

TOOLS FOR POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health America has launched the *Live Your Life Well* campaign to encourage all of us to take good care of ourselves and our mental health. The campaign's focus is to offer ways for us to better manage our stress, work through major life challenges and to *deliberately* choose more satisfying lives for ourselves.

The 2008 year end Gallup poll found that 58% of Americans reported they were struggling, representing an increase of more than 22 million Americans over the last year's report. Yes it's true, current economic conditions along with work-life stresses have left many of us exhausted and worried. But it is also true that our attitudes and our intentions are the foundations upon which we build expectations and our future circumstances.

The *Live Your Life Well* campaign makes an important point that we need to take action, beginning by taking simple steps to gain relief. Oh, you may say, "Well that's easier said than done!" But wouldn't you agree that reaching for better feelings and better solutions is a more empowering way of living?

Take Jack Canfield the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" guru, for example. He started out as a young teacher assigned to teach the most challenging, troubled students in his school. He turned a stress producing experience into an asset. Jack knew that learning occurs best when emotional issues are addressed. So he gave priority to listening to what bothered, hurt or was confusing in his students' lives.

In time, the students felt better and so did their previously harassed teachers who began to notice that the students were actually behaving in class and interested in learning. Canfield moved on to produce his best selling Chicken Soup books filled with inspiring, humane stories for people in 40 languages worldwide.

Canfield believes that we always achieve our goals. Perhaps this is why the *Live Your Life Well* campaign offers 10 researched-based tools that thousands of people have used to help them strengthen their resiliency and restore a more positive outlook. Just by practicing one at a time significant results can be achieved:

The 10 Tools:

1. Connect With Others
2. Stay Positive
3. Get Physically Active
4. Help Others
5. Get Enough Sleep
6. Create Joy And Satisfaction
7. Eat Well
8. Take Care Of Your Spirit
9. Deal Better With Hard Times
10. Get Professional Help If You Need It

The Mental Health America website also includes information for those who are seeking the help of a mental health professional.

Interestingly, connecting with others is at the top of the list. Share your time and your feelings with others. You will find new experiences will open and the networking will produce new opportunities.

Also, Share the 10 Tools with the parents in your program. They will definitely appreciate it.

