakened immune system, greater risk of heart attacks and strokes and an increased chance of experiencing some form of mental or emotional health issues. Although we cannot avoid stress all together, we can manage how stress affects us. Below are some strategies to help manage stress.

Stress Management Strategies

#1: Avoid unnecessary stress

Not all stress can be avoided, and it's not healthy to avoid a situation that needs to be addressed. You may be surprised, however, by the number of stressors in your life that you can eliminate.

- Learn how to say “no” – Know your limits and stick to them. Whether in your personal or professional life, refuse to accept added responsibilities when you are close to reaching them. Taking on more than you can handle is a surefire recipe for stress.
- 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 or end the relationship entirely.
- Take control of your environment – If the evening news makes you anxious, turn the TV off. If traffic's got you tense, take a longer but less-traveled route. If going to the market is an unpleasant chore, do your grocery shopping online.
- Avoid hot-button topics – If you get upset over religion or politics, cross them off your conversation list. If you repeatedly argue about the same subject with the same people, stop bringing it up or excuse yourself when it's the topic of discussion.
- Pare down 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”. Drop task that aren't truly necessary to the bottom of the list or eliminate them entirely.

#2: Alter the situation

If you can't avoid a stressful situation, try to alter it. Figure out what you can do to change things, so the problem doesn't present itself in the future. Often, this involves changing the way you communicate and operate in your daily life.

- Express your feelings instead of bottling them up. 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 the same.
- Be willing to compromise. When you ask someone to change their behavior, be willing to do the same. If you both are willing to bend at least a little, you'll have a good chance of finding a happy middle ground.
- 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. If you've got a report due and your chatty spouse just got home, say up front that you only have five minutes to talk.
- Manage your time better. Poor time management can cause a lot of stress. When you're stretched too thin and running behind, it's hard to stay calm and focused. But if you plan ahead and make sure you don't overextend yourself; you can alter the amount of stress you're under.

#3: 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.

- Re-frame problems. Try to view stressful situations from a more positive perspective. Rather than fuming about a traffic jam, look at it as an opportunity to pause and regroup, listen to your favorite radio station, 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? A year? Is it really worth getting upset over? 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. Set reasonable standards for yourself and others and learn to be okay with "good enough".
- Focus on the positive. When stress is getting you down, take a moment to reflect on all the things you appreciate in your life, including your own positive qualities and gifts. This simple strategy can help you keep things in perspective.

#4: Accept the things you cannot change

Some sources of stress are unavoidable. You can't prevent or change stressors such as the death of a loved one, a serious illness, a global pandemic, or a national recession. In such cases, the best way to cope with stress is to accept things as they are. Acceptance may be difficult, but in the long run, it's easier than railing against a situation you can't change.

- Don't try to control the uncontrollable. Many things in life are beyond our control – particularly the behavior of other people. Rather than stressing out over them, focus on the things you can control such as the way you choose to react to problems.

- Look for the upside. As the saying goes, “What doesn’t kill us makes us stronger.” When facing major challenges, try to look at them as opportunities for personal growth. If your own poor choices contributed to a stressful situation, reflect on them and learn from your mistakes.
- Share your feelings. Talk to a trusted friend or make an appointment with a therapist. Expressing what you’re going through can be very cathartic, even if there’s nothing you can do to alter the stressful situation.
- Learn to forgive. Accept the fact that we live in an imperfect world and that people make mistakes. Let go of anger and resentments. Free yourself from negative energy by forgiving and moving on.

#5: Make time for fun and relaxation

Beyond a take-charge approach and a positive attitude, you can reduce stress in your life by nurturing yourself. If you regularly make time for fun and relaxation, you’ll be in a better place to handle life’s stressors when they inevitably come.

