

Top tips for starting your day right



All AfPP members have FREE access to Togetherall, a 24/7 anonymous online mental health and wellbeing service.

The teams at Togetherall and AfPP have been reflecting on the importance of mental health and taking care of yourself, now more than ever.

Since March 2020, our lives have radically changed and many of us have found it difficult to cope.

According to the Office for National Statistics, in adults, the proportion of **individuals showing symptoms of depression** has almost doubled since the start of the pandemic, with stress, anxiety and worry about the future being the top three reasons driving mental health problems.

Here's are some tips on how to start (and finish) your day right:

1. Start your day with a nutritious breakfast and some exercise

Eating healthy will make you feel better in yourself physically and mentally. Drink a cup of green tea followed by a nice and nutritious breakfast to kick start your day. This will give you the energy to power through your morning. Having an exercise plan with realistic goals and sticking to it, it's also very important. Get out in the morning or during daylight to get some fresh air. Whether it is walking the dog, running, or stretching in the garden, break away from the screen for at least three minutes every hour.

2. Build routines

Fight the desire to stay in bed later and treat your day as a normal university or work day. This includes pretending to commute to your place of work or university. Use the time you used to take for commuting to exercise, so you are hitting the desk fresh and motivated. Set up your day with a desk-style set up (even if you are at the kitchen table) that gives some replication of being at university or work.

At the end of the day, build in a routine to ensure down time and good sleep.

During the weekend try to do an outdoor activity – picking up all the face masks dropped on the street can be beneficial for both your health and the community!

3. Pamper yourself

We are going through a tough time, so it's good and beneficial to do something a little extra for yourself that you wouldn't usually do. This could be as little as having a bubble bath or lighting a scented candle before you start your day. Try to incorporate little things that make you face the day with a smile.

4. Connect with others

We are all lacking connection with others nowadays, but also what we talk about when we connect has become limited as our lives can feel more monotonous. So, plan calls and conversations to cover topics that feel more 'normal', such as agree to watch a tv series or read a book at the same time to have something else to talk about or find someone who will go for a walk at the same time as you and call to chat while walking and focus just on what you see on your walk.

The Togetherall community is a good place to share how you are feeling without fear of judgement, but also to help and connect with others like you. The Togetherall community is completely anonymous and available 24/7, so you can give and receive support any time, any place. It is also monitored by mental health practitioners, meaning you can get professional advice and encouragement.

5. Celebrate small achievements

Every achievement, regardless of its size, deserves a reward. Try to practice some gratitude when you wake up. This could be appreciating the sleep you just had or being grateful for a healthy meal. You can write all your achievements – whether big or small they are – in the journal tool within 'Resources' on Togetherall or use the goal setter. Get in the habit of celebrating each small success. Your little wins add up to big things.



Did you know that AfPP members have FREE access to Togetherall mental health support?

Togetherall is easy to access and available 24/7.

Register here: <https://bit.ly/3aVstTc>