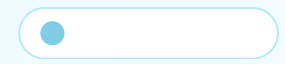




MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH TOOLKIT

Inside, you'll find practical insights, encouragement, and resources designed to help you and those around you prioritize mental well-being—because every conversation, connection, and small step forward matters.



FINDING CALM: HOW MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION STRENGTHEN YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Mindfulness and meditation are powerful tools that can nurture your mental and emotional well-being. Whether you're looking to reduce stress, manage anxiety, or simply bring more balance into your life, incorporating these practices into your daily routine can offer lasting benefits. Here are some ways to get started:

Tips for Starting Mindfulness and Meditation:

Begin with Small Steps

Start by dedicating just a few minutes each day to mindfulness or meditation. As you become more comfortable, you can gradually extend your practice.

Anchor Yourself in the Present

Mindfulness is all about paying attention to the present moment without judgment. This focus can help ease anxiety and stress by bringing your awareness to the here and now.

Explore Guided Meditations

New to meditation? Try using guided meditations available through free apps and websites. These resources can help you stay focused and build confidence as you practice.

Create a Peaceful Space

Find a quiet, comfortable place where you can relax without interruption. You might use pillows, a meditation cushion, or simply sit comfortably on a chair or floor.

Make It a Habit

Consistency is important. Even a few minutes each day can make a difference. Try to build mindfulness or meditation into your daily routine.

Show Yourself Compassion

Mindfulness isn't about achieving perfection. It's normal for your mind to wander. When it happens, gently bring your attention back to your breath or your chosen point of focus. Be patient and kind to yourself as you learn.

By making mindfulness and meditation part of your daily life, you can experience increased calm, reduced anxiety, and a greater sense of overall well-being.

Taking care of your mental health is an essential part of living a healthy life. For extra support, reach out to Bree Health at **1-800-327-2255**. They offer confidential services and resources—including guided meditation videos—to help you prioritize your whole health and well-being.

BREAKING THE STIGMA: HOW TO TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

We know that one of the bravest steps you can take in caring for your mental health is talking about it openly with the people you love. However, starting that conversation can feel overwhelming. Mental health still carries stigma in many communities, making it challenging to share personal struggles without fear of judgment or misunderstanding. Here are some ways you can begin to break the stigma and foster understanding with your family and friends.

Start with Honesty and Simplicity

You don't have to have all the answers or deliver a perfect speech. Begin by sharing a simple truth, like "I've been feeling overwhelmed lately" or "I've been working on my mental health." Speaking plainly invites others to listen without feeling intimidated or confused.

Choose the Right Time and Place

Pick a moment when everyone is calm and distractions are minimal. A private, relaxed setting can make the conversation feel safer for both you and your loved ones.

Use "I" Statements

Framing your feelings with "I" statements — such as "I have been dealing with anxiety" — keeps the conversation focused on your personal experience, rather than placing blame or making assumptions about how others might feel.

Prepare for Different Reactions

Understand that not everyone will know how to respond right away. Some may react with support, while others may need time to process what you've shared. Be patient and remember that their first response isn't necessarily their final one.

Provide Resources

Sometimes loved ones want to help but don't know how. Offering resources, like reputable websites, books, or information about mental health services (including Bree Health), can guide them toward understanding and supporting you more effectively.

Be Kind to Yourself

Talking about mental health takes courage. Celebrate your bravery, no matter how the conversation goes. Every honest dialogue chips away at stigma and builds a stronger foundation for compassion and connection.

Remember, Bree Health is here to support you. If you need help starting the conversation or would like to speak with someone confidentially, reach out to us anytime. You are not alone, and every step you take toward openness is a step toward healing.

FINDING BALANCE: PROTECTING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

In today's digital world, social media has become an integral part of our daily lives. It helps us stay connected, informed, and entertained. However, while social media offers many benefits, it can also take a toll on our mental health if not used mindfully. Striking a balance between staying connected and staying well is essential. Here are a few tips to help you navigate social media in a healthier way.

Be Mindful of Your Time Online

It's easy to lose track of time scrolling through endless feeds. Setting boundaries for your screen time can help you stay in control. Try scheduling "social media breaks" throughout your day or using apps that track and limit your usage.

Curate Your Feed

What you consume online matters. Follow accounts that uplift, inspire, and educate you. If you find certain pages or people consistently make you feel anxious, inadequate, or upset, it's okay to mute, unfollow, or block them. Your digital space should be a positive one.

