

Mental Health Series Summary:

Actionable Checklist:

Mission 1: Know Your Mental Baseline

Your goal: To understand your own internal patterns so you can spot warning signs early.

- ☐ Start a 2-Minute Daily Check-In: At the end of each day, note your:
 - ☐ Energy level (1-10)
 - ☐ 2-3 emotions you felt
 - ☐ One high point and one low point
- ☐ Journal Weekly for Deeper Patterns: Once a week, use prompts to reflect on what gives you energy, what causes you stress, and what brings you joy.
- ☐ Create Your Personal Profile: After a few weeks of reflection, write a one-page summary of your:
 - ☐ Typical "Good Day" State (your healthy normal).
 - ☐ Common Stressors & Triggers.
 - ☐ Personal Early-Warning Signs of distress.
 - ☐ Most Effective, healthy Coping Skills.

Mission 2: Build Your Coping Toolkit

Your goal: To practice healthy coping skills when you're calm so they're ready when you're stressed.

- ☐ Practice "In-the-Moment" Skills:
 - ☐ Walk through the 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique right now.
 - ☐ Practice Diaphragmatic (Belly) Breathing for 2-5 minutes daily.
 - ☐ Memorize and practice the "STOPP" skill (Stop, Take a breath, Observe, Pull back, Practice what works).
- ☐ Incorporate Healthy Lifestyle Habits:
 - ☐ Schedule 30 minutes of intentional movement into your calendar for 3-5 days this week.
 - ☐ Set specific time limits on your phone for news and social media apps.
 - ☐ Schedule at least 15 minutes of unstructured "do nothing" time into your day.
- ☐ Practice Mindset Shifts:
 - ☐ Practice a daily gratitude exercise (e.g., write down three good things).
 - ☐ When you catch yourself in a negative thought, practice self-compassion by asking, "What would I say to a friend right now?"

Mission 3: Weave Your Support Network

Your goal: To intentionally identify and nurture the relationships that support your well-being.

[] Map Your Network Roles: On a piece of paper, write down the names of people in your life who fit these roles:

[] The Listener / Confidant

[] The Practical Helper

[] The "Get Your Mind Off It" Friend

[] The Mentor / Advisor

[] Nurture Your Connections Proactively:

[] Send a simple "thinking of you" text to one person on your list this week.

[] Schedule a recurring call or coffee meeting with a friend.

[] Practice Asking for Help: Make one "low-stakes ask" this week to build your comfort level (e.g., ask for a podcast recommendation or help with a small task).

Mission 4: Map Your Professional Resources

Your goal: To know exactly who to call before you're in a crisis, for yourself or a friend.

[] Save Immediate Crisis Numbers: Save the primary crisis/suicide prevention hotline number for your country in your phone's contacts (e.g., 988 in the US).

[] Research Local Therapists: Use an online directory (like Psychology Today) or your insurance provider's website to identify and save the contact info for 2-3 potential local therapists.

[] Identify Local Low-Cost Options: Do a quick search for "[Your County] community mental health services" or "[Local University] psychology clinic" and save the information.

[] Create a "Global to Local" Resource List:

[] In a note on your phone, create sections for the cities where your closest friends/family live.

[] For one friend who lives elsewhere, take 10 minutes to find and save the local crisis line number and a link to a therapist directory for their area.

Mission 5: Prepare to Be a Helper for Others

Your goal: To build the skills and mindset to confidently support someone else.

[] Get Trained: Research a Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course online or in your community and consider enrolling.

[] Practice Active Listening: In your next conversation, consciously practice listening to understand, not just to respond. Try summarizing what you heard to confirm your understanding.

[] Define Your Boundaries: Think about what you are and are not capable of offering in a crisis. Knowing your limits is a strength, not a weakness.

[] Identify Your Own Support: After you've helped someone else, who will you talk to? Identify your own confidant for debriefing and self-care.