



Improving Mental Health

May 2025

Each May, organizations across the country recognize Mental Health Awareness Month and underscore the importance of emotional well-being. For at least the past five years, mental health has been recognized as a significant factor affecting driver productivity. You face long and stressful hours on the road, isolation, fatigue, poor eating habits and the pressure of job demands—all of which can impact your mental well-being.

According to a study by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), 28% of truck drivers reported suffering from loneliness, which can worsen mental health challenges like depression and anxiety.

How can you improve your own mental health?

While some of these issues will exist regardless, they don't have to harm your mental health. There are many actions truck drivers can take to feel better emotionally. Here are five to consider:

- **Stay in touch with loved ones throughout the day.** One way to not feel so alone when driving is to keep in touch with your spouse, parents, children or other family members and friends when you're on the road. Give them a call or send them a text when you stop for a break or lunch. This helps remind you that you're not truly alone in this world because you have a lot of people who care for you.
- **Connect with other truck drivers.** It can feel good to spend time with people who are experiencing the same issues or concerns as you. That's part of what makes support groups so powerful. Connect with other truck drivers who understand how you feel. Meet up for lunch if you can or set aside a few hours on a day off to share how you're doing. This helps build camaraderie while also making you feel better mentally.
- **Listen to inspirational podcasts.** Instead of listening to news radio talk about all that is wrong with the world, turn on an uplifting podcast. You may even begin to look forward to your drive time because it allows you to listen to someone who can inspire you to feel better or to work toward the best version of yourself. A few to consider are the [Gretchen Rubin's Happier Podcast](#) or [Mel Robbins Podcast](#).
- **Admit when you are struggling.** There is no shame in feeling depressed or anxious. In fact, these are two of the [most common mental health issues](#) experienced. Admitting when you are feeling a certain way is the first step. Talk to your spouse, a good friend or a member of your church about how you are feeling. Sometimes just letting it out is enough to make you feel better. It also gives the people in your life the opportunity to step up and support you, so you don't have to face these issues alone.
- **Know when to seek help.** The good news about mental health is that many issues are highly treatable. In some cases, this might involve talking to a therapist to learn coping skills or identify your triggers. It may also involve taking medication to help correct chemical imbalances that may be contributing to how you feel. If you've tried to improve your mental health but nothing seems to work, or you've been struggling with depression, anxiety, or another issue for some time without relief, talking to a professional can get you on the road to recovery.