



# Plan of the Week Notes for October

## Mental Health Month

### Week 1

**There are more reasons to exercise than staying physically fit.**

Working out can have a major impact on your mental health and reduce muscle tension. Consider the following components in your fitness program for improved mental health.

1) Cardiovascular (for example: bike, swim, walk, run, zumba, dance) exercise keeps your heart and lungs strong and pumps oxygen filled blood throughout your body. Additionally, this type of exercise can help lower anxiety, decrease anger, and promote restful sleep.

2) Flexibility exercises promote improved range of motion and circulation. Finding flexibility in the form of yoga can reduce anxiety and improve mood. **Try a class at your local command and check out our online resources for Active Living:**

<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/active-living/Pages/active-living.aspx>

### Week 2

**Are you getting enough sleep?**

The stresses of daily life often get in the way of a good night's rest. Not getting enough sleep at night may be detrimental, not only to your own health but to those around you. Sleep deprivation can lead to poor reaction time, the inability to properly operate a motor vehicle or machine, poor decision making and a compromised immune system. Lack of sleep for an extended period of time can even contribute to anxiety and depression. For tips on how to achieve a better night's sleep, visit our Got Sleep Webinar to learn more (slide 28 reviews sleep tips): <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/general-tools-and-programs/Webinars/Got-Sleep-Webinar.pdf>

To learn how to develop healthy sleeping habits while deployed, visit:

<http://www.realwarriors.net/active/deployment/sleep.php>



## Week 3

### **There is another option: Prevent Suicide**

Often times, suicidal thoughts stem from depression and despair causing a person to feel like there is no way out. Their suffering has become unbearable. Most people contemplating taking their own lives wish there was an alternative; they just can't see one. Suicide prevention starts with recognizing the warning signs and taking them seriously. If you think you know someone experiencing suicidal thoughts, remember the **ACT NOW** steps - A: Ask questions, actively listen, acknowledge their feelings; C: Care about them, what distresses them, how they might see a way out; and T: Treat, assist them in getting medical or professional help and don't leave them alone. Post this flyer as a reminder:

<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/psychological-emotional-wellbeing/act-now.pdf>

For more information on warning signs, visit:

<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/psychological-emotional-wellbeing/IS-PATH-WARM-Acute-Suicide-Warning-Signs.pdf>

and

<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/psychological-emotional-wellbeing/marine-suicide-risk-factors.pdf>

## Week 4

### **True or False? Can anger be expressed without aggression?**

Absolutely true. Aggression contributes to poor communication in personal and professional relationships. Expressing anger in some situations is natural and often tells us something about our boundaries or values. However, when anger becomes a regular means to get your way or a "go to" place whenever you are irritated or frustrated it may have become a bad habit.

Consequently, it can have a negative impact on your health. To deescalate a heated interaction: try taking a break for 10 minutes in the midst of a heated discussion, calm your emotional state through deep breathing, distract yourself for thirty minutes and let others know you will get back to them. To learn more about how to manage anger review this fact sheet "Anger Coping Strategies, <http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/docs/Info-anger%20coping%20strategies.pdf> and speak with a counselor or chaplain.