

Mind Your Health

by Patricia Smith

(NAPSA)—All of us struggle at one time or another as we face life's challenges. This can sometimes lead to severe depression, anxiety or other behaviors that keep us from feeling and doing our best for ourselves and our loved ones. For too long, people struggling with mental health challenges have felt discouraged or ashamed because they are not able to “force themselves” to do or feel better.



So what can we do about it? There are many ways to help yourself feel better. Take advantage of the resources available in most communities such as free support groups, and make sure you get enough sleep and exercise. If your symptoms are keeping you from your normal activities or you have any thoughts of giving up, contact your doctor or local mental health resources. Know that it is okay to speak up, to acknowledge that “I’m having trouble here,” and look for an approach that works for you.

“Toughing it out” may be the right strategy for some challenges, but it’s not right for depression or mental anxiety. And pat yourself on the back for taking the step that could dramatically improve your life.

- *Ms. Smith is president and CEO of the Alliance of Community Health Plans, online at www.achp.org.*