- Set aside relaxation time. Include rest and relaxation in your daily schedule. Don’t allow other obligations to encroach. This is your time to take a break from all responsibilities and recharge your batteries.
- Connect with others. Spend time with positive people who enhance your life. A strong support system will buffer you from the negative effects of stress.
- Do something you enjoy every day. Make time for leisure activities that bring you joy, whether it be stargazing, playing the piano, or working on your bike.
- Keep your sense of humor. This includes the ability to laugh at yourself. The act of laughing helps your body fight stress in a number of ways.

Healthy ways to relax and recharge:

- Go for a walk
- Spend time in nature
- Call a good friend
- Have a good workout
- Write in your journal
- Savor a cup of coffee or tea
- Play with a pet
- Work in your garden
- Curl up with a good book
- Light scented candles
- Take a long bath
- Listen to music
- Watch a comedy
- Get a massage

#6: Adopt a healthy lifestyle

You can increase your resistance to stress by strengthening your physical health.

- Exercise regularly. Physical activity plays a key role in reducing and preventing the effects of stress. Make time for at least 30 minutes of exercise, three times per week. Nothing beats aerobic exercise for releasing pent-up stress and tension.
- Eat a healthy diet. Well-nourished bodies are better prepared to cope with stress, so be mindful of what you eat. Start your day right with breakfast and keep your energy up and your mind clear with balanced, nutritious meals throughout the day.
- Reduce caffeine and sugar. The temporary “highs” caffeine and sugar provide often end with a crash in mood and energy. By reducing the amount of coffee, soft drinks, chocolate, and sugar snacks in your diet, you’ll feel more relaxed and you’ll sleep better.
- Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs. Self-medicating with alcohol or drugs may provide an easy escape from stress but the relief is only temporary. Don’t avoid or mask the issue at hand, deal with problems head on and with a clear mind.
- Get enough sleep. Adequate sleep fuels your mind, as well as your body. Feeling tired will increase your stress because it may cause you to think irrationally.



Mental Health Support

Family Life Counseling & Psychiatric Services (FLC)

FLC Treatment Philosophy: “Many families in our area face desperate situations that involve mental health and substance use issues. Our therapy approach is to treat the entire family, not just the struggling individual. Our goal is to renew and maintain the family structure and support group with an emphasis on returning the individual to a healthy family and community life.”

FLC offers a variety of services including individual mental health and substance abuse counseling, family therapy, Intensive Outpatient and Aftercare Programs, and Child Play Therapy. The program covered in this Wellness Fair is Child Play Therapy.

Also referred to as "Revive", FLC's play therapy program is designed for children between the ages of 3 and 10. This evidence-based program strives to restore joy and peace to children and families through a method that works with the child's natural way of communication. Children continue to develop their language skills and struggle with using words to communicate needs and feelings. Given the opportunity, children will play out their feelings and needs in a manner of expression similar to adults. Whether the child is feeling fearful, unsatisfied, angry, or happy, play therapy is able to communicate these feelings and effectively restore connection between the caregiver and child.

Family Life Counseling & Psychiatric Services Locations:

- Norwalk: 567-560-3584
- Bellevue: 567-560-3587
- Willard: 567-560-3586

For a brief introduction into Child Play Therapy click the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rsd7l-IIN2w&t=68s>

Firelands Counseling & Recovery Services

Firelands Mental Health Services statement: “Everyone experiences emotional difficulties at one time or another. It’s not unusual for a person to become depressed or anxious on occasion. But if such feelings persist, it may be time to seek professional help. The caring mental health professionals at Firelands Counseling & Recovery Services can help people deal with their emotional problems and maintain control of their lives. Firelands provides a complete range of outpatient mental health services for children, adolescents, and adults.”

