

## 10 Ways to Live Your Life Well

*Stress can hold you back from living life to the fullest*

1) **Connect with Others.** People who feel connected are happier and healthier—and may even live longer.

2) **Stay Positive.** People who regularly focus on the positive in their lives are less upset by painful memories.

3) **Get Physically Active.** Exercise can help relieve insomnia and reduce depression.



4) **Help Others.** People who consistently help others experience less depression, greater calm and fewer pains.

5) **Get Enough Sleep.** Not getting enough rest increases risks of weight gain, accidents, reduced memory and heart problems.

6) **Create Joy and Satisfaction.** Positive emotions can boost your ability to bounce back from stress.

7) **Eat Well.** Eating healthy food and regular meals can increase your energy, lower the risk of developing certain diseases and influence your mood.

8) **Take Care of Your Spirit.** People who have strong spiritual lives may be healthier and live longer. Spirituality seems to cut the stress that can contribute to disease.

9) **Deal Better with Hard Times.** People who can tackle problems or get support in a tough situation tend to feel less depressed.

10) **Get Professional Help if You Need It.** More than 80 percent of people who are treated for depression improve.



Coming home and returning to the so called “normal” living for a combat veteran can be a challenge for all concerned. The Real Warriors Campaign has been launched on May 6 by the Defense Centers of Excellence (DCoE) for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) to promote the processes of building resilience, facilitating recovery and supporting reintegration of returning service members, veterans and their families.

*The Real Warriors Campaign* combats the stigma associated with seeking psychological health care and treatment and encourages service members to increase their awareness and use of these strategies, including outreach and partnerships, print materials, media outreach, an interactive web site and social media. The campaign features stories of real service members who have sought treatment and are continuing to maintain successful military or civilian careers. In addition, DCoE established the DCoE Outreach Center, a 24/7 call center staffed by health resource consultants to provide confidential answers, tools, tips and resources about psychological health and TBI. The Outreach Center can be reached toll-free at 866-966-1020 or via e-mail at [resources@dcoeoutreach.org](mailto:resources@dcoeoutreach.org).

As the duration and frequency of military deployments increase, service members and their families are increasingly faced with the challenges associated with deployment and combat. DCoE partners with the Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs and a national network of military and civilian agencies, community leaders, advocacy groups, clinical experts and academic institutions to establish best practices and quality standards for the treatment of psychological health concerns and TBI.

A young Marine, Sgt. Josh Harper, 24, who was born in Gleason, Tennessee recently helped launch the Real Warriors Campaign. Shortly after his graduation from Gleason High he enlisted into the U. S. Marine Corps. During his career he has deployed to Djibouti Africa, and completed two combat tours to Iraq. During his first deployment to Husaybah his company was involved in over 279 separate engagements in seven months. During his second tour to Habbinyah, Iraq, the challenge this time was a 10-mile stretch of highway covered in IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices). His mobile team was hit by IEDs on a daily basis, sometimes multiple times a day. Hopper served as the machine gunner in the lead truck of the convoy. On September 10, 2006, his truck ran over a double stack of landmines placed by the enemy insurgents. The blast rendered him unconscious for nearly 20 minutes and he remembered little about the day after that. Upon returning from his second deployment he began suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a condition that many of our service members are coming home with from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Hopper was sent to Walter Reed Army Medical Center to receive treatment for PTSD, and was additionally diagnosed with TBI caused by the multiple IED blast in Iraq. After nearly a year, Hopper has made a full recovery from PTSD and the TBI symptoms have diminished. He now



feels comfortable talking about his experiences with PTSD and wants to try to help others get the help and support he received. On Thursday, May 21, 2009, he helped the DCoE launch the Real Warriors Campaign at the Pentagon. (Hopper's profile can be viewed at [www.realwarriors.net](http://www.realwarriors.net))

## REAL WARRIORS

<http://www.realwarriors.net>

### RESOURCES

Defense Center of Excellence (DCoE) for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury - call **866-966-1020**

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline for Crisis Intervention - call **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

