

119th Session of the East Tennessee Annual Conference
13th Episcopal District
African Methodist Episcopal Church
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Warren Chapel AME Church (Chattanooga), Host Church
Dr. Pedro Basden, Host Pastor
Bishop Jeffrey N. Leath, Presiding Prelate
Dr. Susan J. Leath, M.D., Episcopal Supervisor
Rev. Dr. Eva M. Settles, Presiding Elder
Rev. Dr. Terence Mayes, Sr., Associate Presiding Elder

Report on Health & Wellness

16 "With a long life I will satisfy him And let him see My salvation." Psalms 91:16 (NASB)

There is a clear connection between the way your brain thinks and the way your body feels. Just like you can use your body to reduce your psychological distress, you can also use your mind to improve your body.

Simply changing the way you think and taking charge of what occupies your mind, you can improve your physical health and well-being. While positive thinking won't cure everything, a healthy mindset is a key component to a healthy body.

Amy Morin, the author of "Seven Ways to Heal Your Body by Using the Power of Your Mind, Backed by Science" in Inc Magazine, suggests seven ways you can use your mind to promote physical health:

1. Make Your Treatments More Effective by Expecting Them to Work

Countless studies show the placebo effect influences the effectiveness of treatment. If someone tells you a pill will cure your headache, you are likely to find the treatment helpful, even if the pill was a sugar pill. Whether you are trying physical therapy for a bad knee, or you are seeing a chiropractor for pain in your back, your *belief* that those treatments will work may be more effective than the treatment themselves. So, before you undergo any kind of treatment, think about all the reasons the treatment is likely to help.

2. Sleep Better by Writing in a Gratitude Journal

If you are struggling with insomnia, a gratitude journal might be the best cure. Several studies have linked gratitude to better quality and longer lasting sleep. Identify three things you are grateful for and write them in a gratitude journal before you go to bed. Conjuring up feelings of thankfulness right before you fall asleep will increase the chances, you will get a good night's rest.

3. Live Longer by Focusing on Your Purpose in Life

Feeling like you have a sense of purpose could increase the length of your life. Studies consistently show people who believe their lives are meaningful are more likely to live healthier, longer lives. Whether your work gives you a purpose, or you find meaning as a volunteer, make sure whatever you are doing matters. Feeling like you have a reason to get out of bed every day might be the secret to longevity.

4. Be Optimistic and Boost Your Immunity

Several studies have shown that optimistic people are less likely to get sick. For decades, many researchers thought the boost in immunity stemmed from the fact that optimistic people were more likely to take care of their health. But more recent studies have shown that a hopeful outlook is what influences immunity. Looking on the bright side makes you less likely to get a cold or infection because optimism keeps your immune system performing at its peak.

5. Slow Aging with Meditation

Meditation provides a generous buffer against the harmful effects stress can have on the body. Numerous studies have shown meditation slows the rate of cellular aging. Not only might meditation help you stay looking youthful, but it could help you ward off age-related disease. Researchers suspect teaching children to meditate could provide lifelong benefits. But no matter what age you are, it is never too late to gain some health benefits from meditation.

6. Build Muscle by Imagining Yourself Working Out

What if you could get buff by imagining yourself lifting weights? Well, researchers have found that mental imagery can help you gain muscle without lifting a finger. One study found that people who imagined themselves working out were able to gain 24% more muscle strength. People who lifted weights saw better results, but the research shows mental training can provide some serious changes to muscle mass.

7. Reduce Your Risk of Heart Disease by Laughing

If you want to build a healthier heart, think about something funny. Research shows laughter decreases stress hormones, increases 'good' cholesterol, and reduces artery inflammation. Perhaps laughter really is the best medicine. And the best news is, the positive effects of laughter last 24 hours.

Recommendations: With daily practice, mental exercises could be the key to living a longer, happier life. Your mind can be your best asset or your worst enemy. We must learn how to train our brain to help our body perform at its peak. Everyone can build mental strength. So, we must push ourselves daily to evoke these practices in order to reach the ultimate outcome. Therefore, the Committee on Health & Wellness of the East Tennessee Annual Conference of the 13th Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church recommends continued teaching and preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ as related to healthy living.

Humbly Submitted,

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