One of the programs Firelands offers in relation to their mental health services is a suicide prevention program call QPR. QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) is an educational training for community members to better understand how to prevent suicide. Suicide is a major public health concern. Over 48,000 people died by suicide in the United States in 2018 and it is the 10th leading cause of death overall. (<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/suicide-prevention/index.shtml>) Suicide is complicated and tragic, but it is often preventable. Knowing the warning signs for suicide and how to get help can help save lives. Firelands Counseling & Recovery Services is the Crisis Service Provider for Huron County and operates the county Crisis Hotline. If you or someone you know is experiencing thoughts of suicide, please contact the Huron County Crisis Hotline at 800-826-1306 or text 4HOPE to 741741

Firelands Counseling & Recovery Services Locations:

- Norwalk: 419-663-3737
- Bellevue: 419-483-6516

For a brief introduction on suicide prevention; how to recognize the warning signs, how to have a conversation, how to ask the question, and how to refer to help, click the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R58uBULtNCE>

Addiction Support

Rigel Recovery Services

Rigel Recovery Addiction Treatment: Addiction is a psychological and physical inability to stop consuming a chemical, drug, activity, or substance, even though it is causing psychological and physical harm to the individual and others. It is important to understand that the term addiction does not only refer to dependence on substances such as heroin, cocaine, alcohol, or prescription medications. Some addictions also involve an inability to stop partaking in activities, such as gambling, eating, or working. In these circumstances, a person has a behavioral addiction.

An addiction is a chronic dysfunction of the brain system that involves reward, motivation, and memory. It's about the way your body craves a substance or behavior, especially if it causes a compulsive or obsessive pursuit of "reward" and lack of concern over consequences.

Someone experiencing an addiction will:

- be unable stay away from the substance or stop the addictive behavior
- display a lack of self-control
- have an increased desire for the substance or behavior
- dismiss how their behavior may be causing problems
- lack an emotional response

Over time, addictions can seriously interfere with your daily life. People experiencing addiction are also prone to cycles of relapse and remission. This means they may cycle between intense and mild use. Despite these cycles, addictions will typically worsen over time.

The path from addiction to recovery isn't a straight line, and the process for each person is unique. Rigel Recovery Services provides comprehensive substance abuse treatment programming which is comprised of three core components:

- Cognitive Behavior Therapy
 - Based on the model that your thoughts cause your behaviors, so if you can change the way you think, you can change the way you act.
- Contingency Management
 - Rewards good behaviors thereby causing change in a positive, supportive manner.
- Recovery and Peer Support
 - Aftercare and referral to self-help support groups.
- Assessments
 - The individuals use of alcohol and/or drugs is evaluated in order to determine an appropriate treatment plan and goals that are specific to each participant as they begin the recovery process and continue sobriety.

Overcoming addiction is a long journey and it can be difficult but by engaging in effective treatment and establishing a support system, recovery is possible.

Rigel Recovery Locations:

- Norwalk Office: 567-280-4023

For a brief introduction into Rigel Recovery Services click the link below:

<https://youtu.be/9T6xJhaIbgg>



Nutrition

** Always consult with your healthcare professional to design a healthy eating plan to meet your individualized needs. This general information is not intended to replace your healthcare professional.*

One of the most unrecognized factors in the development of mental health is the role of nutrition. We know nutrition has substantial physical impacts, but it is the mental impacts of nutrition that are gaining traction with additional research and heightening awareness around this topic.

Proper nutrition is what fuels our bodies and our bodies need a regular supply of fuel. Oxygen is part of that formula and food is another part. If we supply our bodies with a sugar filled diet, we are filling up on poor fuel. But if we supply our bodies with a healthy diet which includes natural foods such as vegetables, fruits, and whole grains, we are giving our brains the fuel it needs to positively affect our mental wellness and emotions. Similar to a high-end vehicle that uses premium gasoline, our brains function best when it receives premium fuel.

What should I eat?

It is important to avoid high sugar, processed foods and focus on foods containing the nutrients that benefit brain health. A brain-friendly diet includes fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean protein, and limited amounts of sodium, saturated fat, and sugar. Working these foods into your diet will help protect your brain, fight fatigue, and boost your mood and alertness.

