

FAMILY SERVICES of PEEL

MENTAL HEALTH



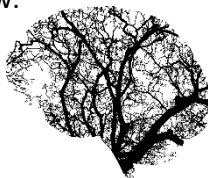
Just a friendly hello from some FSP staff!

Keep the Brain Young, Sharp, Resilient, and Healthy

During this pandemic, a preventative step to safeguard our mental health and keep our brain working is to shut it off for 7-9 hours a night. **"Sleep is the most important thing you can do to reset the brain, allow it to heal, and to restore mental health,"** says Romie Mushtaq. During sleep, the brain clears out toxins called beta-amyloids, which can lead to Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

Other tips to keep **MENTALLY HEALTHY** follow.

1. **Do a digital detox.** Commit to the same bedtime each night and turn off all electronics at least 30-60 minutes before you hit the pillow.



2. **Dump your worries.** Jot down any lingering concerns/do a quick to-do list for tomorrow to help settle your brain. Our thoughts are always racing and provoking anxiety but if you write them down, it tells your brain that it doesn't have to be concerned about those things while you sleep.
3. **Spend a moment meditating.** Not only will 5-10 minutes of mindful meditation calm your brain and make it easier to sleep, meditation has been shown to reduce anxiety, depression, fatigue, and confusion. Meditation benefits people with insomnia by helping them to fall asleep and stay asleep. It also helps with inflammation in the brain, which helps with focus and anxiety.

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Transforming Lives in Peel

Volume 12 | Issue 1



Quarterly Newsletter February 2021

In This Issue...



Keeping the Brain Young

Integrating some of these mental health tips may help keep your brain young and healthy.

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Ways to respond to crisis situations, created by the current pandemic.

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Tips/Mental Health Fun

Helpful tips on increasing your self-esteem. Also, a fun game to exercise your brain.

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In our Clients' Words...



“ My counsellor was so amazing! Huge difference. She was able to calm me down despite my severe anxiety and depression. - CP Client

I am so happy with my new APSW worker. She is so nice and helps me a lot. She really cares and I want her to be my worker forever. - APSW Client

The job prep course did give me some valuable insights, which I will use in the future. I would like to thank you for the service that you provide. I have told my friends and colleagues, who are struggling at the moment, about my experience. Hopefully they will contact you for similar support that I received. - EO Client **”**

A Message from the Executive Director

Behind the scenes at Family Services of Peel, the Board is working diligently to recruit a new Executive Director.

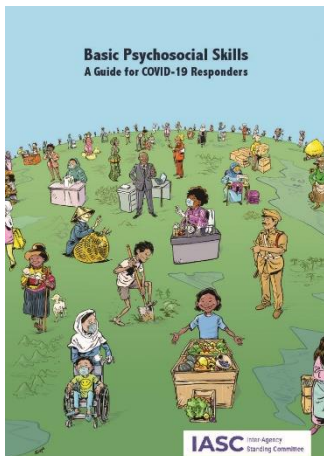


Over the past 12 years, I have had opportunities to become engaged in many different projects and programs. It has been my pleasure to work with many professions whose knowledge and expertise have allowed me to continue to grow and develop as a professional, and I thank them for that opportunity.

Peel Region is one of the most diverse communities within Canada, and working within this environment presented unique challenges, none of which were insurmountable because of the dynamic individuals employed at Family Services of Peel.

Thank you for the friendships and the prospects, and to the next Executive Director of Family Services of Peel, I wish you all the best. You will be working with some exceptional people in the community.

Response to Crisis Situations Created by COVID-19



The COVID-19 pandemic has many feeling stressed and anxious as they adjust to numerous changes to daily routines (e.g., working and/or schooling from home). The **WHO Guide**, aimed at helping people to integrate psychosocial support skills into their daily work, has this to say when you encounter someone in serious distress (Module 4).

- 1 Safety first!** Make sure that you, the person and others are safe from harm. If you feel unsafe, leave and get help. If you think the person may hurt themselves, get help (ask a colleague, call emergency services, etc.). Take preventative measures against COVID-19 infection (e.g., physical distancing). Do NOT put yourself at risk.
- 2 Let them know who you are:** Introduce yourself clearly and respectfully – your name and your role, and that you are there to help. Ask them for their name so that you can address them.
- 3 Keep calm:** Don't shout at the person or physically restrain them.
- 4 Listen:** Use your communication skills, as described in Module 2. Do not pressure the person to talk. Be patient and reassure them that you are there to help and to listen.
- 5 Offer practical comfort and information:** If possible, offer the person a quiet place to talk, a non-alcoholic drink or blanket. These gestures of comfort will help them feel safe. Ask them what they need – don't assume that you know.

