

# GOOD *for you*

Health and Wellness  
for Magna Employees



## Meet Jason MacKenzie

Mental health and mental illness are topics both misunderstood and feared by many. Maintaining good mental health means striking an ideal balance between your home and work life, the social, spiritual and physical.

continue  
reading

### IN THIS ISSUE

#### PAGE ONE

Meet Jason MacKenzie  
Did you know?

#### PAGE TWO

Recognizing Signs of Depression & Anxiety  
Positive Psychology: The Study of Happiness

#### PAGE THREE

Maintaining Good Mental Health  
Simple Steps to a Happier You  
Hey Bartender

#### PAGE FOUR

9 Nourishing Nutrients for Optimal  
Mental Health  
Chocolate Chia Seed Pudding  
Did you know?

You can't see a mental illness, like you can a physical ailment, but chances are, you or someone you know, is struggling with anxiety, depression, eating disorders, or one of the other many conditions that fall under the umbrella of mental illness.

Jason MacKenzie, of Presstran Industries, experienced the tragic effects of mental illness when he lost his first wife, the biological mother of his two children, to suicide.

"About ten years ago, shortly after the birth of our second daughter, she began to act out of character. She got extremely angry a lot, lost a lot weight and started disappearing for prolonged periods of time." There were other signs. Jason noticed that she wasn't sleeping much and she began drinking heavily and abusing her prescription anti-anxiety medication. She was eventually diagnosed with bipolar disorder, but their family went through years of chaos and worry that ended with her taking her own life. "Having to sit down and tell your five and six year old children that their mother is dead and never coming back is an experience that changes you forever."

But the single father of two had another problem to overcome. During this time, Jason turned to alcohol in order to cope with the stress, and continued drinking every day, even after his wife had passed. "My new wife, who is a saint, helped me understand what I am capable of. My drinking was starting to upset her and she pushed me, with love and increasing pressure, to be better." Jason hit his personal rock bottom during that time and began feeling terrible about what he was doing to his family.

He woke up one morning—after a particularly bad day that began with beer and ended in a bottle of whiskey, and "... in a moment of complete clarity I knew I was finished drinking. I have not touched a drop since and I know I never will again."

It wasn't easy. He had tried and failed so many times, but when he managed to stop, he realized that if he could accomplish that, then there was nothing he couldn't do. "I spent the next few months



“ I realized that being capable of achieving goals and actually achieving them are two different things.”

walking around amazed that I was living free of alcohol. I realized that being capable of achieving goals and actually achieving them are two different things." Jason did some research and came up with a plan. Practicing success rituals every day helped him dramatically change how he looked at himself and the world. "I meditate, practice daily affirmations, and use visualization."

Now a trim 162 pounds, with only 7% total body fat, Jason eats a mostly vegetarian diet. Presstran's Department Leader of Purchasing and Manufacturing Information Systems, rides his bike most days to work, a 30 km trek each way. "I've ridden 4500 km on my bike in the last four months. I'm the leanest and fittest I have ever been. I understand that life is a journey and that I am far from perfect, but I try very hard to make each day the best it can be and next one just a bit better."

Jason is fit, happier and healthier than he's ever been and wants to inspire others to find their balance for optimum health—both physical and mental. Visit Jason's blog, From Drunk to Monk ([fromdrunktomonk.com](http://fromdrunktomonk.com)) to learn more about his incredible journey.

**Jason MacKenzie**  
Presstran

### DID YOU know?

People often live their lives with a

**DO**

**HAVE**

**BE**

perspective.

In other words, if I "do" the right things, I will "have" the things I want, and I will "be" the person I deserve to be (e.g. Once I finish this job I will have money and then I can be happy).

However, research shows that those individual who live with the

**BE**

**HAVE**

**DO**

perspective are more successful in life.

**WHAT'S  
YOUR  
perspective?**

### JASON'S SUCCESS PLAN

Define how you want to live your life.

Practice gratitude.

Make conscious choices to do the right thing.

Look for ways to help others. The more you give in this world, the more you will receive.

Be open and honest with people about how you're feeling, share your dreams, your struggles. People crave personal connections and the more people you create connections with, the more of an impact you will make on this world.

