

YOUR CARE POLMED

October 2020



Take a mental health day!



IN SOUTH AFRICA:

20%



will experience a depressive disorder at least once in their lifetime.

1 in 6



will face a common mental health condition.

These conditions **can be successfully managed** and do not need to impact your life negatively.

TOP TIP:

It's important that South Africans take care of their mental health, just as they would for their physical health.

Taking a mental health day for yourself is one of the best ways that you can take care of your mental health.

WHY SHOULD I TAKE A MENTAL HEALTH DAY?

Taking a mental health day can help you to:

- Reduce stress and anxiety
- Boost productivity and creativity
- Improve your work-life balance
- Help manage your emotions
- Help reset your perspective
- Boost happiness
- Leave you rested and recharged



HOW DO I KNOW WHEN I MAY NEED A MENTAL HEALTH DAY?

If you begin to or are already experiencing any of the below symptoms, you may need to take a mental health day:

- Feeling overwhelmed, even with small tasks
- Plagued by heavy thoughts
- Trouble concentrating
- Irritable
- Trouble sleeping
- Constantly on edge
- Struggling to manage emotions
- Keep getting sick



WHAT CAN I DO ON A MENTAL HEALTH DAY?

Here are a few ways you can plan to spend your mental health day.



READING

Reading provides a **welcome distraction from your stressors**. The book's theme can also improve your mental health. A comedic book can make you laugh, and a self-help book can provide you with tools to improve your mental health.



GARDENING

Gardening can help to improve your self-esteem as it provides you with a **sense of purpose** and witnessing your hard work come to fruition can make you feel better about yourself.



EXERCISING

Exercising helps to **release endorphins**. These are brain chemicals that can help to improve symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression.

Yoga, Pilates, and brisk walks are great exercises that can help improve your mood as they boost endorphins.

COMMUNITY OR CHARITY WORK

Spreading love and goodwill to the less fortunate can help to **improve the view you have of yourself** and thereby improve your self-esteem.

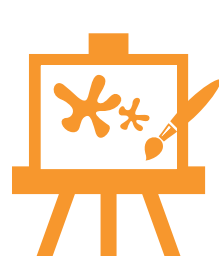


SPRING CLEANING

A fresh, clean space can **help put you in a good mood**. It can also increase your self-esteem to finish a task such as cleaning or organising your room or another space.

CREATIVE HOBBIES WITH FRIENDS OR FAMILY

Hobbies are a fun way to **unwind, and many can help to improve your mental health**. Activities can include cooking/baking or learning a new language.



REST

Sleep is important, but there's more to rest than sleeping. **Resting can also mean taking a break from your regular routine**, and instead meditating or soaking in a bath.

SPENDING TIME IN NATURE WITH FRIENDS OR FAMILY

Taking a walk, hiking, having a picnic in the park or visiting an animal sanctuary can help to **reduce your stress levels**. Enjoying your natural surroundings can make you feel more positive.



ACTIVITIES THAT MAY AFFECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DAY

Some activities may increase your stress levels and leave you more anxious than before. These include:

- Any sort of office work
- Eating processed foods and junk foods
- Spending the day scrolling through social media
- Spending all day binge-watching shows and movies
- Smoking or engaging in illegal drug abuse
- Focusing on the negativity

PLAN AHEAD FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DAY

It's important to **plan this day in advance**, so that it is in your schedule and you can stick to it. Discuss it with your family and friends so that they are aware of how important this time is to you.

Looking after your mental health is key to your overall health and wellness. Be pro-active about taking a mental health day when you feel your mental health is negatively affecting your ability to cope and address day-to-day stressors.

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