



How to M.O.V.E. toward Emotional Wellness!



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What is “emotional wellness”?

Emotional wellness is your ability to handle stress, change, and hard times. When your emotional wellness is as good as it can be, you are at your best.

Everyone can work on their emotional wellness. Even if your emotional wellness is good, you can do things to keep it there.

For more information on emotional wellness, visit: <https://medlineplus.gov/mentalhealth.html>.

How to use this book

In this book, we explain 4 ways you can take charge of your emotional wellness. We use the acronym **M.O.V.E.** to remind you that you must take action to keep your emotional wellness on track. Just like staying physically healthy takes time and energy, so does staying emotionally healthy. But with some simple tips, you can feel your best.



M.O.V.E. to be the best YOU that you can be!

- **Mark** any changes in behavior or activity.
- **Own** your emotional wellness.
- **Visit** a professional.
- **Expect** to keep working toward your emotional wellness.

You can also use this book to help others. This information may help you notice when someone you care about needs some help with their emotional wellness.

If you need help right away, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
1-800-273-8255



M.O.V.E.

Mark any changes in behavior or activity.

We all have changes in our lives. But some changes can be a sign that your emotional life is not as healthy as it should be. Common changes that may mean you need to take action are listed below. Mark any of these changes you are having. You might need to take action if these changes:

- Start suddenly (out of the blue)
- Last more than 2 weeks
- Make your life harder than usual



Behavior and Activity Changes Checklist

Eating changes

- ☐ Eating more or less than usual
- ☐ Gaining weight without trying
- ☐ Losing weight without trying
- ☐ Losing interest in eating
- ☐ Throwing up on purpose

Changes in energy levels

- ☐ Not enough energy to make it through your day
- ☐ Too much energy; you cannot sit still

Changes in your sleep

- ☐ Sleeping less than usual
- ☐ Sleeping more than usual
- ☐ Feeling tired all the time

Mood changes

- ☐ Feeling sad more often than usual
- ☐ Feeling very angry
- ☐ Worrying a lot
- ☐ Being afraid more often than usual
- ☐ An upset stomach (butterflies, “nerves,” or nausea) that will not go away
- ☐ Swinging from very good moods to very bad moods

Other changes

- ☐ Being confused often
- ☐ Avoiding family or friends
- ☐ Having a hard time focusing
- ☐ Seeing or hearing things that are not there

Helping others M.O.V.E. toward emotional wellness

You may know others who are struggling to stay emotionally healthy. If you see big changes in your loved ones' behavior or activities, they may need to M.O.V.E. toward emotional wellness, too.

Emotional wellness is hard to talk about, so be careful when talking to someone about it:

- Talk in private.
- Tell them what you have seen (not what you think it means).
- Tell them you are concerned.
- Listen to their response.
- Offer to help them explore options if they want.



Healthy Conversation Starters

Do say...

I notice you are not eating much lately.

If you are going through something, I am here.

I've noticed some changes in you lately, and I was wondering if we could talk.

Do not say...

I worry you may be emotionally unhealthy.

I know what you are going through.

Just hang in there or tough it out.

I know someone who took medicine that worked.

You just need to get over this.



M.O.V.E.

Own your emotional wellness.

There are several steps you can take to maintain your emotional wellness. Even if your emotional wellness is good, you can do these things to stay well.

What can I do to help my emotional wellness?

- Exercise regularly (go for a walk or take a yoga class).
- Eat healthy foods (lean protein, vegetables, fruits, and whole grains).
- Get plenty of sleep (6 to 8 hours per night).
- Spend time doing healthy activities that make you happy (hobbies, gardening, volunteering in your community).
- Spend time with people who support your emotional health (family, friends, or pastor).



Use the **My Emotional Wellness Kickstart Sheet** on page 5 to get started on your **Emotional Wellness Plan**.



My Emotional Wellness Kickstart Sheet

My exercise goals (what, how many minutes, days):

Healthy activities that make me happy (try to spend more time on these):

Healthy foods I want to eat more often:

People who support my emotional health (try to spend more time with these people):



After you have filled this out, you can start your own Emotional Wellness Plan by using a notebook.



M.O.V.E.

Visit a professional.

Even if you are working on your emotional wellness on your own, a mental health professional can give you even more support. A mental health professional is trained to help you get where you want to be emotionally and stay there. Your insurance will normally pay for visits.

Be aware: It can take some time to get an appointment.

How do I find someone who can help me?

Talk to one of these first to help you get started.

- Talk with your **primary care doctor**.
- Call your **health insurance company**.
- Call your company's **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**.
- Find a **Community Health Center** near you.
- If you are a student, visit your college or university's **Student Services** office.

What are the different kinds of professionals?

These are some of the professionals your primary care doctor may suggest you visit:

- Licensed Professional Counselors, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Marriage and Family Counselors, and Psychologists can provide talk therapies.
- Psychiatrists and Neurologists are medical doctors that can provide medicine.

How can I get ready for my first emotional wellness visit?

Get the most out of your visit by having a few things ready before you go. Make a list of:

- Any changes, events, or problems that are making your life harder
- Your concerns, worries, or fears
- All of your medicine (over-the-counter, vitamins, and herbal supplements), the dose, and when you take it

What should I do during my emotional wellness visit?

- Share your thoughts and feelings honestly. This will help you get the most out of your visit.
- Ask questions. Be sure you know:
 - What you can do to help yourself between visits
 - When you should come back
 - Who you should call for help between visits

Is my information private?

The information you share is private. Mental health professionals will not tell what you say without your permission, with few exceptions. Your professional will tell you more about this during your first visit.



M.O.V.E.

Expect to keep working toward your emotional wellness.



It takes time.

Like physical wellness, emotional wellness is a lifelong process. The tips in this book are not like taking medicine for a headache. It can take weeks or months to start feeling much better. And if you are feeling well, it is something you can keep doing forever to stay well.



It takes work.

Therapy and the other tips in this book only work when you are working on your emotional wellness at home and work, every day.

This may mean big changes, like getting out of a relationship or looking for a job that is better for your health. Or it may just mean little changes, like spending more time with your children or getting more sleep.



Stay inspired by tracking your progress.

Keeping a log or schedule of your emotional wellness activities can help you stay motivated and focused on your emotional wellness goals. Use a chart like the one on the next page to get started.



Use the table below to track your emotional wellness activities and how they are working. Take this information with you when you visit with your professional.

Date	Emotional problems I am having...	What I am doing to help with these problems...	How it is working...
Example: June 5	Feeling nervous	Took a walk	It helped a little while I was on the walk.
Example: June 6	Feeling nervous	Went out with friends	This helped a lot.



Mark. Own. Visit. Expect.

M.O.V.E. to be the best you that you can be!

Mark any changes in behavior or activity.

Watch for changes in eating, energy, sleep, and mood.

Own your emotional wellness.

Take care of your body and mind. Exercise, eat well, get enough sleep, do your hobbies, and spend time with people who make you feel good.

Visit a professional.

Talk with someone trained to help people feel better, deal with hard times, and adapt to change.

Expect to keep working toward your emotional wellness.

We are all at different places on the path to emotional wellness. And we can all move forward. Make a plan, and keep working!

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