# RECOGNIZING SIGNS OF *Depression* & *Anxiety*



Source: [www.healthline.com/health/anxiety/effects-on-body](http://www.healthline.com/health/anxiety/effects-on-body),  
[www.healthline.com/health/depression/recognizing-symptoms#Overview1](http://www.healthline.com/health/depression/recognizing-symptoms#Overview1),  
[alberta.cmha.ca/mental\\_health/statistics/#.VYFhPvIko](http://alberta.cmha.ca/mental_health/statistics/#.VYFhPvIko)

According to the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), 4 of the 10 leading causes of disability in developed countries are a result of mental disorders (this includes: major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and obsessive-compulsive disorder).

The burden of mental illness can have a detrimental impact on individuals and society. Anxiety disorders and depression are the most common mental disorders experienced by individuals. Recognizing the signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety can help individuals increase their control over a mental illness, and it can help individuals, and others, recognize if additional assistance may be required.

**DEPRESSION** is defined as a mood disorder that affects the way one feels about life. This disorder is much more than simply being unhappy; it's complex and it is caused by various factors including genetics, personality, stress, and brain chemistry.

SIGNS	WHAT MIGHT BE HAPPENING
<b>Sudden or Uncharacteristic Changes in Feelings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feelings of hopelessness, helpless, worthless, self-hate, inappropriate guilt</li> <li>Urge to cry</li> </ul>
<b>Lack of Interest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of enjoyment or pleasure from things once loved (e.g. hobbies, sports, hanging out with friends etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Fatigue and Sleep</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feeling tired</li> <li>Lack of energy</li> <li>Lethargic</li> <li>Insomnia, no sleep at all OR excessive sleeping</li> </ul>
<b>Loss of Concentration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trouble focusing</li> <li>Difficulty remembering things or making a decision</li> <li>Loss of touch with reality, hearing voices, having atypical or uncharacteristic ideas</li> </ul>
<b>Anxiety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irritable</li> <li>See anxiety disorder</li> </ul>
<b>Weight</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased appetite and weight gain OR decreased appetite and weight loss</li> </ul>
<b>Mood swings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncontrollable emotions</li> <li>Fluctuation of emotions</li> </ul>

When depression worsens, it can lead to thoughts of suicide. The uncontrollable emotions and feelings of hopelessness can make an individual believe they need a permanent solution. According to the CMHA, approximately 90% of people who take their own life have a diagnosable mental disorder. If you, or an individual you may know, are showing signs of depression for two weeks or more, it is advised that you reach out for professional help. Depression affects millions of people but there are a wide variety of treatments available to lessen the burden depression can have on one's life.

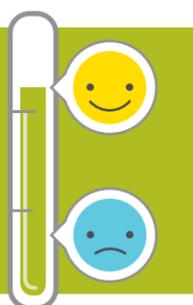
**ANXIETY DISORDER** is defined as distress in an individual's life that negatively affects his or her ability work/study, socialize, and manage daily tasks.

Every individual experiences some level of anxiety during their lives, however it's typically short-term. The problem is when a combination of cognitive, physical, and behavioral symptoms persists over a long period of time. When symptoms become severe they can be detrimental to an individual's health. There are different types of anxiety disorders including phobias, like claustrophobia and agoraphobia, panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, and generalized anxiety disorder. Since there are multiple types of anxiety disorders, there are different signs and symptoms of each. Hallmark signs include:

SIGNS	WHAT MIGHT BE HAPPENING
<b>Fear</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irrational or excessive</li> </ul>
<b>Feelings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apprehensive</li> <li>Tense</li> </ul>
<b>Task Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficult time managing</li> <li>Distress related to tasks</li> </ul>
<b>Other cognitive, behavioural and physical symptoms may include</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anxious thoughts, predictions, beliefs</li> <li>Avoidance of feared situations or similar ones</li> <li>Safety behaviours</li> <li>Excessive physical reactions to things/fears</li> <li>Physical symptoms that are relatable to other physical illnesses</li> </ul>

Anxiety disorders can affect anyone. They are often triggered by a specific event or stressful life experience. It is important to acknowledge that an anxiety disorder is a real illness and many people often think or hope they can "get over it" on their own. Unfortunately this is not always the case and treatment can be used to help individuals develop coping strategies and build behaviours that can help them improve their well-being.

## POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY: THE STUDY OF HAPPINESS



Positive psychology studies human flourishing, happiness, and what makes life worth living. Flourishing is a state where individuals are moving rapidly, becoming successful, and thriving with whatever they are doing. The goal of positive psychology is to move individuals from a state of negative and neutral to positive and flourishing. Martin Seligman, a researcher in this field, developed a theory of wellbeing, which is the state of being comfortable, healthy and happy. He created the PERMA model that incorporates five essential to help bring wellbeing to your life.

