



MAY 2023

31 WAYS TO MAKE THE WORLD AROUND YOU WORK FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

	1 Try to find 15 minutes to get some sunlight – if that isn't an option, use a daylight lamp or a blue light lamp when you spend all day indoors.	2 Create a "favorite things" corner, basket, or space with pictures of people/things you love, textures that bring you joy, or your favorite color.	3 Remember that your mind and body are connected. Use your space to assist you with physical movement – find a good spot to stretch, practice yoga, or do other exercises that you can do at home.	4 Surround yourself with loved ones (if not physically in person, seek out communities online).	5 Write down affirmations or notes that you can look at throughout your day. These could go in your home or car to serve as reminders as you go about your day.	6 Play music instead of watching TV when you have downtime at home.
7 Do some spring cleaning with mental health in mind! Remove objects in your home that might trigger negative thoughts or habits.	8 Put pictures of loved ones or pets in places you often look to stir positive thoughts and feelings throughout the day.	9 Set a timer and clean whatever you can in 10 minutes. Try doing this daily to tackle cleaning up your space in a non-overwhelming way.	10 Stop and smell the roses...literally. Studies show that being surrounded by nature is a mood booster. While you're at it, consider adding plants to your space. They will improve air quality and cognitive functioning.	11 Get comfortable and read a good book. Reading can help relieve stress and tension by serving as a temporary distraction.	12 Hold the door for a stranger or sign up to volunteer for your favorite charity. Studies show that random acts of kindness increase release of oxytocin – the "feel good" hormone.	13 Take the stairs instead of the elevator, or park your car farther away from the store. Even small additions of exercise throughout the day can decrease tension and improve sleep.
14 Incorporate your favorite color into your living space – if you can't paint walls, use art, pillows, blankets, or curtains.	15 Do you work from home? Setting up a designated workspace in your home is ideal, but if you don't have the option of an office, at least keep your work out of your bedroom.	16 Air pollution can speed up cognitive decline – change the filter in your furnace regularly, clean dust often, buy an air purifier if you can, or use houseplants to improve air quality.	17 Try prepping your lunches or picking out your work clothes the night before. You'll save some time in the morning and start the day with a sense of control.	18 Keep it cool for a good night's sleep. The optimal temperature for sleep is between 60 degrees and 67 degrees Fahrenheit.	19 Keep hobby supplies easily accessible for when you are stressed or need a creative outlet.	20 Dance around while you do your housework. Not only will you get chores done, but dancing reduces levels of cortisol (the stress hormone) and increases endorphins (the body's "feel-good" chemicals).
21 Use scents you like in your spaces. This could be lighting candles, using diffusers, or even creating DIY smells (for example, boiling oranges and cinnamon on the stove).	22 Use noise-canceling headphones or earplugs to block out noise at home. Especially if the sound of specific people or things gets triggering, or if you find yourself getting overstimulated.	23 Make your sleep environment as dark as possible. Try blackout curtains or use a sleep mask.	24 Keep things that nourish your primary needs easy to access (snacks, water, blankets for bedtime, etc.).	25 Try creating a stim box filled with fidgets or soft things to occupy your hands when you feel stressed, anxious, or need help focusing.	26 Try listening to white noise if you have trouble falling asleep. You can use a white noise machine, phone app, or turn on a fan.	27 Give yourself a break! Take 10 minutes out of your day for a walk. Small breaks (and exercise) improve your ability to deal with stress.
28 Consider changing the settings on your phone to "do not disturb" or mute your notifications when possible.	29 After you're done using something, put it away, don't just put it down – this can help prevent clutter and piles of stuff from accumulating.	30 Try keeping a journal or notepad by your bedside. If you struggle with shutting your mind off at night, write down your thoughts to attempt to clear your mind and find rest.	31 Make a wall or jar of gratitude where you write things you are thankful for, that bring you joy, or positively impact your mental health.		 mhanational.org mhascreening.org	 /mentalhealthamerica @mentalhealtham @mentalhealthamerica /mentalhealthamerica