

7 Ways to recharge your batteries

Mental health isn't just about problems, disorders, or illnesses. It's something *everyone* has, and caring for it is essential to staying well! Just as we prioritize sleep, nutrition, and physical activity for our physical health, our mental health deserves the same attention.

Years ago, **Mouvement Santé mentale Québec** carried out an extensive review of research to identify key protective factors for mental health. The result? The **7 Ways to Recharge your batteries** —a roadmap to nurturing both individual and collective well-being. Let's dive in!

Take Action, it's giving meaning to your life. Taking action helps us feel motivated. It also helps us get out of feeling helpless. It also allows us to recognize the good in our lives—a practice that can boost happiness and optimism. While our brains are wired to focus on dangers and obstacles for survival, making an effort to notice the positive builds resilience and determination.

Feel The Moment, it's recognizing your emotions, understanding them, owning them and accepting them. Emotions are like signals, guiding us toward our needs. Learning to understand and welcome them can help us navigate life more effectively. Here's a simple approach: observe without judgement, name the emotion you are feeling, identify the need tied to the emotion, respond to that need with care. Since we spend 90% of our waking hours experiencing emotions, tuning into them is essential for balance and clarity.

Accept Yourself, it's identifying your strengths, abilities and limits, and expressing your needs. Self-acceptance is about recognizing your strengths, skills, and worth—as well as those of others. It means embracing who you are with compassion and extending that same kindness to others. When we accept ourselves, we foster a sense of belonging and connection.

Reenergize, it's leaving some space for what's good for you. Life's many roles—parent, partner, employee—can leave us running on empty. Prioritizing what makes us feel good and giving ourselves permission to rest is vital. Think of your energy like a battery: if you overuse it without recharging, you risk burnout. Strive for balance across all areas of life to stay energized and grounded.

Explore, it's opening up to life. Curiosity helps us grow. By opening up to new ideas and experiences, we unlock our potential and find joy in the process. Exploring differences fosters understanding and equips us to adapt to life's inevitable changes. Embracing discovery strengthens our resilience and sense of wonder.

Make choices, it's being independent. Making choices aligned with our values and our needs allows us to develop our autonomy. It's important to follow your rhythm and

respect your limits when making a choice. Growing our sense of autonomy helps us have a better mental health.

Foster Relationships. Human connection is a cornerstone of well-being. Supportive relationships—whether with loved ones, friends, or your broader community—provide a safety net in both good times and bad. Cultivating these bonds helps protect your mental health and fosters a sense of belonging.

Which of these ways will you use to recharge today?