Sources: [www.mindtools.com/pages/article/perma.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/perma.htm), [www.authenticchappiness.sas.upenn.edu/learn](http://www.authenticchappiness.sas.upenn.edu/learn)

**P**  
**POSITIVE EMOTION**  
Viewing life with a positive perspective. This includes: happiness, peace, gratitude, satisfaction, pleasure, inspiration, hope, curiosity, and love. Studies show that recognizing positive emotions over negative increase performance, boosts health, strengthens relationships, and increases optimism about the future.

**E**  
**ENGAGEMENT**  
"Being one with the music" and using your moral strengths to achieve flow, the state of being completely involved in the present moment and enjoying. The more engagement that is experienced the more likely one is experiencing wellbeing.

**R**  
**RELATIONSHIPS (positive)**  
Good relationships are the core to the wellbeing of individuals. Humans are "social beings" and we require positive connections, love, and physical and emotional contact with others. Studies have shown that those with meaningful and strong positive relationships are happier than those who don't have them.

**M**  
**MEANING**  
Serving and dedicating time to help something greater than ourselves (e.g. participating in a volunteer organization or a getting involved with a cause that helps humanity).

**A**  
**ACCOMPLISHMENT**  
Striving to become a 'better you', mastering a skill and achieving goals. Accomplishments are measured by self-discipline and extreme persistence. According to research, those who have a strong sense of self-discipline and extreme persistence are twice as likely experience accomplishment, in comparison to those with only a high IQ.

# Maintaining GOOD MENTAL HEALTH



## Mental health and mental illness are not the same things.

Mental health is a state of well-being that includes one's psychological and emotional welfare. In this state, one realizes their own ability, copes with a normal amount of stress, works productively, and is able to make positive contributions to their community. Mental illness describes a range of mental health conditions that can impair one's mood, thinking, behavior, and mental health.

Just like physical health, there is no guarantee that you'll never feel unwell. Recognizing your state of mental health and understanding the symptoms or progression toward mental illness is as important as washing your hands to prevent the spread of viruses. By recognizing early signs, using preventative measures, like diet and exercise, and preparing a plan to cope with illness can help you bounce back to optimal health as quickly as possible.

## EXERCISE

*"Walking is man's best medicine."*

– HIPPOCRATES

Research suggests that physical activity is associated with a better quality of life and has beneficial effects on one's mental health. Exercise stimulates the brain to release 'feel-good' chemicals and helps to deter the release of immune weakening chemicals. These responses have both temporary and long term effects, including notable decreases in anxiety, mental fatigue, stress and depression, while improving self-esteem, and enhancing positive moods. Moderate to high levels of regular physical activity can reduce the onset of depression and can prevent the onset of anxiety disorders and associated symptoms. If you haven't incorporated a fitness plan into your lifestyle, here are a few suggestions to try:

### MODERATE ACTIVITY

- Brisk walking
- Swimming
- Zumba
- Golfing
- Leisure biking

### MORE INTENSE ACTIVITY

- Hiking
- Sports like tennis, hockey, basketball
- Running
- Cycling
- Skiing

## DIET

There is evidence that diet can play a critical role in the development, management and prevention of mental illnesses such as depression, schizophrenia, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

As our increasingly busy lifestyles create a deficit in time for physical activity, our consumption of processed and convenience foods—sweets, fried, processed and high in fat—has skyrocketed. Although not fully to blame for our poor eating habits, stress has been strongly linked with the compulsion to overeat. Stressful situations cause the body to produce a fluctuation in hormones that trigger cravings for high-fat and sugary comfort foods, that typically contain empty calories and have little to no nutritional value, and thus begins a cycle that can be difficult to break.

According to the Mental Health Foundation, a healthy diet can assist the body in achieving a balance in mood, boost our self-esteem and enhance our feelings of positivity toward well-being. Poor nutrition can have a negative effect on bodily functions and cause inflammation and decrease our ability to absorb nutrients thereby compromising our mental health.

The next time you're stressed, instead of reaching for comfort food, try snacking on mood boosting foods like nuts, berries or a small portion of dark chocolate.



