



# May is Mental Health Month!

EvoLibri Consulting



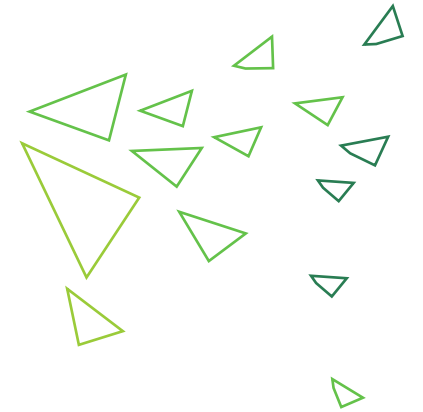


# EVOLIBRI

## About Us

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## What We Do...

EvoLibri provides services to neurodiverse clients ages 14 through adult to help them master the neurotypical world in school, work, and community.

# What Are the Prevalence Rates?

According to the NIMH, in 2017, 20% of the nation had depression or anxiety, and 43% were seeking treatment for ‘any’ mental health issue, including ADHD, learning disabilities, and ASD – plus anxiety and depression. Current estimates are that *these numbers have increased by an additional 20% during 2020*.



20%

## **Mood Disorder**

In 2017, 20% of the population sought treatment for anxiety and depression.



43%

## **“Any mental illness”**

Inclusive of learning disabilities, ADHD, and other ‘brain based’ challenges, 42.6% of the population sought treatment in 2017. This equates to ~38% of the workforce.



63%

## **During 2020**

Add another 27% to those numbers and this is where we are estimated to be today.

Nearly 2/3rds of us are seeking treatment for mental distress of some sort.



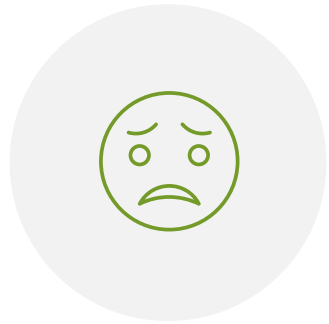
# What is the Anxiety-Depression Cycle?

While we tend to think of anxiety as 'high energy' and depression as 'low energy', the two frequently co-exist in a 'back and forth' fashion.



## **Anxiety...**

Long-term worry and fear cause us to be in 'fight or flight' for much of our day. This makes it difficult to get much done.



## **Depression...**

When we are not able to focus and get our work done, we tend to move into a depressive state.



## **& Repeat**

Fear about not getting work done moves us temporarily out of depression and back into anxiety.



# “Whole Person” Theory

How does our mental health impact our lives?



## Focus

Depression and anxiety take a huge toll on our executive functioning ability, particularly focus. Imagine trying to solve a difficult problem with a blaring fire alarm screaming in the background. This is enormously taxing to our system.



## Memory

Along with focus, memory is also impacted by anxiety and depression. While our systems are flooded with adrenaline, our brains are not able to function in the same way as when we are calm. This can lead to inability to *form or retrieve* memories.



## Energy

As mentioned, trying to be ‘normal’ when anxious and depressed is hugely taxing to our system. We find ourselves sleeping more, feeling exhausted at the end of the day, never feeling like we hit our stride in a given workday.



## Aggressive/ Shut Down

Another side effect is to either become snappish and aggravated over small things, or to completely shut down emotionally across the board. Neither of these are good states to be in and are symptomatic that we need a break.



## Illness

If we don’t take care of ourselves, and this stress continues over a long period of time, we have a higher risk of both common illnesses and of more serious illnesses like heart disease.

# What Helps?

Here are some activities to add to your Self-Care bag of tricks that have been proven to help ameliorate depression and anxiety. These are great if you're just in a funk and need to change up your mood short term. Which of these can you add to your daily or weekly routine? How can you establish a PRACTICE?



## Nature

Being out in nature has significant impact on our mood by reducing heart rate, blood pressure, and the production of the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol.



## Art

Whether viewing or participating in any form of art – music through visual arts – increases the production of dopamine and endorphins. Also, focusing just on one thing at a time is a form of meditation.



## Animals/Pets

As with nature and art, spending time with a pet reduces the production of stress hormones and increases the production of positive 'happy' hormones – including oxytocin – through connection and physical touch.



## Groups/ Fellowship

Being with other people in safe groups, whether it's spiritual, helping others, interest-related, or supportive (like AASCEND!) is an excellent way to stay connected and supported.



## Exercise

We all know that exercise is vital to sleeping well and maintaining physical health. It is also vital to mental health by producing hormones that flood us with endorphins – the runner's high!





Let's Do It!

## Get a Pen and Paper

1

***What are my 'practices'?*** What things are you doing now or do you want to start to de-stress your life? Be creative and inclusive! \_\_\_\_\_

2

***What is stopping me?*** We are often very good at creating barriers: "I can't, I don't have the time/money/ability..." Write these down. \_\_\_\_\_

3


***Helpers!*** Who can help you break through your own barriers? A friend, a therapist, a partner, an advocate or ally? Think of someone who can help you think – and act – in more positive ways.




# Thank You



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