

February Webinar – Taking Emotional Care of YOU and your Heart

Video Recording of Webinar <https://youtu.be/KzVrpWIIQXY>

What is Emotional Health?

- Not the same as mental health
- Focus on being in tune with our emotions, vulnerability, authenticity
- Not an absence of negative emotion, more the ability to navigate ups and downs of life

What are the benefits of being emotionally healthy?

- Manage stress – impact on physical, mental health, energy level
- Building resilience
- Deeper connection to others
- Higher self esteem
- Feelings of contentment

What does emotional health look like?

- Resilience
- In touch with your own emotions, self aware
- Awareness of self judgement – would my best friend talk to me the way I talk to myself? Would I talk to my best friend the way I talk to myself?
- Why do I react this way? Is there something in my past that triggers a strong response?

What can I do to improve my emotional health?

- Acceptance – we can't control everything, and we should not suppress the anxiety, hopelessness or grief we may be feeling
- Be kind to yourself – now is not the time for perfection, but instead for forgiveness and flexibility
- Courage – face your emotions with courage. Courage is not an absence of fear – it is fear walking (Susan David, author of *Emotional Agility*)
- Emotional regulation – exploring what you are feeling by:
 - Meditation
 - Journaling

- Talking to someone you trust
- Exercise- aim for 30 minutes a day, in 10 or 15 minute increments if that works best
- Be mindful – focus on one thing at a time, take a break from social media and the news
- Connect with others – you are not alone! Grow your circle of friends and spend time with people that lift you up. Social distancing is physical distancing, not the absence of social connection.
- Try a new hobby
- Eat and drink healthfully and in moderation
- Get a good nights sleep

Every day – try to move, create, learn, connect.

Resources and Links:

- Teresa Merryfield
Relationship & Grief and Loss Coach
teresa@teresamerryfield.com
- Health Advice in BC and Alberta - Call Health Link at 811
- [Alberta Health Services Grief Support Program](#)
- [Susan David TED talk on Emotional Courage](#)
- [Andrew Weil 4-7-8 Breathing Exercise](#)

Other ideas from the webinar:

- Be creative! Write poetry, take pictures, or write your family history. Explore something you are curious about and just try it!
- BREATHE – when we are stressed we often resort to shallow breathing, which deprives our body of the oxygen we need to function well. Focus on taking in deep slow breaths, and you will soon feel your body respond.

- Try a gratitude list using the alphabet and just work through each letter. It helps break the cycle of busy thoughts with distraction, and helps you to fall asleep with positive thoughts. You don't always need to start with 'A'. You can start from 'Z' and work backwards or start in the middle somewhere.

A-I am grateful for apples. They are healthy for me. B-I am grateful for blue, it's my favorite color. Z-I am grateful for the Zoo because it brings joy to so many people. And so on...

- Play your favourite music and dance to it. You get to be uplifted by the music and move your body, which is good for you. Everyone can do this! The same for singing. "Dance like nobody is watching. Sing like nobody is listening." That is a mindful and joyful experience!