



Food for your mind!

MINDFUL FACTS & FIXES

If you or someone else is in need of coping strategies or mental health services DON'T HESITATE, SEEK HELP!

- Talk to someone: Family, friends, your doctor, counselor, therapist, community leader
- Do something you love or start a new hobby
- Exercise regularly and eat healthy
- Practice Positive thinking and visualization
- Try something new

DID YOU KNOW?

You can turn back the hands on the aging clock and **prevent cognitive decline!!!**

- Keep Active!** Exercise promotes healthy proteins that help protect and grow the brain.
- Learn something new, read a good book, always challenge yourself... you can do it!
- Eat well! Omega-3 fatty acids, fresh vegetables and fruits, and whole grains are your brains best friends!

About Us

ADAM is a welcoming and integrating community based organization dedicated to serving immigrants of African Descent. ADAM strives to provide the tangible and intangible infrastructures that are needed to resettle and motivate new immigrants of African descent to stay in Nova Scotia.

Additional Resources:

Bayers Road Community Mental Health
Tel: (902) 454-1400

Bedford/Sackville CMH
Tel: (902) 865-3663

Cole Harbour / Eastern HRM, CMH
Tel: (902) 434-3263

Dartmouth Community Mental Health
Tel: (902) 466-1830

West Hants Community Mental Health
Tel: (902) 792-2042

www.cdha.nshealth.ca

In a mental health crisis, call *Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team*: (902) 429-8167 / 1-888-429-8167



MINDFUL AGING: FOR SENIORS

Rhonda Atwell
Program Coordinator
rhonda.atwell@adamns.ca
Mental Health Promotion
3200 Kempt Road, Suite 202
Halifax, NS B3K 4X1

This pamphlet is for information purposes only and should not be considered as valid medical advice.



African Diaspora Association of the Maritimes
United We stand in Diversity, Democracy, Prosperity & Peace.

MINDFUL AGING: FOR SENIORS

MINDFUL AGING

The beauty of aging is vast in its depth of life experiences. It could be filled with very rewarding and challenging experiences that shape us from the time of our birth. As we age, our life experiences can present many changes which can become sources of stress:

- Our strength may diminish
- Illness may be more of a problem
- Mobility issues may arise
- Children may move away from home
- People we love may die
- We may become lonely and feel isolated
- Eventually, we may have to give up our jobs and retire
- Unemployment/Under-employment
- Cognitive and sensory impairment

As an immigrant in Canada, your challenges can be far greater:

- Social isolation
- Loss of social networks (community and family)
- Cultural shock
- Cultural change/devaluing of one's culture
- Racism and assimilation
- Lack of professional/educational recognition

All of these stressors can leave a person feeling depressed or imbalanced. It is important to recognize how you feel and know that you are **not alone**. There are things you can do to help yourself and those you love **right away!**

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH

For many, mental health can mean many things: incorporating spiritual, physical, mental, emotional and social aspects of wellness.

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) defines mental health as:

"...The capacity of each and all of us to feel, think, and act in ways that enhance our ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face. It is a positive sense of emotional and spiritual well-being that respects the importance of culture, equity, social justice, interconnections and personal dignity".

STIGMA

Stigma refers to negative attitudes (prejudice) and negative behavior (discrimination) toward people with mental health problems. Stigma means having fixed ideas and judgments about people, as well as fearing and avoiding what we don't understand. - *Mental Health Commission Canada.*

THE MULTI-LAYERS OF STIGMA

People with mental illnesses often experience stigma and discrimination when attempting to access services and supports. The issue of stigma as it relates to mental illness, immigration and aging is compounded by its overlapping effects. It is through Mental Health Education and Promotion and Culturally Competent Services that we will break the barriers of these associated stigma's and negative stereotypes in our communities and in the world.



Never Give-up!

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS & SENIORS

Seniors are not immune to mental health problems or disorders. Depression, anxiety and suicidal behaviors and cognitive decline are not uncommon among older adults.

Depression: Depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest. It affects how you feel, think and behave and can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems.

Anxiety: Anxiety is a normal feeling that we all experience at times. Anxiety can be helpful to you in times of need, i.e. avoiding danger or helping to solve a problem. Anxiety can range from a mild uneasiness to a panic attack. People with anxiety disorders have high levels of anxiety that greatly interfere with day- to-day life.

Dementia: Dementia involves the loss of brain cells and results in loss of memory, judgment and reasoning. It also shows itself in changes in mood, behavior and communication abilities (beyond what might be seen in normal aging). Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia.