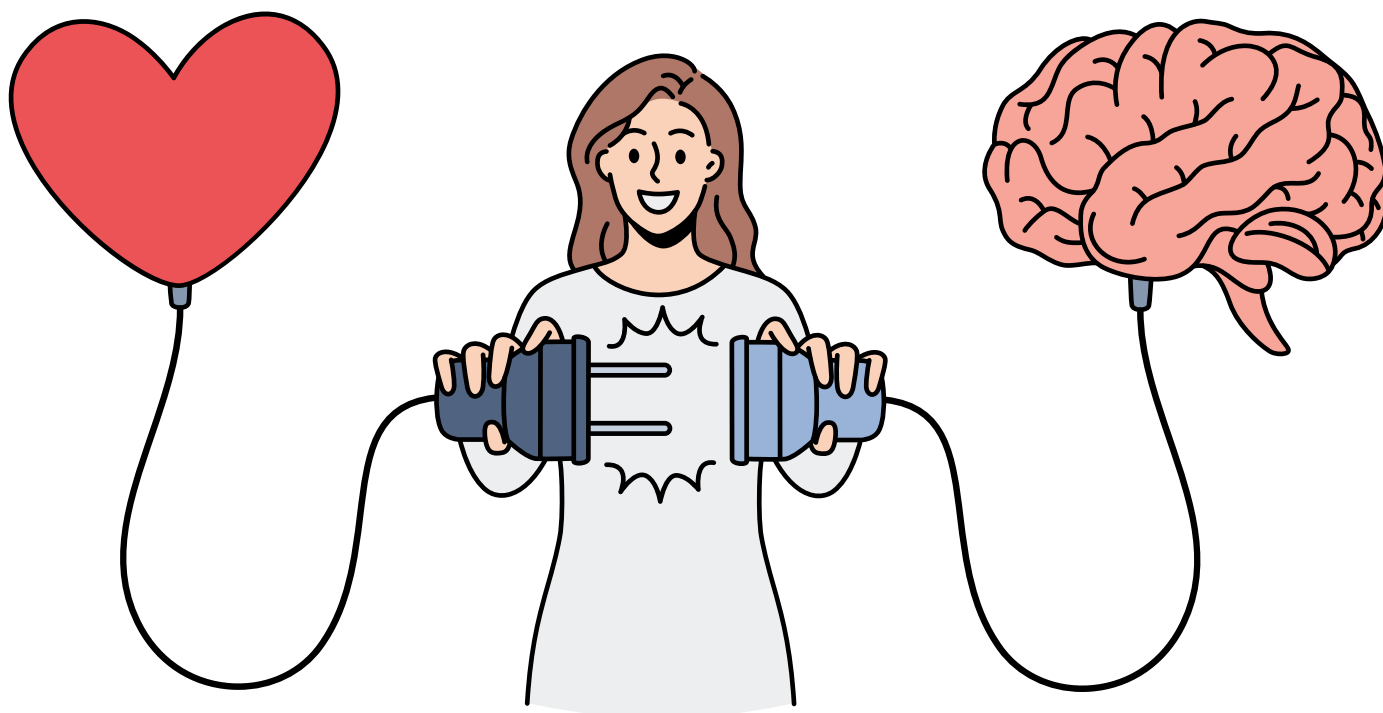


# THE HEART-MIND CONNECTION



Researchers at the American Heart Association (AHA) have discovered a strong connection between heart and mental health. They found substantial evidence to prove that each plays an important role in how the other functions.

“For example, studies show people with depression are at greater risk for heart attacks and strokes, whereas people who report feeling optimistic have a lower risk of heart disease and stroke. Adults who report having a greater sense of purpose in life engage in lifestyle behaviors that reduce heart health risks, such as smoking less, staying more physically active, and maintaining better blood glucose control.”  
(American Heart Association News, 2021).

With these findings, we now know that adding interventions to help people can cultivate positive mental health and significantly impact improving heart health.

**Check out the next page for tips on how you can start working to improve your heart and mental health today!**

# TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR HEART & MENTAL HEALTH!

## 1. Add meditation to your routine.

Recent studies offer promising results about meditation's impact on reducing stress, blood pressure, and risk of heart-related death.

A few tips to help guide your meditation journey include:

- Block out a time to meditate each day. 5 to 10 minutes to start is great.
- Do your best to sit quietly while concentrating on taking slow, deep breaths.
- Enhance the experience by adding peaceful music or white noise.

## 2. Improve stress management.

Building skills to manage the stress in your life can lower your exposure to cortisol and other stress hormones that increase your risk of developing anxiety, depression, heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke.

Ways to manage your stress include:

- Fostering healthy friendships and talking with friends and family.
- Keeping a journal to write down your thoughts or what you're grateful for.
- Taking time for hobbies, such as reading, listening to music, or watching your favorite show or movie.

## 3. Make lifestyle improvements.

Start small. Making small, manageable daily improvements adds up to better overall health. Even small changes like adding more fruits and vegetables to your plate or walking around the house can help. Try to find physical activities you enjoy that can help you stay motivated.

## 4. Seek professional help.

Mental health is essential to everyone's overall health and well-being. Just like other areas of your health, you may need to seek additional support from a professional. There are various ways someone can receive the support they need, including individual or group therapy, teletherapy, support groups, and much more. Mental health support is proven to help reduce stress and improve the quality of life for those in treatment by helping provide a space to identify problems, build coping skills, and find unbiased support.

If you or someone you know is struggling with a recent heart-related diagnosis or a decline in mental health, our program can help. Whether through our psychiatry and therapy program, or another service, our team works to identify and address the emotional needs of those in our community and provide support.

Sources: AHA, Insider, Mayo Clinic, Harvard Health Publishing

## WE CAN HELP.

Our outpatient program is designed to meet the unique needs of older adults experiencing depression and/or anxiety related to life changes that are often associated with aging. Anyone can make a referral to our program, including self-referrals, provider referrals, or community referrals.

**Call us today at**