

## FINDING BALANCE: NURTURING VALUES FOR OPTIMAL MENTAL HEALTH

*by:*

**Viola T. De Guzman**

*Pablo Roman National High School*

In today's fast-paced and demanding world, achieving and maintaining good mental health is of paramount importance. While various factors contribute to our mental well-being, one aspect that often goes overlooked is the role of values. Values act as guiding principles that shape our beliefs, decisions, and actions. By nurturing and aligning our values with our daily lives, we can cultivate a sense of balance and promote optimal mental health.

Values represent our core beliefs and what we hold dear in life. They are deeply personal and unique to everyone. When our actions and choices are congruent with our values, we experience a sense of fulfillment and purpose. This alignment plays a crucial role in maintaining positive mental health. On the other hand, neglecting or compromising our values can lead to inner conflict, emotional distress, and a decline in mental well-being. Take time to reflect on your values and identify what truly matters to you. Consider aspects such as honesty, compassion, personal growth, or connection with others. Write down your core values to gain clarity and make them more tangible. Assess how well your daily actions align with your values. Are you living in accordance with what you hold important? Identify any areas of inconsistency and make conscious efforts to bridge the gap. Small changes in your behaviors can significantly impact your mental well-being. Establishing clear boundaries is essential for protecting your values and mental health. Learn to say no to commitments or situations that conflict with your values. Prioritize self-care and allocate time for activities that align with your beliefs and bring you joy and fulfillment. Practicing mindfulness can also help you become more aware of your

thoughts, emotions, and actions. You can observe whether your choices and behaviors align with your values through mindfulness. Surround yourself with individuals who share or respect your values. Engage in meaningful conversations and seek support from like-minded friends or support groups. Connecting with others who value similar principles can provide a sense of belonging and reinforce your commitment to nurturing your values. When we live in harmony with our values, we experience several benefits for our mental health. These include enhanced authenticity and self-acceptance, increased resilience and coping mechanisms, improved self-esteem and confidence, greater clarity in decision-making, and a deepened sense of purpose and meaning in life.

Finding balance and nurturing our values is an ongoing process that requires self-reflection, intention, and conscious effort. We can promote optimal mental health and well-being by aligning our actions and choices with our core values. Remember that each person's values are unique, and it is essential to respect and honor the values of others. Embracing and nurturing our values can empower us to lead more fulfilling and purposeful lives while fostering positive mental health in ourselves and those around us.

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