

Tips for Psychological Health

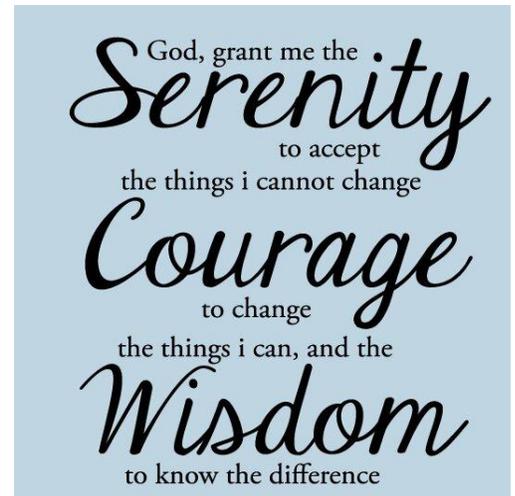
This is an excerpt from a brief presentation at the St. Luke Institute in Silver Spring, Maryland. Emily Cash is a staff member there. She referred to a work by Robert Wick entitled "Bounce," in which he describes the keys to psychological stability. We recognize these elements as keys to a healthy, happy life.



1. **Laughter**—(It is interesting that Wick puts this first). Francis Dobrezynski, a Marquette priest who served at Sacred Heart Major Seminary, said the devil hates laughter, because of his pride. He always thinks we're laughing at him. Bring on the Laurel and Hardy!

2. **Control**—Acknowledge the things we can control, and those we can't. By including the second group, we can lessen our stress.

It is important to know the difference between the two. Pray the Serenity Prayer.



3. **Gratitude**—St. Ignatius of Loyola's Examen at the end of the day has us start here, not with our failings.

4. **Be aware of Negativity**—We pay too much attention to it. Ms. Cash likens negativity to thunder, and praise to a whisper. When one person criticizes you, and twenty thank you, to which do you pay more attention?

5. **Connect (every day)**—The enemy wants to separate us from Christ. He will start by isolating us from friends and family, more easily done in these days. Yes, it takes extra effort to call someone. It's much easier to sit and wonder why someone doesn't call us. As the squid admiral says in *Star Wars*, when the resistance is about to attack the death star "It's a trap!" Avoid it.

6. **Attend to Physical Health**—

- Getting enough sleep? Unable to sleep, due to stress? Reach out to a counselor or friend and talk things out. Listen to meditative music or read your Bible before bed. Cut back on caffeine.
- Food and Drink in appropriate amounts. We have seen jokes about trips to the fridge on the internet, but....
- Exercise. Raise the heart rate every day. You will probably sleep better, too!
- Leisure. Recreational reading. Hobbies. This is a necessity, not a luxury.



7. **Pacing**—

- Prayer
- Time outside (even if you have to wear a mask). Touch the earth! Get out of the house once a day, and take a drive once a week!