Knox County Veterans Service Office  
**740-393-6742**

*never forgotten*



*To those who bravely fought for  
America*

## VETERANS

**You may qualify for:**

- Free Medical Care
- Free Prescriptions
- Disability Pension

**We also provide:**

- Temporary financial assistance
- Transportation to and from VA clinics
- Fuel reimbursement for your trips to VA appointments
- Fully equipped veteran workroom

*Stop in and meet our staff!!*

**KNOX COUNTY VETERANS  
SERVICE OFFICE**

*We are Located At*

411 Pittsburg Avenue  
Mount Vernon, OH  
(740)393-6742

Web Site: [knoxcounty.ohiovso.com](http://knoxcounty.ohiovso.com)  
E-mail: [vso@co.knox.oh.us](mailto:vso@co.knox.oh.us)

## GRIEF ~ What is it?

Grief is a normal response to loss. Often the most painful loss is caused by the death of a loved one. A sense of grief can also be experienced from the loss of a home, job, marriage, or significant other.

Grieving is a process and the journey through grief becomes an individual experience. Grief is a combination of emotions that seem to come and go, often appearing unexpectedly and without warning. Some people grieve longer than others. Experts say that understanding the emotions of grief and its feeling and symptoms are important steps in healing and in helping other who may be grieving. Reactions to loss vary. The most commonly describe reactions are: Shock, denial, anger, guilt, depression, acceptance, and growth. A person may experience all of these sometime during the grieving journey, or several at a time. One thing is certain: grief does not follow a timetable, but it does ease over time.

People's style of grieving may vary and must be respected but it is generally believed that the amount of support people receive can ease some of the pain. People frequently adjust to their grief with the support of family and friends; however, sometimes it may be necessary to seek professional counseling. Our local Hospice facilities are excellent resources for help.

**"Helping a child cope with loss is perhaps one of the most important roles an adult can play. In effect, you are helping that child develop skills that can last a lifetime."**

The death of a loved one is always difficult. For children, the death of a loved one can affect their sense of security. Like adults, children express loss by grieving. Yet children may not demonstrate the grief in the same manner as adults. Preschoolers usually see death as temporary; between the ages of 5 and 9, children begin to experience grief more like adults. NMHA provides the following information for parents, educators and others who may help a child overcome loss.

## Signs of Grieving in Children & Adolescents

- Sadness
- Profound emotional reactions-anxiety attacks, chronic fatigue, anger, thoughts of suicide
- Feelings of anger, denial, shock and confusion
- Extended depression with a loss of interest in daily activities and events
- Boisterous play
- Inability to sleep, nightmares, loss of appetite, prolonged fear of being alone
- Withdrawal from friends
- Sharp drop in school performance or refusal to attend school
- Excessively imitating or asking questions about the deceased; repeated statements of wanting to join the deceased; inventing games about dying
- Acting much younger for an extended period or reverting to earlier behaviors (e.g., bedwetting, baby talk, thumb-sucking)
- Loss of concentration and/or irritability
- Humiliation or guilt over personal failure to prevent loss of life
- Frequent physical complaints such as stomach-aches and headaches.

### RESOURCES

Hospice of Knox County - 397-5188  
 Pathways of Licking/Knox - 2-1-1  
 Mental Health America - 397-3088  
 MHAKC Chat Line - 397-9322  
 American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry - 800-333-7636; <http://www.aacap.org>  
 GriefNet - <http://www.griefnet.org>  
 Dougy Center - <http://www.dougy.org>

## Helping Children & Adolescents Grieve

*Long-term denial of death or avoidance of grief is unhealthy for children and may resurface later with more severe problems. Here is a list of things you can do to help a child overcome loss.*

