

Unmasking your mental health



Mental health is an essential part of our well-being, yet many people hide their struggles from others, often without even realizing it. This behavior, known as “masking,” can have serious long-term effects on relationships, mental health, and overall physical well-being.

Recognizing that you're masking is the first step toward making positive changes. Here are five tools to try as you work towards breaking the habit.

1 Acknowledge your emotions.

Start by allowing yourself to feel whatever emotions come up, without judgment. Acknowledge that it's okay to not feel okay, and your feelings are valid.

2 Talk to someone you trust.

Opening up about your mental health may seem daunting, but talking to someone you trust — whether it's a close friend, family member, or therapist — can provide a valuable outlet for your feelings.

3 Seek professional support.

If you're struggling, reaching out to a mental health professional is critical to a speedy recovery. Your [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#), as well as in-network therapists and counselors can all help you better understand your emotions and how to cope with them.

4 Set realistic expectations.

If you're masking at work or social situations due to high expectations, it's important to set realistic goals. If you're feeling anxious or down, give yourself some grace — and remember it's okay to seek support when you need it.

5 Challenge negative beliefs.

If you find yourself masking because of fear of stigma or judgment, challenge those negative beliefs. Remind yourself that mental health struggles are part of being human, and reaching out for support shows strength, not weakness.



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