MOVEMENT

FIVE PRACTICES FOR MENTAL HEALTH

May is Mental Health Awareness month and a good time to consider practices that support our mental health and wellbeing. Here are 5 practices that can help support your mental health.

1. **Regular exercise:** Whether you're going on a brisk walk during a break or participating in recreational activities after work, maintaining 150 minutes of activity per week is essential for releasing endorphins that help enhance cognitive function, reduce depression and anxiety, and improve sleep quality.
2. **Healthy gut = healthy brain:** Proper nourishment is necessary for the maintenance of a healthy relationship between the gut and the brain, which can be achieved through the inclusion of foods rich in probiotics (fermented foods like yogurt, kimchi, and kombucha) and prebiotics (high-fiber foods like whole grains, legumes, vegetables, and fruits).
3. **Magnesium and Vitamin B6:** These two nutrients—associated with helping to reduce perceived stress and improve mood—are most effective when taken together. Sources of magnesium and vitamin B6 include pumpkin seeds, almonds, spinach, cashews, avocado, black beans, quinoa, chickpeas, and tuna.
4. **Healthy Fats:** Healthy omega-3 fats found in fatty fish, ground flax seed, chia seeds and walnuts are not only good for our hearts but also the long-term health of our brains.
5. **Stress Reduction Techniques:** During times of stress, it's helpful to have go-to stress-reduction techniques—such as deep breathing, guided meditation using an app, stretching or going for a walk, and more—that can help restore your calmness and focus.

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