

# ON THE ROAD TO LIVING WELL

# TAKING CHARGE!

Being prepared for your journey is important! Every successful road trip begins with a list. Check out the tips and reminders here to help keep you in the driver's seat.

## DON'T FORGET!

- Tips for managing your mental health while you wait for an appointment:
- Surround yourself with family and friends.
  - Talk to a counselor, social worker, nurse or trusted adult.
  - Continue doing what you love: reading, writing, nature walks, creating art...

## Finding a Mental Health Specialist:

- ✓ Ask your primary care provider to help you make your first appointment to avoid long wait times.
- ✓ Check the details of your mental health insurance coverage.
- ✓ If the first mental health specialist isn't a good fit, look elsewhere for someone you connect with.

## Making your First Appointment Count:

- ✓ Come prepared to talk about what you're experiencing and how you're feeling.
- ✓ You may be asked to fill out a questionnaire describing your mental health experience.
- ✓ Be upfront and specific about what you want addressed to help you feel better.
- ✓ Ask the mental health specialist to explain treatment options to you until you understand. Write down the plan so you know what you are supposed to do.

## NAVIGATING YOUR INSURANCE

- Involve someone with experience to help you.
- Call your insurance company to ask what mental health benefits are covered.
- To find a provider, go to the insurer's website or call the number on the back of your card.

## Making Sure Your Treatment Plan Works for You:

- ✓ Keep a wellness log and monitor your progress.
- ✓ Follow up and don't be afraid to ask about changes to your treatment plan if things aren't going well.
- ✓ Most therapies and medications take time to work, so stick with it and results will come.
- ✓ Your treatment plan may change. Be active in this process.

## Living Well:

- ✓ Recognize that you have control over living well.
- ✓ Find a routine that works for you that includes a healthy diet, exercise and regular sleep patterns.
- ✓ Stay close to your support network. Engage family, friends, teammates and your faith community.
- ✓ Be realistic and mindful of your needs and take that into consideration in making life decisions.

## Questions You May Want to Ask:

- I'm concerned about the way I feel. What is your plan for helping me feel better?
- Are there any safety concerns that I should know about with my condition or treatment plan?
- Do I have to take medication? What does it help with? What are the side effects?
- How will I know I'm getting better in a few days, weeks or months?
- How long will it take for me to feel better?

## Getting Through It

- Stay away from drugs and alcohol. Peer pressure can make this hard, so find strategies to make it work, like carrying a cup at parties so people don't ask if you need a drink.
- If you use alcohol or drugs, be honest and tell your doctor because it will likely affect your treatment plan.
- Do your best to stay positive. Surround yourself with positive messages, people and activities. This can rub off and help to improve the way you feel.

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