# Hey BARTENDER

Alcohol has been around for centuries and although it can have beneficial effects, like lowering your risk for cardiovascular disease and diabetes, it can be detrimental if used inappropriately. According to the Mayo Clinic, moderate alcohol consumption is 1 serving/day for adult women and 2 servings/day for adult men. What is a serving? We'll get to that, but first, let's go over the important stuff.

*Social drinking is defined as casual drinking in a social setting with no intention of getting drunk.*

### THE FINE PRINT:

Social drinking, even when done in moderation, still comes with risks. Habits can escalate and binge drinking in social situations can lead to the development of a chemical addiction. If you're a social drinker, learn to recognize the warning signs of alcoholism and seek help if you're drinking becomes an issue.

*Addiction is defined as patterned usage of alcohol that leads to impairments in functioning.*

### MAINTAINING OPTIMAL MENTAL HEALTH:

Alcohol consumption alters brain chemistry and can act as a depressant which can lead to a decline in mental health. Alternatively, struggling with a mental illness also increases the risk that an individual may turn to alcohol to try to manage or avoid their symptoms. Many people have a relationship with alcohol—they drink to relax, to build confidence, to celebrate, or to feel numb, to forget, to say goodbye. Self-medicating with alcohol is not exclusive to those with mental illness, but excessive drinking and mental illness are strongly correlated. Become familiar with drinking patterns and reach out for help and support when a potential drinking problem becomes evident.

## SERVING SIZES:

Not all alcoholic drinks are created equal. The pure alcohol content varies between wine, beer, spirits, etc. One standard serving of an alcoholic beverage contains .6 fluid ounces (14 grams) of pure alcohol. It's for this reason that different beverages have different serving sizes, and why the bartender doesn't give you a pint of pure vodka or a shot glass of beer. It's also why 'one serving per day for adult women' does not mean a super-sized, big-gulp cup that holds an entire bottle of merlot.

### QUIZ ANSWERS ON PAGE 4

*Think you know your way around a bar?*

Match up the standard serving size in fluid ounces to each type of drink:

	17% FORTIFIED WINE	12 OZ
	7% MALT LIQUOR	1.5 OZ
	24% SCHNAPPS / APERITIF	5 OZ
	5% BEER	3-4 OZ
	12% TABLE WINE	2-3 OZ
	40% DISTILLED SPIRITS	8-9 OZ

Sources: rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/whatcountsdrink/whatsastandarddrink.asp, pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/Practitioner/PocketGuide/pocket\_guide2.htm, mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/indepth/alcohol/art-20044551?pg=1, camh.ca/en/hospital/health\_information/a\_z\_mental\_health\_and\_addiction\_information/concurrent\_disorders/Pages/Concurrent-Disorders.aspx

## SIMPLE STEPS to a HAPPIER YOU

The study of positive psychology and the PERMA model (see "Positive Psychology – the Study of Happiness" on page 2) can teach us about how to bring wellbeing and happiness into your life. Although it might seem difficult at times there are many challenges that are simple and can be easily incorporated into your daily life to improve your happiness.

Source: inc.com/jeff-haden/10-scientific-proven-ways-to-be-incredibly-happy-wed.html

- 1 Exercise:** Exercise can help you relax, increase your brain power, improve body image, and has also been considered an effective strategy for overcoming depression.
- 2 Sleep more:** Sleep helps your body recover and repair which helps to increase focus and productivity. A sufficient amount of sleep can affect positivity, sensitivity to negative emotions, and mood.
- 3 Spend more time with family and friends:** Psychologist and Harvard Professor, Daniel Gilbert, states that we are happy when we have family and friends. All other things that we think make us happy are just ways to getting more family and friends.
- 4 Get Outside:** Fresh air can boost happiness and help you stay positive.
- 5 Help others:** Participation in any act of kindness improves our sense of well-being. Strive to dedicate 100 hours per year to helping others (e.g. donate blood, respite work, reading to seniors, serve one meal/week at a food bank). By helping others you can also make a big difference in your community!
- 6 Practice smiling:** Studies show that smiling can reduce pain, improve your mood, and help you think better. This effect escalates dramatically if you pair a smile with positive thoughts!
- 7 Meditate:** This can help to rewire your brain to improve focus, attention span, calmness, and long-term happiness.
- 8 Practice Gratitude:** This increases happiness and life satisfaction. Take a few moments each day be thankful for the good things in your life.

