

A Mental Health Myth

There is a **myth prevalent in our society** today that the term 'mental health' is only applicable to persons who suffer severe emotional disorders. In actuality, every person who appreciates "feeling good" or wants to "feel good" is either experiencing or seeking good mental health.

It is natural for people to seek physical and emotional comfort. But, do you know what that actually entails? A considerable factor is our neurotransmitters. Each of us has chemicals within our brain called neurotransmitters; when balanced, neurotransmitters play a significant role in feelings of pleasure and well-being. When we experience a deficiency or an excess of any neurotransmitter, it will lead to uncomfortable feelings. Often we will then respond with an attempt to relieve the uncomfortable feelings - or in other words, **we will attempt to regulate our mental health**. Some of us do this by eating chocolate or by indulging in a substance or an activity that makes us "feel better" and helps to alleviate the discomfort or the restlessness or the cravings that we are experiencing.

"...it is time to correct an imbalance somewhere..."

We may seek different avenues to achieve that desired sense of satisfaction or well-being, but we are all motivated by the same chemical activity within our brain, managed by our neurotransmitters. Those uncomfortable feelings are actually your brain's message that it is time to correct an imbalance somewhere - and a good place to begin is with our neurotransmitters.

Neurotransmitters are chemicals that make it possible for your brain (an organ made of nerve tissue) to coordinate mental activity. Many of these neurotransmitters are composed of amino acids. For example, the neurotransmitter serotonin is made from the amino acid tryptophan. If tryptophan is not available, serotonin levels will fall, and brain functioning and mood will be affected. Individuals will typically feel a little down. The neurotransmitter tyrosine synthesizes to dopamine, increasing energy and alertness. Those are just two examples of how neurotransmitters affect our mental health. Some other symptoms of neurotransmitter deficiency or imbalance include drowsiness, irritability, agitation, and inability to focus.

However, just as easily as our brain chemistry can become depleted or imbalanced as a result of poor diet, stress, toxic environmental factors, etc., **we can give our mental health a boost through amino acid intake**. A complete blend of amino acids (which includes all essential and non-essential amino acids) can aid in restoring maximum brain function and optimal mood with no known negative side effects. Amino acids are extraordinary nutrients that can often serve as a stand-alone remedy for many common mental health symptoms. Having a proper balance of amino acids within the mind/body is an essential component of each person's individual mental health and lays the foundation for a healthier, well-balanced life. **"Feeling good" is within reach when you reach for amino acids!**

References:

1. <http://www.fi.edu/learn/brain/proteins.html>
2. American Psychiatric A: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Fourth edition, text revision Washington DC 2000. _
3. Young SN: Clinical nutrition: 3. The fuzzy boundary between nutrition and psychopharmacology. CMAJ 2002, 166(2):205-209.
4. Petty F: GABA and mood disorders: a brief review and hypothesis. J Affect Disord 1995, 34 (4):275-281.
5. Ruhé HG, Mason NS, Schene AH: Mood is indirectly related to serotonin, norepinephrine and dopamine levels in humans: meta-analysis of monoamine depletion studies. Mol Psychiatry 2007, 12(4):331-359.



Written by Dr. Daniel S. Smith
© 2012 Genesa Inc
800-404-1065
www.GenesaLiving.com