Keeping in touch

mental health month

A FRESH START TOWARDS BETTER WELL-BEING

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As we transition out of the cold, gray months of winter and into the warmth and renewal of spring, many of us look forward to lake days, gardening, and spending more time outdoors. With this season of growth comes a reminder to turn our attention inward and care for our mental and emotional well-being.

May is **Mental Health Awareness Month**. Mental health affects all of us in some way, whether directly or indirectly. It's no secret that many people struggle with their mental health. One in five individuals will experience a mental health condition, and half of all lifetime mental health concerns begin by age 14. These statistics can feel alarming, but the good news is that support and resources are available. Taking care of your mental health and working toward becoming the best version of yourself is always worth it.

So, where do we begin?

Therapy is a great way to start working on your mental health. It offers a space to process emotions, build coping strategies, improve communication, and work through life's challenges. Most importantly, therapy is about you. Whether it's learning to manage anxiety, navigating a difficult life change, or simply wanting to feel more like yourself again, therapists can guide and support you. They can also connect you with additional resources like group therapy or medication management when needed. Just like seeing a doctor for our physical health, attending therapy is a proactive step in caring for our mental health.

Sleep and nutrition also play key roles in emotional well-being. On average, adults should aim for 7-9 hours of sleep each night. When we're sleep-deprived, it affects everything from mood and memory to our ability to regulate emotions. Similarly, a balanced, healthy diet that includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and proteins can boost energy and improve our mood. Everything in our body is connected; when we eat well, we feel well.

Mindfulness is another effective way to reduce stress and manage emotions. Practices such as deep breathing, meditation, or taking a moment to pause and reflect can be practiced at home, at work, or wherever your day takes you. These small moments of presence can make a big difference.

Above all, remember: taking care of yourself isn't selfish... it's essential. Life brings challenges, but we can build resilience and move forward with strength by recognizing when we're not feeling our best and taking steps to care for our mental health. Whether it's a walk in nature, a meaningful conversation with a friend, or simply taking a quiet moment for yourself, these actions all contribute to greater well-being.