- Children are concrete in their thinking. To lessen confusion, avoid expressions such as "passed on" or "went to sleep." Answer their questions about death simply and honestly. Only offer details that they can absorb. Don't overload them with information.
  - Children can be fearful about death and the future. Don't offer false comfort. Give them a chance to talk about their fears and validate their feelings. Offer a simple expression of sorrow and take time to listen.
  - Children are repetitive in their grief. Respond patiently to their uncertainty and concerns. It can take a long time to recover from a loss.
  - Children are physical in their grief. Watch their bodies, understand and support their play and actions as their "language" of grief. Offer reassurance.
  - Children grieve cyclically. Expect their grief to revisit in cycles throughout their childhood or adolescence. A strong reminder, such as the anniversary of a death, may reawaken grief. Make yourself available to talk.
  - Children need choices. Whenever possible, offer choices in what they do or don't do to memorialize the deceased and ways to express their feelings about the death.
  - Children grieve as part of a family. Expect children to mourn the deceased and the environment that existed before the death. Children may grieve the "changed" behavior of family and friends. Keep regular routines as much as possible.
- Resource: Mental Health America: Helping Children Cope With Loss. (www.NMHA.org)*
- Mental Health America (formerly known as the National Mental Health Association) is the country's leading nonprofit dedicated to helping ALL people live mentally healthier lives.

# You Can Live Your Life Well

## Why Mental Health Matters—

Some people think that only people with mental illnesses have to pay attention to their mental health.

But the truth is that your emotions, thoughts and attitudes affect your energy, productivity and overall health. Good mental health strengthens your ability to cope with everyday hassles and more serious crises and challenges. Good mental health is essential to creating the life you want.

Just as you brush your teeth or get a flu shot, you can take steps to promote your mental health. A great way to start is by learning to deal with stress.



## How Stress Hurts

Stress can eat away at your well-being like acid eating away at your stomach. Actually, stress can contribute to stomach pains and lots of other problems, like:

- headaches
- insomnia
- overeating
- back pain
- high blood pressure
- irritability
- vulnerability to infection

Stress also can lead to serious mental health problems, like depression and anxiety disorders. If you think you have such a problem, you can get help.

Of course you can't magically zap all sources of stress. But you can learn to deal with them in a way that promotes the well-being you want—and deserve.

Evolution was pretty savvy about danger. See a saber-tooth tiger, get moving! Today, flight—or fight, if necessary—still triggers major bodily changes, such as:

- Sugars in the bloodstream increase to supply energy
- Muscles tense so they're poised for action
- Heart beats faster to get blood pumping
- Digestion and other functions slow to save energy needed elsewhere



The problem is that our brains react to ominous loads of laundry and upcoming dentist visits like they were vicious predators. And the onslaught of today's stressors is fairly nonstop. When our bodies stay triggered for too long lots of possible health problems can develop or worsen.

## About the Live Your Life Well Campaign

Mental Health America is the country's leading nonprofit dedicated to promoting mental health. We have worked with communities, families, schools and individuals across the nation to ensure that all people have a chance to thrive. Founded 100 years ago to improve

conditions for people with mental illnesses, we have worked tirelessly since then to promote understanding of anxiety disorders, depression and other mental health issues. Our more than 300 affiliate offices help veterans returning from war, victims of natural disasters, children at risk of substance abuse and millions of other people across the country.

Now we are launching the Live Your Life Well campaign to provide tools to people like you who are stressed by the many demands of modern life.

We want you to know that you can thrive even in the face of stress. We want you to know that you can build more of the life you want.

We also want you to know that your mental health is one of your greatest assets. It helps you focus at work, overcome obstacles, get along with the people around you and even fight off illness. And there are simple, effective tools you can use to support this vital asset.

You also can get more information from your local Mental Health America affiliate or visit [www.NMHA.org](http://www.NMHA.org).

We at Mental Health America believe...

*You can feel better—more vibrant, alert and gratified.*

*You can feel stronger—more comfortable, confident and productive.*

*You can Live Your Life Well!*

# Mental “health” is fun- damental to all our lives



*A suicide tragedy happened in Hocking County -- it happens in Knox County, too.*

So far this year in Knox County there has been seven suicides -- that is seven too many and two more than the total completed suicides in our county in 2008. *How can we stop it?* A suicide is a tragedy anywhere for any age, but it is especially heartfelt when a parent loses a child to suicide. At the basis of most suicides is the underlying cause of *depression!*

Richard Wallar of Hocking County is a juvenile court judge where he sees a steady stream of juveniles with mental health disorders. Judge Wallar is also a member of many clubs and organizations, ranging from the Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges to Kiwanis -- he and his family also became a member of an unenviable club of those who have lost a loved one to suicide when their son, Neil, took his own life at the age of 19, unable to see his way out of the deep dark hole of depression.

