Mental Health Self-Care

INFORMATION LEAFLET

iscte
UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE OF LISBON

Social Services

Student Counselling Office

Mental Health Self-Care

University life comes with many challenges, including academic pressure, personal changes, being away from family, a lack of support networks for those living away from home, financial difficulties and uncertainty about the future. Therefore, looking after your mental health is essential.

Self-care for mental health involves small daily actions, such as getting enough sleep, asking for help, taking breaks and maintaining healthy relationships, that help to maintain emotional balance and prevent burnout.

What is Mental Health?

According to the WHO “Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

Mental health is fundamental to our collective and individual ability as humans to think, emote, interact with each other, earn a living and enjoy life.”.

It is the emotional balance that enables us to cope with daily life, study, form relationships and take care of ourselves.

It is not the absence of sadness; rather, it is knowing when to pause, feel, and ask for help.

Some self-care tips:

- **Create a healthy routine;**
- **Try to maintain a balance between your personal, social and academic life.**
  Set regular times for studying, eating, and sleeping. Take regular breaks and make sure you rest;
- **Establish a sleep routine and try to sleep between seven and nine hours per night.**
  Avoid using electronic devices before going to bed;
- **Adopt healthy eating habits:**
  A healthy diet should be varied and balanced to supply all the necessary nutrients, and it may vary according to individual needs. Staying hydrated is also important;
- **Exercise regularly, as regular physical activity is linked to higher levels of mental health.**
  You can easily incorporate physical activity into your daily routine: take the stairs instead of the lift; walk whenever possible, preferably with a family member or friend, and do some stretching exercises every day;
- **Stay connected:**
  Social relationships are essential for promoting well-being. Building and maintaining meaningful and caring relationships is the best protection against mental health problems. Try to express your emotions and feelings to friends, family or other important people in your life;
- **Include enjoyable activities in your daily routine**
  Make time for activities that bring you joy, such as listening to music, watching a series or reading.



Look out for these signs:

Changes in mental well-being usually occur gradually. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to possible warning signs, such as:

- **Persistent sadness**
- **Lack of motivation**
- **Isolation and withdrawal**
- **Constant anxiety**
- **Difficulty concentrating on studies or daily tasks**
- **Changes in sleep or appetite**
- **Frequent negative thoughts**



Remember

If you feel you can't handle the situation,
please do not hesitate and contact the SAS/GAA
for information, specialised screening and referral.

To make an appointment for a screening interview:

E-mail:	sas.gaa@iscte-iul.pt
Tel.:	+351 210 464 039 or +351 21 790 3000 (option 1 and 4)
Office hours:	9:30-12:30 and 14:30-16:30

More information

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