Common brain-friendly foods include:

- Avocados
- Blueberries
- Wild Salmon
- Turmeric
- Whole Grains
- Dark chocolate
- Beans
- Nuts and Seeds

<https://www.webmd.com/diet/features/eat-smart-healthier-brain#2>

What now?

Start by paying attention to how eating different foods can make you feel. Not just how they feel hitting your taste buds, but how they make you feel a few hours later or the next day. Experiment with a healthy diet for three to four weeks. Cut out the processed and sugar filled foods and replace them with healthy alternatives. See how you feel. If you feel great, you might be onto something. If you feel more alert, are in a better mood, and have more energy, you are definitely on to something. Then slowly introduce foods back into your diet and see how you feel. This will be the “aha moment” when you realize how critical nutrition is for your mental health and truly realize that premium fuel is the best fuel for your brain.

Physical Wellness

** Always consult your physician before beginning any physical wellness activity or exercise program. This general information is not intended to replace your healthcare professional. Consult with your healthcare professional to design an appropriate exercise plan.*

While the physical health benefits of exercise are frequently discussed, the psychological benefits are often overlooked. But research has shown that exercise can be quite beneficial for mental health. Physical activity may help ward off mental health problems before they start. Additionally, research shows exercise can improve the symptoms of many existing mental illnesses. Mental health professionals often prescribe exercise as part of the treatment for specific mental illnesses.

Exercise can alleviate many of the symptoms of depression, such as fatigue, tension, anger, and reduced vigor. For people with panic disorder, PTSD, and other anxiety-related conditions, exercise can be a proactive way to release pent-up tension and reduce feelings of fear and worry. Exercise also decreases sensitivity to the body's reaction to anxiety, as well as decreases the intensity and frequency of panic attacks in some cases.

Exercise can be intimidating to some but it doesn't have to be. Exercise can be as simple as taking a brisk 20 minute walk each day or incorporating a series of stretches and breathing sequences to your daily routine. Don't be afraid to start small and work your way up. Below are a few exercises you can incorporate each day to create your own physical wellness routine:

- Take a walk
- Go for a run
- Do yoga
- Stretch and take deep breaths for 5 minutes
- Go for a hike
- Go for a bike ride
- Play basketball
- Play catch
- Go swimming

Managing Physical Pain with Stretching

** Always consult your physician before beginning any physical wellness activity or exercise program. This general information is not intended to replace your healthcare professional. Consult with your healthcare professional to design an appropriate exercise plan.*

If you suffer from physical pain, the thought of exercise may seem almost impossible. When a person is suffering with chronic pain, it can affect every aspect of his or her life. It can sometimes start out like a pebble in one's shoe, only to become a thorn, or piece of glass—depending on the intensity. The difference is that when there's a foreign object in our shoe, it's easy to take the shoe off and remove it. Yet when it comes to living with pain, it's much more difficult to treat than removing a pebble from a shoe. The constant suffering can affect a person's

mentality in a number of different ways. It can influence thoughts, feelings, sleep patterns, memory, concentration, and even connections with others.

Living with pain is a constant battle to fight the physical discomfort as well as the mental and emotional side effects it causes. Trying to attack all symptoms at once can seem overwhelming. But with support of family, friends, and the proper medical care, hope for a life with less pain is possible. Ask your doctor about alternative pain treatments, other than prescription medications, that can provide enough relief to maintain regular sleep habits and re-engage in everyday tasks. You can also look into available support groups for emotional encouragement, and reach out to family, friends and acquaintances for relationship stability.

A great local resource to help with chronic pain relief is Patty Abrigo-Naidenoff. Patty is a Licensed Physical Therapist who provides services in the Huron County area and also offers helpful videos on her YouTube channel with guidance on how stretching can help reduce headaches as well as back and neck pain.

Click below to access these beneficial videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHEGEaBrCeOJAa1ZexY2jUQ>