# 9 NOURISHING NUTRIENTS FOR OPTIMAL MENTAL HEALTH

These nutrients, found in food, have been associated with helping individuals attain optimal mental health. Most individuals can meet their nutritional requirements with a well-balanced diet. Certain populations may have other issues that limit their ability to uptake nutrients. It is important to discuss any issues with a health care professional before adding nutrient supplements to your diet.



## FOLATE

Supports serotonin regulation (the brain chemical that helps make you happy) and aids with the production of other mood boosting neurotransmitters (which transfer nerve impulses).

**Foods:** dark leafy greens, asparagus, broccoli, lentils



## IRON

Aids with supporting energy levels and muscle strength.

Low levels can lead to feelings of depression and/or fatigue.

**Foods:** meat, soybeans, dark leafy greens



## MAGNESIUM

Plays a large role in the development of serotonin.

**Foods:** almonds, cashews, edamame, spinach



## OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS

Contributes to our cognitive functioning like memory and learning skills. The body's doesn't produce Omega-3's therefore they must be consumed in our diet.

**Foods:** chia seeds, fish, spinach, walnuts



## CHROMIUM

Helps with the brain's mood regulators.

**Foods:** broccoli, green beans, fruits, whole grain products, beef and poultry



## VITAMIN B6

Assists with the production of neurotransmitters, regulation of brain functions, and immune health.

**Foods:** meat, fish, poultry, chickpeas, pistachios



## VITAMIN D

Regulates cell growth, immune health, and bone protection. Low levels of vitamin D have been linked to depression. Although there are some food sources that provide small amounts of vitamin D, sunshine is the best way to get it!

**Foods:** egg yolk, fish, fortified foods... and SUNSHINE



## VITAMIN B12

Aids with the creation of red blood cells and nerves. Low levels of vitamin B12 are associated with depression symptoms.

**Foods:** meat, fish, poultry, cheese



## ZINC

Found in almost every cell and helps the body with mood regulation.

**Foods:** pumpkin seeds, cashews, fish, shellfish, poultry, grains, and baked beans

Source: <http://greatist.com/happiness/nutrients-boost-mood>

## HEY BARTENDER CORRECT ANSWERS

Distilled Spirits: 1.5 oz., Schnapps/Aperitif: 2-3 oz., Fortified Wine: 3-4 oz., Table Wine: 5 oz., Malt Liquor: 8-9 oz., Beer 12 oz.

## Did you KNOW?

### Approximately 95% of serotonin in your body is made in the gut.

Poor gut health can decrease the production and efficiency of serotonin throughout the body, which can influence your mood and mental health.

## Chocolate CHIA SEED PUDDING

Serves 4



This simple, six ingredient, Chocolate Chia Seed Pudding is naturally sweetened and loaded with nutrients. It can be prepared in a blender for a thick and creamy finish, or left as-is with a chunkier, tapioca-like texture. Eat it for breakfast, a snack or dessert!

- 1 ½ cups almond milk, unsweetened
- ⅓ cup chia seeds
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2-5 tbsp maple syrup if not blending, or 5-9 pitted dates if blending
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon - optional
- ¼ tsp sea salt

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add all ingredients except sweetener to a mixing bowl and whisk vigorously to combine. If you are not using a blender, sweeten to taste with maple syrup. If blending, you can sweeten later with maple syrup or dates.
2. Cover and let mixture rest in the fridge for 3-5 hours, until it achieves a pudding-like consistency. For best results, leave overnight.
3. If blending, add to a blender and blend until completely smooth and creamy, scraping down sides as needed. Sweeten to taste and serve.
4. Serve chilled with desired toppings, such as fruit, granola or coconut whipped cream.

## NUTRITION INFORMATION

Serving size: ¼ of recipe

80 calories

2.8 g fat

0.6 g saturated fat

14 g carbohydrates

9 g sugar

187 mg sodium

3 g fiber

1.9 g protein

Source: The Minimalist Baker

We would love to hear from you!  
Send your suggestions / comments to:

Magna Wellness  
141 Staffern Drive, Concord, Ontario L4K 2R2  
e: [wellness@magna.com](mailto:wellness@magna.com)  
p: (905) 726-7490

**MAGNA** and **GOOD for you**  
are registered trademarks of Magna International Inc.

For more articles, employee stories, quizzes and recipes, please visit [www.magnawellness.ca](http://www.magnawellness.ca)