Neil was a typical teenager who got good grades and stayed out of trouble. Judge Wallar and his wife, Sharon, saw something in him that wasn't quite right — a parent's intuition that something potentially serious was wrong with him. They repeatedly sought counseling and care for Neil, but were told each time that Neil was just a “typical teenager” experiencing symptoms of growing up; then it was too late!

**“Parents need to be more vocal....”**

While the judge and his wife do not blame the mental health professionals who worked with Neil, they do feel that parents must be vocal when they have concerns that professionals are overlooking or ignoring vital informa-



**Judge Richard Wallar**  
*Hocking County*

tion when they fail to consider important insights, intuitions and observations that parents or caregivers have to share. They also believe that society must be better educated about mental illness, and the fact that it is a chronic no-fault and treatable disease. “If more people were sensitive to this fact, more of them would seek help.”

No parent can ever adjust to losing a child to an early death; it is what they do after such a devastating loss that helps them cope and find purpose. One way the Wallar's chose to make sure that their child's life had meaning was to participate in parent support groups and try to reach out to other parents who have lost a child to suicide, many times with mixed results. “You have to wait until someone is ready to talk,” advises Judge Wallar.

As a juvenile court judge, he says, “Not all, but many of the kids who come through my court are battling mental illnesses, are victims of abuse and neglect, or have family and school issues that add to their basket of problems.” He says, “More and more studies are providing evidence that treatment and positive support, not punishment works with these kids. It is the court's responsibility to acknowledge that traditional methods of institutionalizing offenders with mental illness results in a revolving door of incarceration, release, arrest, and incarceration. We need to find ways to provide treatment and quit punishing people for something they cannot control.”

**Education is the key** -- Judge Wallar believes that education is the



key. His goal is to get people to understand that mental illness is a disease and that there have been remarkable studies in the treatment of mental health disorders.

“We need school boards, educational institutions, businesses, courts, law enforcement, the faith community and policymakers to come together and recognize that mental health treatment is a critical issue to the future of Ohio -- everyone will be touched by it at some point,” he said.

[Resource: NAMI Ohio *Stigma Buster*, May 2009]

*Parents can be a child's best advocate. Good mental health allows children to think clearly, develop socially, learn new skills, build self-esteem, and develop a positive mental outlook — If you're concerned about your child's mental health — get help! Talk with your pediatrician or contact your local mental health association at 397-3088 for information or local resources.*

## SUICIDE LOSS SUPPORT

On April 6, 2009, Hospice of Knox County and MHA KC combined forces to facilitate a Survivor of Suicide Loss Support Group. The group, led by Kathy Wantland of Hospice, continued to meet every Monday since April 6 through June 8. The group will be available again starting in September 2009; it is free and open.

The purpose of the group is to offer a setting where survivors can meet and discuss intimate feelings with others who are on the same journey of bereavement and where each may find friendship and hope. Many of the discussions are based on a “road map to survival” put together by Linda Flatt who lost her 25-year old son to suicide June of 1993.

**MHAKC****UPCOMING EVENTS**

**SNOW CONES  
-- SNOW  
CONES --  
SNOW  
CONES!!!**



**Come  
see us at the  
Dan Emmett  
Festival!!!!**

Each year MHAKC sets up a Snow Cone concession at the Dan Emmett Festival as a fund raiser. Thanks to R & M's Southside Diner, all products are donated allowing all profit from sales to go toward programs that we do. Volunteers are always needed to help sell snow cones, please call our office (740-397-3088) to sign up.

