

Good mental health

10 key points from Rev Tony Murphy



As a church leader, I am passionate about the whole area of mental health. It is an area of increasing concern as we navigate through this covid pandemic.

The bottom line is and one that not everyone realises is that we all have mental health! **The question**

is, how is it?

If it is good, we have a responsibility to look after it and keep it good.

If it is not good, we may need to seek help, but can still take steps to look after it.

I recently went on a conference on this topic of mental health, where the following 10 areas were explored and some of the key points are summarised below

#1/10 EXERCISE

One way of nurturing good mental health is exercise.



Please don't run away at this point!
Exercise could be anything from improving our posture to a full-blown training program.

But the bottom line is that it releases good hormones into our system that help

our mental health.

However we start, it is recommended to start small, set sensible goals, aim for them, meet them and then set higher ones.

And yes, even the Bible mentions the benefit of physical fitness in 1 Timothy 4v8.

#2/10 FOOD & MOOD

The next way to nurture good mental health is through what we eat. It literally does affect our thinking. Consider

- Eating as many **different** plants as possible
- AVOIDING high fat and processed. They may taste delicious, but they literally poison the body (and the mind)
- Eating high protein foods and spicy foods.
- Taking vitamin supplements



Bible back up 1 Corinthians 10v31

#3/10 SLEEP HYGEINE

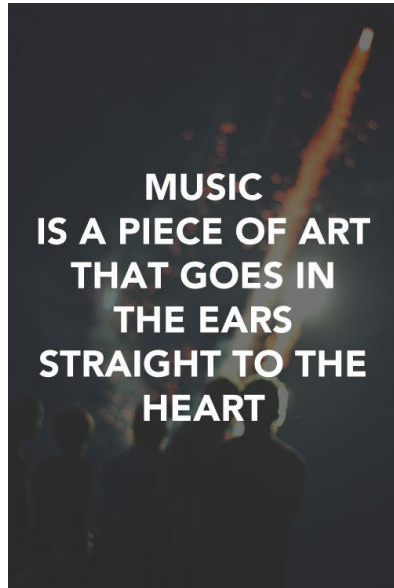
The next way to nurture good mental health is through aiming for good quality sleep. Consider the following.

- WARNING: burning the candle at both ends leaves NOTHING!
- AVOID caffeine after 2pm
- CHILL out the hour before bed. Switch your phone OFF* Vitamin supplements are recommended
- My experience is that I can't make myself sleep, but I can make myself rest... which leads to sleep.

** Bible back up Psalm 4v9



#4/10 GOOD MUSIC



The next way to nurture good mental health is through good music! It is shown to increase levels of good hormones in the body.

This is something that I find to be very true personally, especially in the area of Christian music, which allows God to touch our inner being.

Here's a link to one particular

song which really lifts me

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

** Bible back up Ephesians 5v19**

#5/10 LAUGHTER

The next way to nurture good mental health is through smiling and laughter, both of which release good hormones into the body.

In the Book of Proverbs, we are told, "*A cheerful heart is good medicine*"

Try finding something that makes you laugh eg a good film or comedy and give it a watch!



#6/10 GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

Another significant way to nurture good mental health is through investing in positive relationships.

This includes recognising friends who value you and spending time with them. Also, the opposite of this, avoiding those who drag you down (when possible!).

When you have a choice over who we can spend out time with, choose wisely, choose those who have a positive effect on you and choose to make sure you have a positive effect on them too.

****Bible back up: John 13v34****



#7/10 COMING ALIVE!



There are certain things we do that make us come alive and other things that have the opposite effect.

Set yourself achievable goals each day and list them.

Fact, every job you tick off a to do list releases happy hormones!

In the workplace, look to **delegate** the tasks which suck the life out of you. There are probably people who enjoy them!

****Bible back up: Matt 11v28****

#8/10 TIME OUT

It is impossible to just keep going... and going... and going.

We need to choose our time off before we make ourselves ill and our time off chooses us.



In the morning, try avoiding social media until you have woken up properly, had breakfast, made your bed, washed up and got a grip! If you can

take time to pray, read the Bible or reflect. Then you will be starting the day from a place of rest.

Try taking a day off every week. In the account of creation, God spent 6 days creating and on the 7th day he rested. This is an excellent principle to take into life and I can vouch it has worked fabulously well for me. If it's good enough for God, it's good enough for us!

****Bible back up: Genesis 2v2****

#9/10 BE THANKFUL

Even in difficult times, good things happen, but the problem is we naturally focus on the bad things.

Developing an “**attitude of gratitude**” can really improve our mental health

Try writing down 3 things each day that you are thankful for. They only need to be small things.

For example, apparently, I made my wife the perfect cup of tea recently! These can be shared with a friend or some people post them on social media

****Bible back up: 1 Thessalonians 5v18****



#10/10 KNOW YOUR WORTH

Our mental health suffers when we don't value ourselves. And we don't value ourselves when we feel low or tired. The key here is not to rely on our feelings when it comes to self-worth.

I believe that God values us higher than most of us realise and if we can learn to see our true value through his eyes, our mental health will certainly improve.

I would invite you to listen and reflect on this beautiful song, *How much do you think you are worth?* (Graham Kendrick)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MksPRx1Ky9I>

Bible back up 1 John 1v3

