

UK P&I CLUB



HEALTH FOCUS: MENTAL HEALTH

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IS MANAGED
BY **THOMAS
MILLER**

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INTRODUCTION

There are two aspects to health: the physical and the mental. A lot of information is already available about our physical health and it is the subject of many health campaigns. This brochure focuses on mental health.

Mental health includes our psychological, emotional and social well-being. It can determine how we think, feel, act and influences our relationships with others.

Positive mental health provides a sense of wellness, contentment, and happiness. When we view our lives in a positive way this allows us to enjoy life, make choices, be flexible and adapt, feel safe and secure, deal with the stresses in our everyday lives, work productively, reach our full potential and make meaningful contributions to our workplace and community.

There are tips here on how you can achieve the above. However, in the event that you aren't sure about your well-being, don't hesitate to ask for help.

Remember that health (both physical and mental) is not a goal. It is a way of life!

Glennnda Canlas, MD

Halcyon Marine Healthcare Systems

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUIZ

It is not unusual to feel sad, 'down' or discouraged once in a while. However, if you are feeling like this for a sustained period of time, speak to a healthcare professional.

When answering the questions choose the answer you feel best indicates how you have been feeling over the past two weeks.

Rate each question 0-3.

0 = not at all, 1 = several days, 2= over half the days 3= nearly every day.

- Little interest or pleasure in doing things?
- Feeling down, depressed or hopeless?
- Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, or sleeping too much?
- Feeling tired or having little energy?
- Poor appetite or overeating?
- Feeling bad about yourself – that you are a failure or have let your family down?
- Trouble concentrating on things such as reading or watching television?
- Thoughts that you would be better off dead, or of hurting yourself?

If you are consistently scoring over 5-9 points, please consult a medical expert.

FIVE STEPS TO BETTER MENTAL WELL-BEING

1. Communicate – Don't keep your emotions bottled up!

- Identify someone on board who you can talk to about your experiences and emotions.
- Keep a diary and reflect on previous days and your general mood.
- If it is all getting to be too much, let someone know.

2. Healthy body, healthy mind

- Eat a balanced and healthy diet.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Try to take at least 15 minutes a day to do some form of physical exercise e.g. circuit training.

3. Take time for yourself

- Life onboard is stressful, take some time every day to do something that you enjoy for example reading a book or playing a board game.

4. Focus on the positive

- It's hard being away from loved ones and feeling isolated. Take time every day to notice and appreciate the positive impact you have on people's lives.

5. Connect with others – Relationships are important!

- If you notice one of your co-workers is struggling with depression or signs of anxiety, don't ignore it.
- Reach out and offer a helping hand where you can.

STRESS REDUCTION EXERCISES

Incorporating this simple breathing exercise into your daily routine can help to alleviate symptoms of stress and anxiety and takes just a few minutes of your day!

- It can be done standing up, sitting in a chair that supports your back or lying on a bed.
- Make yourself as comfortable as you can. If you can, loosen any clothes that restrict your breathing.
- If you're lying down, place your arms a little bit away from your sides, with the palms up. Let your legs be straight, or bend your knees so your feet are flat on the floor.
- If you're sitting, place your arms on the chair arms.
- If you're sitting or standing, place both feet flat on the ground. Whatever position you're in, place your feet roughly hip-width apart.
- Let your breath flow as deep down into your stomach as is comfortable, without forcing it.
- Try breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- Breathe in gently and regularly. Some people find it helpful to count steadily from one to five. You may not be able to reach five at first. Then, without pausing or holding your breath, let it flow out gently, counting from one to five again, if you find this helpful.
- Keep doing this for three to five minutes.

Adapted from www.nhs.uk

FURTHER SUPPORT

Further support is available from ISWAN's SeafarerHelp and the Sailors' Society Wellness at Sea App.

SeafarerHelp is the free multilingual helpline for seafarers and their families available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Contact us via any of the methods below, whatever the problem, wherever you are in the world, and we will do our best to help you.

Contact SeafarerHelp by:

SMS/Live chat/Skype

SMS: +44 (0)762 481 8405

Skype: info-seafarerhelp.org

Live chat: www.seafarerhelp.org

Email: help@seafarerhelp.org

Call collect on +44 (0) 207 323 2737

The Sailors' Society free Wellness at Sea App provides interactive challenges on each of the five elements of Wellness at Sea: Social, Emotional, Physical, Intellectual and Spiritual. Users receive daily feedback enabling them to monitor their progress. Android and iPhone compatible.

For more information, visit www.sailors-society.org/wellness

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This publication is not a substitute for medical advice, if you are experiencing ongoing symptoms, please consult a healthcare professional.



WELLNESS AT SEA



SeafarerHelp
The lifeline for seafarers

A UK P&I leaflet in conjunction with ISWAN and Sailors' Society.