Keep the Brain Young, Sharp, Resilient, and Healthy (Continued from Page 1)

4. **Move Your Body.** Walking for 30 minutes/day, taking a dance class, or going for a swim could improve your cognitive health and keep you slim and fit. A Canadian study found that the more physically active adults scored higher on memory and problem-solving tests. Exercise boosts blood flow to the brain and increases the size of the hippocampus (responsible for memory), which shrinks as we age.
5. **Eat Well.** A diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids, low in saturated fat, full of nutrients found in leafy green vegetables, along with whole grains helps keep the brain healthy for life. As an example, the Mediterranean diet emphasizes fish, fruits and vegetables, nuts, olive oil, and avocados, while limiting red meat.
6. **Be Social.** Don't veg with Netflix or Facebook. During this isolation, spend time with family in your household and do so virtually, if needed. When socializing, the blood circulates to several different parts of your brain as you're listening and formulating responses. When you're connecting with friends, you're less likely to get depressed, which hampers how well your brain works. A depressed or anxious brain becomes so occupied with 'what-ifs' and worries that it's not able to give 100% to learning new things.
7. **Try New Things.** Building new skills throughout your lifetime – how to cook new dishes, how to play an instrument, even learning the rules of new card games helps keep your brain healthy by constantly creating new connections between brain cells. Challenging your brain essentially creates a backup system. The more intellectual stimulation you have, the more various neural circuits are used. And the more circuits you have, the harder it is for the changes associated with neurodegenerative diseases to manifest.



Prevention is better than Cure they say and our long-term mental health is mostly in our CONTROL.

Source: Dr. Romie Mushtaq, MD, neurologist and integrative medicine specialist WEB:MD

Article submitted by Sandra, Director of Client Services at Family Services of Peel

Response to Crisis Situations Created by COVID-19 (Continued from Page 2)

6. **Help people regain control:** A) If the person is anxious, support them to breathe slowly – see “slow breathing” technique page 14. B) If the person is out of touch with their surroundings, remind them where they are, the day of the week, and who you are. Ask them to notice things in their immediate environment (e.g., “Name one thing you see or hear”). C) Help them to use their own good coping strategies and to reach out to supportive people in their lives.
7. **Provide clear information:** Give reliable information to help the person understand the situation and what help is available. Make sure that you use words they can understand (not complicated words). Keep the message simple and repeat it or write it down if needed. Ask them if they understand or have any questions.
8. **Stay with the person:** Try not to leave the person alone. If you can't stay with them, find a safe person (a colleague, a friend) to be with them until you find help or they feel calmer.
9. **Refer to specialized support:** Do not go beyond the limits of what you know. Let others with more specialized skills, such as doctors, nurses, counsellors, and mental health professionals, take over. Link the person directly with support or make sure that they have contact information and clear instructions for getting further help.

<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-05/Basic%20Psychosocial%20Skills-%20A%20Guide%20for%20COVID-19%20Responders.pdf>

Article submitted by Sijetlana, Program Manager at Family Services of Peel

Marijoy's Food Blog

Mental Health – Food and Self-care

Who would have thought that we would still be in the midst of a pandemic almost one year after the initial lockdown went into effect? During these challenging times, it is important to take good care of our mental health, and as you may already know, my kind of self-care includes indulging in delicious treats.

With the recent closures of restaurants in Ontario, my favourite hobby of dining at new eateries is unfortunately a no-go. However, as a foodie who loves adventure, I have improvised by having car picnics and driving throughout an area (driving has also become a part of my self-care) to get some good grub.

My recent venture was to [North York](#) and here is a list of the delightful foods that I was able to consume in my one-day food escapade.

- **Chung Chun Rice Hot Dog** is the first Canadian base of the Korean chain, specializing in sticky rice corn dogs. This tiny eatery takes breaded hot dogs on a stick to another level as the traditional batter is replaced with a flour made from glutinous rice and

layered with panko crumbs. They have an assortment of wonderful and interesting flavours, like ramen and squid ink, which I had the pleasure of trying. However, my favourite is the [cheesy mozzarella](#). The ooey gooey cheese and crunchy outer layer were to die

for! It may sound “cheesy” but I love “corny” food.

- **Comal y Canela – Birria Tacos** contain sweet, vinegary, slightly spicy, and completely savory Mexican beef stew that is slow-cooked until the beef is

tender, juicy, and delicious. The soft corn tortilla is stuffed with this beefy goodness and cheese, and then dipped into the stew and fried-up. An order includes 5 tacos, served with a side of consommé and garnishes. “Taco” bout some delicious birria!

- **Sang-Ji Fried Bao** – These famous Chinese soup dumplings are made fresh to order. They’re stuffed with a mix of savoury pork and chunks of gelatinized, yet flavoursome pork broth. The magic of these Bao lies in the cooking. These pockets of

goodness are first browned in a frying pan, and then the lid is placed over top so that the Bao steams and softens while the broth melts inside. One of my other favourite dishes is their [Dry Noodle, Scallion Oil, and Peanuts](#), which is made with a deeply complex and onion-y oil of scallion confit. I was all “a-bao” these dishes!

