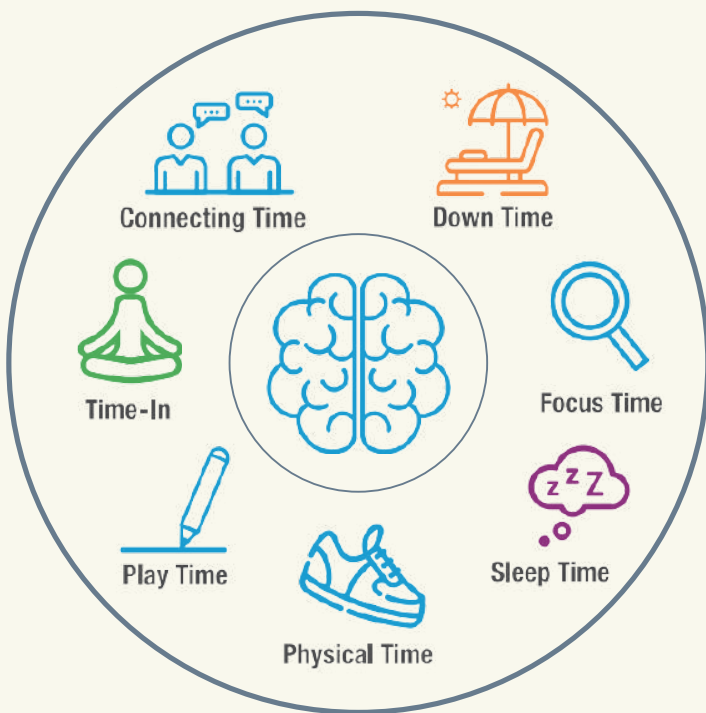


According to Statistics Canada, roughly one-third of Canadians are getting less than 7 hours of sleep per night. 66.8% of Canadians reported poor quality of sleep. Living where you work, adjusting to changing weather and feelings of stress, may lead you to struggle with sleep and rest. Different kinds of sleep and rest are essential for our mental health.



Dan Siegel's Healthy Mind Platter

The Healthy Mind Platter, developed by Dr. Dan Siegel, works similarly to Canada's Food Guide, except instead of food, it provides guidance on the kinds of activities to include in your day for a healthy mind. Three of these activities contribute to our rest and sleep:

Time-in is when we quietly reflect internally. By focusing on sensations, images, feelings and thoughts we help to better integrate different parts of our brain to work as a coordinated whole.

Down time is when we are non-focused, without any specific goal and let our mind wander or simply relax. This helps the brain recharge.

Sleep time gives the brain the rest it needs, consolidates learning and helps recover from the experiences of the day.

Every person is different and our needs change over time and between seasons. There is no 'suggested serving' for each of these elements. The idea is to become aware of the full spectrum of essential mental activities and, as with essential nutrients, make sure that we are bringing the right ingredients into our mental diet every day .



Not getting enough proper sleep and rest can impact our mental and physical well-being, resulting in:



- Poor concentration
- Difficulty with memorization
- Emotional fluctuation
- Slower reactions
- Higher sensitivity to pain
- Slower recovery from injury or illness

Sleep hygiene tips

While there are times of the year such as growing, or birthing seasons that disrupt your typical sleep cycle, there are things you can focus on leading up to and after those times of year to help reset your sleep practices.

-  Keep a consistent bedtime routine with low lighting, cooler room temperatures, bathing, dental care and other bedtime habits.
-  Take time to wind down towards the end of your day. This may include time for reflection or prayer.
-  Exercise regularly. Physical activity is proven to help improve sleep.
-  Link being in bed with sleeping. Try to avoid doing other things in bed like reading or watching TV.
-  If you are having trouble falling asleep, don't stay in bed. After 20 minutes, get up and do something else that is relaxing, such as reading a book on the couch.
-  Try not to look at electronic devices right before bed, or just after waking up.

Can't sleep because of racing thoughts? Try keeping a notebook next to your bed and writing down all the worries that are preventing you from sleeping.

Seeking support

Farmer Wellness Initiative 1-866-267-6255 - Offers Ontario farmers, farm workers and their families unlimited mental health counselling in English, French, Spanish and Tagalog. Find help addressing the unique challenges of agriculture. Intake and urgent support are available 24/7/365. www.farmerwellnessinitiative.ca

ConnexOntario - Mental Health & Addiction Treatment Services 1-866-531-2600 - A database of Ontario mental health, addictions and problem gambling services built to help you access local support. Whether for yourself, a loved one or a client, their confidential services are available 24/7. www.connexontario.ca

9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline - Call or Text 988 - When you reach out, a trained responder will listen without judgement, provide support and understanding and inform you about resources that will help. www.988.ca

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