



# SHIELD FOR SUCCESS

Monthly tips for success and promotion of overall well-being brought to you by **Valparaiso University's Counseling Services**

## Mental Health Awareness Month

Welcome to the May issue of the Shield for Success! This monthly newsletter is divided into two parts. The first section provides information and resources on a topic relevant to the current month. The second section offers helpful tips and exercises tailored to each month's topic. May is **Mental Health Awareness Month**. Most people have been impacted by mental health in some way, whether personally, through a family member, or through a friend. It's important for students to recognize warning signs, know where to find resources if you or someone you care about is in need of help, and raise awareness to end the stigma around mental health issues. Whether you prefer to seek out mental health resources on your own first or decide to reach out to a mental health professional, it can sometimes be difficult to know where to look. In this month's issue, we've provided some helpful statistics, resources, and additional helpful links on how to set up a therapy appointment at the Valpo Counseling Center or search for a community therapist near you.

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## Mental Health Statistics and Resources

- [Mental Health Month](#)
- [Mental Health Info & Resources](#)
- [Valpo Counseling Center Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Psychology Today Therapist Finder](#)

If you are in an immediate crisis please call VUPD at 219-464-5430. Following are other campus as well as national crises resources available to you:

- Valparaiso University Counseling Center: 219-464-5002 (M-F; 8-12, 1-5)
- Campus Pastors – Chapel of the Resurrection: 219-464-5093; Rev. James Wetzstein & Pastor Kate Museus Dabay
- Residential Learning Coordinator's – Office of Residential Life: 219-464-5413
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255); [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org) (24/7)
- Crisis Text Line: Text "TALK" to 741-741 (24/7)
- The Trevor Project: 1-866-488-7386 (crisis line dedicated to LGBTQIA+ people under 25)



## Activities for Improving Mental Health

- 1) *Look into therapy services on-campus or in the community with the Psychology Today therapist finder.*
- 2) *Create a mental health safety plan with a list of helpful coping skills, friends and family contacts, and emergency services numbers.*
- 3) *Practice giving yourself positive affirmations to help challenge negative self-talk.*
- 4) *Spend some time outdoors and go for a walk, drive, or even just relax by sitting and reading or listening to music.*
- 5) *Practice self-care by doing something fun and relaxing, taking the day off, or getting some much-needed rest.*

## Mental Health Pain Scale Instructions

Step 1: If you choose to participate, first rate your mood on a 1-10 scale, you can use the Mental Health Pain scale provided.

Step 2: Each day you will have the opportunity to complete a different exercise. On weekdays, Monday through Friday, pick one exercise from the list provided for you below. On weekends, Saturday & Sunday, choose one exercise that you felt improved your mood the most, these exercises do not have to be from the exercises provided.

Step 3: After implementing the exercise, rate your mood using the same scale as Step 1.

## A Simple Mental Health Pain Scale

thegracefulpatient.wordpress.com

<b>MILD</b>		<b>1</b> Everything is a-okay! There is absolutely nothing wrong. You're probably cuddling a fluffy kitten right now. Enjoy!
		<b>2</b> You're a bit frustrated or disappointed, but you're easily distracted and cheered up with little effort.
		<b>3</b> Things are bothering you, but you're coping. You might be overtired or hungry. The emotional equivalent of a headache.
<b>MODERATE</b>		<b>4</b> Today is a bad day (or a few bad days). You still have the skills to get through it, but be gentle with yourself. Use self-care strategies.
		<b>5</b> Your mental health is starting to impact on your everyday life. Easy things are becoming difficult. You should talk to your doctor.
		<b>6</b> You can't do things the way you usually do them due to your mental health. Impulsive and compulsive thoughts may be hard to cope with.
<b>SEVERE</b>		<b>7</b> You're avoiding things that make you more distressed, but that will make it worse. You should definitely seek help. This is serious.
		<b>8</b> You can't hide your struggles anymore. You may have issues sleeping, eating, having fun, socialising, and work/study. Your mental health is affecting almost all parts of your life.
		<b>9</b> You're at a critical point. You aren't functioning anymore. You need urgent help. You may be a risk to yourself or others if left untreated.
		<b>10</b> The worst mental and emotional distress possible. You can no longer care for yourself. You can't imagine things getting any worse. Contact a crisis line immediately.

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If there are any topics you are interested in seeing or learning more about please email [counseling.center@valpo.edu](mailto:counseling.center@valpo.edu), subject Shield for Success topic ideas.