- **Hui Lau Shan** is the granddaddy of Asian mango dessert places. They only use fresh Carabao mangoes to ensure an unfailingly sweet experience for everyone. I absolutely love their [Mango Mochi](#), which combines the chewy-sticky goodness of mocha with the sweetness of fresh mango. I love mangoes so “mochi”!

Eating all this amazing food was quite satisfying, however, I topped off this adventure by taking a short drive to [Edwards Gardens](#), for a much-needed walk throughout this gorgeous botanical park. Delightful food and outdoor physical activity definitely helps fulfil my self-care needs. As always, stay safe and happy eating!

Marijoy is a Program Manager at Family Services of Peel and an avid “foodie”



Solutions to Christmas Puzzles in December Edition (Vol 11 | Iss 4)

Christmas Word Scramble

FRANKINCENSE | CANDLELIGHT
MISTLETOE | WREATH
CHESTNUTS | SUGARPLUM
YULETIDE

Christmas Cryptogram

MIRACLE ON THIRTY-FOURTH STREET



Riddle-me-this...

What do you put on the table, cut and then pass around, but would never actually eat?

(Look for the answer to this riddle in Iss 2)

Solution to December's Riddle:
The letter “M”

Tips to Increase Self-Esteem

Positive Self Talk: We all talk to ourselves and sometimes we tend to say negative things that can further lower self-esteem. Below are examples of negative and positive self-talk.

- I've never done this
It's an opportunity to learn something new
- There is NO way it will work
I can try to make it work
- No one bothers to communicate with me
I'll see if I can open the channels of communication
- I'm alone and no one loves me
I am excited to find something I love

When you have a negative thought, evaluate it rationally and respond with positive affirmations.

Positive Affirmations: These are positive phrases that you can repeat to yourself that describe how you want to be. Place them where they are visible to you every day.

- I feel the love of those who are not physically around me
- I love and approve of myself
- I forgive myself for mistakes I've made
- I am more than good enough
- I matter and what I have to offer this world also matters
- I take pleasure in my own solitude
- I fill this day with hope and face it with joy
- I adopt the mindset to praise myself

Source: Elder Abuse Prevention

Mental Health Fun

Trivia quizzes, brainteasers, puzzles, and word games are a great way to exercise the brain and maintain your cognitive edge. With this in mind, try the following puzzle for a quick and fun activity.

Insert the words in PART B into the spaces in PART A to form words. Do not rearrange the letters. PART B words are to be used only once. E.g., Inserting PINE into HAP____SS gives you HAPPINESS (pun intended).

PART A

IN____O
CON____NT
H____ING
EX____ENT
OR____R
TA____RY
DIS____T
FOR____TE
AL____R
EM____Y
PER____TE
A____ON
DIS____GE
O____TER
IN____IVE
IM____OR
B____LOR
T____ER

PART B

ACHE | AUNT | BAND
BITE | CELL | CENT
CHAR | COLA | DIME
DOME | EACH | FERN
JOIN | LOVE | PATH
PEST | POST | TUNA



Monthly Observances

Family Services of Peel celebrates diversity via articles, videos, information sheets, social media, and our glass whiteboard. The following observances will be recognized during the months listed below.

FEBRUARY

Black History Month
Groundhog Day (2)
Chinese New Year (12)
Valentine's Day (14)
Family Day (15)
National Flag Day (15)
World Day of Social Justice (20)

MARCH

Celebration Month
Zero Discrimination Day (1)
International Women's Day (8)
Daylight Saving Time Begins (14)
St. Patrick's Day (17)
National Volunteer Week (18-24)
Int'l Day of Happiness (20)
Int'l Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21)
Ostara/Spring Equinox (21)
FSP Incorporated in 1971 (22)
Int'l Day for Right to Truth (24)
Purple Day (26)
Pesach (27-4)
Holi (29)

APRIL

Male Violence Awareness Month
Good Friday (2)
World Autism Awareness Day (2)
Easter (4)
Easter Monday (5)
National Tartan Day (6)
World Health Day (7)
Vimy Ridge Day (9)
Ramadan Begins (13)
Int'l Mother Earth Day (22)
Admin. Professionals Day (28)
World Day for Safety and Health at Work (28)

FAMILY SERVICES of PEEL

Mission, Vision, Values and Contact Information

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Transforming Lives in Peel

Volume 12 | Issue 1



Quarterly Newsletter February 2021

Mission Statement

Through leadership, research, collaboration, and innovation, we support families and individuals in Peel to transform their lives.

Vision Statement

Transforming Lives in Peel

Values

Responsiveness
Excellence, Leadership, Innovation
Service Accessibility and Inclusion
Partnership and Collaboration
Engaging Community
Client Driven
Transparency

What **Diversity** and **Inclusion** means to Family Services of Peel:

Diversity

The mix

Inclusion

Making the mix work

Sandra Rupnarain (Editor)

*Franca Vettese (Co-Editor/
Graphics/Layout)*