

Jack

"School had become very difficult for me. I was never a strong student, but I was falling behind. I started skipping classes. I felt edgy and angry. My parents were worried about me and said I needed something positive to focus on. After a lot of nagging, I decided to try a graphic design course. I printed a drawing on a t-shirt and some kids at school said how cool it was. I didn't expect that having something I like to do would help me feel better, but it did. Even school seems easier now."

Exercise, sleep, and diet are important for your mental health. Did you know being creative can also improve your mental health and wellbeing?

Being creative can be something you do (e.g., play an instrument or paint) or something you view, such as (e.g., listen to music or read a book).

Creativity is a way to express your thoughts and feelings. It is entertaining, simple and there when you want it. It can lift your mood. Creative activity might help you to meet and make new friends.



Being Creative Can Be:

Musical:
composing music,
playing an
instrument, etc...

Visual:
painting, drawing,
videography,
photography, etc...

Writing or Reading:
song writing, poetry,
journaling, etc...

Performing:
acting, dancing,
singing, etc...

Being creative can calm your physical and emotional reactions. When you do an activity you enjoy, it slows your breathing, heart rate, and blood pressure. As well, the brain releases chemicals that help you feel good.

Being creative can help you to

- relax and feel less stressed
- improve your mood
- increase your confidence
- activate your imagination
- keep your mind off stressful thoughts
- focus and concentrate
- calm your thoughts
- problem-solve and cope
- learn a new skill

Creativity is like an experiment to find out what you like and a way to express yourself. You don't need to have a great talent to start, just pick something you like and explore it. If you don't find something you like right away, just keep looking. You might find out you have hidden talents!

Here are a few tips

- be curious and open to new experiences
- try different activities, you might be surprised to find a new activity you like
- check to see what groups or activities are at your school, community centre, or the library
- go to the library or online and search for creative activities that appeal to you
- find something that fits your personality, your other responsibilities and is something you can afford
- look for opportunities to include friends or family
- ask friends and family for ideas of hobbies or creative activities
- be kind to yourself, it's not about being perfect, you don't need to be a great artist to like painting or be a professional dancer to enjoy dancing
- creativity is about fun not extra stress, it's about finding ways to express yourself

If you need more information call:
Health Link Alberta
Toll Free: 1-866-408-LINK (5465)
Calgary: 403-943-LINK
Edmonton: 780-408-LINK

Mental Health Screening & Early Identification
10101 Southport Road SW
Calgary, AB, T2W 3N2
HPDIP.MH.earlyID@albertahealthservices.ca

Disclaimer: This material is designed for information purposes only. It should not be used in place of medical advice, instructions and/or treatment. If you have specific questions, please contact your doctor or health care professional.

Copyright © 2012 Alberta Health Services. All rights reserved.
No part of this document may be reproduced, modified or redistributed in any form without the prior written permission of Alberta Health Services. Although reasonable efforts were made to confirm the accuracy of the information contained herein, Alberta Health Services does not make any representation or warranty, express, implied or statutory, as to the accuracy, reliability, completeness or applicability of such information. In no event will Alberta Health Services be responsible or liable for any error or consequence arising from the use of the information herein.

Revised: 2013-02-19

Creativity and Your Mental Health



Alberta Health
Services