



# WELLNESS BULLETIN

## MENTAL HEALTH

California Department of Developmental Services

MAY 2024



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Mental health is about how a person thinks, feels, and behaves. Taking good care of your mental health can help you live a healthier life.

## Helpful Tips for Your Mental Health

Here are some tips to help you take care of your mental health:

Create a list of activities you like to do for when you are feeling stressed or upset.

Activities can include all kinds of different things like music, exercise, arts and crafts, being in nature, etc.



Taking deep breaths can help you relax and stay calm. Here are some ways to help you take deep breaths:

### Box Breathing

Inhale to a count of four,

Hold the air in for a count of four,

Exhale to a count of four,

Hold your lungs empty for a count of four,

Repeat as needed



Wellness and Safety Bulletins are produced by the Department of Developmental Services to alert individuals, families, and others about specific risks to our community. Please provide feedback on this bulletin and what we can do better through this survey: [Bulletin Survey](#)

# Helpful Tips for Your Mental Health (Continued)

You can also try the activities below to help make you feel better in times of stress or sadness.

## Picturing Breathing

Breathe in and imagine the air is filled with a sense of peace and calm; breathe out and imagine breathing out stress and tension.

## Belly Breathing

Put your hand on your stomach to feel the rise and fall, or visualize blowing up balloons.

You can practice this with blowing a pinwheel or bubbles, etc.

## Stay connected with others:

Make a phone call, set up a video chat or arrange for visits with your friend and family.

Make a card or write a letter to someone you care about.

## Other tips:

Discuss how important your mental health is with your support team.

Practice healthy sleep habits such as turning off your cell phone or tablet and thinking about things you are grateful for before bedtime.

Sources: [CDC](#); [MercyCare](#); [Health Care for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#)



# Signs You Should Get More Support

If you are not taking regular baths or showers and not wearing clean clothes.

If you start feeling like you don't want to be around others.

If you start feeling more mad or worried about things that didn't bother you before.

If you feel like making bad choices, or not thinking about what your choices mean.

If you lose interest in activities that used to make you happy.

If you don't feel like eating, or notice a change in your eating habits.

If you start having trouble going to sleep or staying asleep.

If you feel really tired no matter how much you have slept, or are sleeping a lot longer or more often than you did before.

If you start to hear voices, music, or other noises that aren't there.

If you feel sad and nothing seems to make you feel better.

If you are hurting yourself, or thinking you want to hurt yourself.

If you have thoughts about ending your life or killing yourself.

**If you see any of these signs, tell someone that you trust. Telling someone will help you get the help you need to feel better.** Source: [NAMI](#); [Mental Health America](#); [Mayo Clinic](#)

## Helpful Resources

### Peer Support Phone Lines or Websites

Often called “warmlines” because you get to talk or text with a live person who is good at listening and can help you when you are upset.

### 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Dial 9-8-8 on any phone to be connected with the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

### Friendship Line California

A toll-free phone number seniors or adults with disabilities can call for non-emergency, emotional support.