**2009 ANNUAL MEETING**

**Mark your calendars now for  
our annual meeting ~~~~~**

**SUNDAY, NOV. 15, 2009**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**PLAN TO ATTEND**

**WATCH FOR DETAILS**

**COME SEE US AT THE 2009  
KNOX COUNTY FAIR  
JULY 26 - AUG. 1**

We will be sharing space with  
**THE MAIN PLACE**  
from 11:00a.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
each day in the  
Merchant's Building

**THE OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED  
DURING KNOX COUNTY FAIR  
WEEK AND DURING THE DAN  
EMMETT FESTIVAL (Thursday &  
Friday)**

**THANKS TO OUR MEMBERS**

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**MHAKC SUPPORT GROUPS**

*About 30% of veterans who have spent time in war zones experience PTSD, according to the National Center for PTSD - [www.ncptsd.org](http://www.ncptsd.org)*

*PTSD can be extremely disabling*



**HELP WANTED:** MHAKC is searching for an individual who would be willing to facilitate a Post-Traumatic-Stress Disorder Support Group. Benefits provided are the satisfaction of helping to make a difference. Please contact Dodie Melvin at the MHAKC office at 740-397-3088.

**PARTICIPANTS WANTED:** If you think you suffer or have been diagnosed with PTSD, participating in a support group will help you in your journey to recovery. If interested please call the MHAKC office to enroll. (740-397-3088)

**DEPRESSION/BIPOLAR SUPPORT**

**Do you suffer from a mood disorder? -- Depression? Bipolar — anxiety?**

**If you are between the ages of 18 and 100 — Come join our group which meets the first and third Thursday of every month, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. There is something special about peer support. It's free — Call our office to enroll: 740-397-3088.**

**A Schizophrenia Support Group is forming, Call 740-397-3088 for details.**

*Notes from  
the director*  
*Dodie  
Melvin*



Sometimes the news isn't good -- and this time it isn't. Budget cuts have hit many of our Knox County service agencies, especially those that receive funds from state and federal agencies. MHAKC has not had to suffer those kinds of cuts because we are not funded by any federal or state funding; however, United Way of Knox County has always provided about 70-75% of our budget since 1956. The years change the way some organizations are driven and United Way is one of those organizations that has undergone changes in their philosophy; this has also impacted how funds are distributed. Funding decisions are often influenced by numbers and outcomes. Both of which are difficult for our agency to come up with when we are speaking about mental health education. Research and scientific studies tell us of the strong need for mental health education. This is evidenced locally by the number of emergency cases that visit Knox Community Hospital (last year over 2900) and Moundbuilders. Moundbuilders has a waiting list to see a doctor. Our local mental health providers are overloaded and are also limited by the types of insurance they can accept. Some do not accept any. It is a fact that most people who suffer severe mental illness are dependent on county services because they cannot hold jobs.

Applying national statistics to Ohio's 11.4 million (or more) citizens, an estimated two million children, adolescents, adults and seniors experience at least temporary mental health conditions every year. For approximately half a million Ohioans, they are serious and potentially disabling mental illnesses that require intervention and treatment to mitigate the symptoms.

Well, what can we do? What can our members who have faithfully supported us with donations, do? These are questions our Board of Trustees

are debating. We can appeal to our members to help us share the message that mental health is important to our overall health and that mental health issues can be resolved at rates comparable to medical conditions. But to accomplish this education is needed and funding is needed to support it. Perhaps by spreading the word, more individuals and businesses would be willing to make monetary contributions to us to provide for our programs. We have long had the motto, "Our strength is in the people we serve." Mental health is fundamental to each and every one of us. So there is a head count for you -- there are some 58,000 people in Knox County. *We have a job to do.* Our board is working hard to come up with ideas. We would welcome your suggestions, too.

Next year keeping this agency in operation will become a challenge. The United Way Financial Committee has tentatively approved a 2010 allocation of \$14,700. Our annual budget is approximately \$30,000. About 11% of that is administrative costs. We will try to meet that challenge counting on our membership's support, fund raisers, and seeking outside support through foundations, grants, etc.

In the meantime, please know, we are so very grateful to those individuals who have supported this agency for so many years. Your support does make a difference. We hope we can keep it going.



*Mental Health America Affiliates*

Every where you see a "Bell" is where Mental Health America affiliates are "bringing wellness home"

There are some 320+ affiliates in the U.S. This year Mental Health America celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday MHAKC is celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup>

*All we are given is possibilities to  
make ourselves one thing or another*  
— Jose Ortega Y Gasset

MENTAL AMERICA  
OF  
KNOX COUNTY

The Mental Health America of Knox County is a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) service organization established in 1949. Its mission then as now is to promote good mental health and victory over the stigma of mental illness. It is supported through United Way of Knox County, individual memberships and donations coming from Knox County businesses, organizations and individuals, memorials and fundraisers. In-kind gifts are also acceptable. All gifts are tax deductible.

A volunteer Board of Trustees monitors the general operation of the association and is involved in setting goals and programs as implemented by an executive director. The director wears multiple hats in the carrying out of the goals and mission of the Association through programing, cooperation with and participation in linked community organizations and endeavors. Membership on the Board of Trustees is represented by individuals from all walks of life and areas of the county. Volunteers welcomed!

MHAKC BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**SUPPORT GROUPS:**

**HEARTS** - a peer group for parents who want better parenting skills. Second & Fourth Monday's 6:00 - 8:00 p.m., MHA, 11 W. Gambier St., Mount Vernon Call 397-3088 to enroll.

**PTSD** - (forming) a group for individuals who are or have experienced post-traumatic-stress disorder. Enjoy the comrade and sharing with others. Refreshments. Free and open. Sponsored by MHA Knox County. Call 387-3088 for more information.

**DIVORCE RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP** - If you are going through a painful separation or divorce this will help you heal your heart and self-esteem. Facilitated by Ms. Lorraine A. Ferre', MSW, LISW. of Dr. Christopher Fiumera's psychological services

office. There are six sessions—each class will deal with the spiritual, physical and mental issues of achieving a “healthy” divorce. There is a fee of \$60 for the course. (Scholarship available) This class has great therapeutic value. Registrations are being taken now for a class to begin in September. Class time is 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. Call 397-3088 to enroll.  
**BIPOLAR/DEPRESSION** - A peer group that meets the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month, 7:00 p.m., at Gay Street United Methodist Church. Facilitated by Walt Packer (retired therapist) and Lee Ann Minor (professor of psychology). There is no fee. If you are undergoing medication and psychological therapy, joining a support group will take you one step further in your road to recovery. Also recommended for family members or loved ones. Call our office to enroll.

**PROJETS:**

**ParentTalk Newsletter** - Free subscription to parents of babies born at Knox Community Hospital. Newsletters are mailed at different monthly intervals over five years of the child's life.

**Community Resource Directory** - Compiled, updated and published each year, this informative and useful directory is distributed free to consumers of services, agencies, businesses, schools and service agencies for their use in locating services, etc. (2009-10 available soon)

**Web page** - We now have a website - www.mhaknoxcounty.com. Visit this site for upcoming programs, educational information, etc.

**Community Outreach** - In addition to the above, we offer educational workshops and forums. Maintain a lending library of books, literature and videos concerning mental health issues and provide speakers.

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The MHAAC is an affiliate of the National Mental Health America and a member of NAMI Ohio. We are a United Way of Knox County supported agency.

*Too often we give children answers to remember rather than problems to solve. — Roger Lewin*

*We are working for Knox County's Mental Health. Your support helps us to make a difference in someone's life . . .*

Membership: New \_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_ Yes, I would like to join or renew my membership in the MHA of Knox County (Check Category — Suggested Donations)

- \_\_\_ \$20 ..... Individual
- \_\_\_ \$35 ..... Family
- \_\_\_ \$10 ..... Senior
- \_\_\_ \$ 5 ..... Student
- \_\_\_ \$30 & Up ..... Sponsor

Pacesetter \$250; Business/Organization \$125; Professional \$75

If you have not renewed or joined -- complete the form below and mail to MHAAC with your check, today! *Donations, no matter how small, are appreciated!*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

All donations are tax deductible Mail to MHAAC, 11 W. Gambier St., Mount Vernon 43050