Practice Digital Detoxes

Taking a break from social media can reset your mind and emotions. Whether it's a few hours, a weekend, or even longer, a digital detox allows you to reconnect with the world around you and focus on activities that nurture your well-being.

Be Aware of Comparisons

Social media often showcases highlight reels rather than real life. Remind yourself that everyone has struggles, even if you don't see them online. Comparing your behind-the-scenes to someone else's staged moments can negatively impact self-esteem.

Engage with Purpose

Before opening an app, ask yourself: "Why am I logging on?" Whether it's to catch up with friends, learn something new, or relax, having an intention can prevent mindless scrolling and keep your experience positive.

Take Care of Your Mental Space

If social media ever feels overwhelming, it's okay to take a step back. Reach out to someone you trust—or connect with Bree for confidential support anytime.

Social media can be a great way to stay connected, but it should never weigh on your well-being. Use it with intention and keep your mental health front and center.

TAKING THE FIRST STEP: UNDERSTANDING AND SEEKING HELP FOR DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

Depression can show up as persistent sadness, loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed, changes in appetite or sleep, and feelings of worthlessness or hopelessness. Anxiety often feels like constant worry, racing thoughts, irritability, or a sense of impending doom even when there's no clear reason why. These feelings can creep in quietly or hit suddenly, but they are not your fault, and they are not a permanent part of who you are.

Depression and anxiety can feel overwhelming and disruptive but reaching out for support is a powerful first move toward healing. Here are some important steps to help you recognize the symptoms and get the help you deserve:

Learn the signs

Familiarize yourself with the common indicators of depression and anxiety, such as ongoing sadness or worry, trouble sleeping, changes in appetite or weight, loss of interest in favorite activities, and physical symptoms like headaches or muscle aches.

Know when to reach out

If your symptoms are affecting your daily life or persist beyond two weeks, it's time to seek professional guidance. Immediate support is crucial if you experience thoughts of self-harm or suicide.

Open up to someone

Share your feelings with a trusted friend, family member, or mental health professional. Talking about your experiences can ease feelings of isolation and be an essential step toward recovery.

Focus on self-care

Prioritize activities that support your well-being, including regular exercise, balanced nutrition, sufficient sleep, and hobbies that bring you happiness.

Explore therapy options

Speaking with a therapist can provide effective strategies for managing depression and anxiety. Therapy offers a safe space to explore your feelings, develop coping tools, and better understand your triggers.

Discuss medication if needed

Medication may be recommended to help manage symptoms alongside therapy. Consult with your doctor or mental health provider to explore the best treatment plan for you.

Remember, reaching out for support shows strength and courage. Bree Health is here to offer confidential, professional help as you work toward improving your mental health.

HOW BUILDING CONNECTIONS BOOSTS MENTAL WELLNESS

As human beings, we thrive on connection. Relationships and community are not just a source of happiness – they are essential to maintaining good mental health. Studies show that loneliness and isolation can significantly increase the risk of conditions like depression and anxiety. On the other hand, strong social ties can foster resilience, boost our sense of belonging, and help us better navigate life’s challenges.

Steps to Strengthen Your Support Network:

Identify Your Trusted Circle

Your support system might include family, friends, colleagues, or members of a support group. Focus on connecting with individuals who are trustworthy, supportive, and genuinely care about your well-being.

Express Your Needs

Open communication is key. Share your feelings and let your support network know how they can help. Setting clear boundaries ensures healthier, more meaningful relationships.

Create New Connections

Explore new activities, hobbies, or community groups to meet people who share your interests. Being open to new experiences can lead to fulfilling, lasting friendships.

Welcome Help

It’s okay to lean on others. Accepting support can deepen relationships and lighten emotional burdens.

Practice Active Listening

Truly listening to others – with full attention and without distraction – builds trust and strengthens your connections.

The Benefits of Building a Support System:

- Greater feelings of belonging and connection
- Enhanced coping skills and emotional resilience
- Boosted self-esteem and confidence
- Lessened feelings of loneliness and isolation
- Overall improvement in mental health

If you’re feeling lonely or having a hard time building connections, reaching out can make a real difference. Bree offers confidential support and personalized resources to help you feel more connected and supported—whenever you need it. Log in anytime to explore tools, guidance, and someone to talk to.

EMBRACING SUPPORT THROUGH COUNSELING AND LIFE COACHING

Your mental health matters. Just like caring for your body, taking care of your emotional well-being is a vital part of living fully—but reaching out for help isn't always easy. Stigma, fear, or uncertainty can hold you back from the support you deserve. Whether you're facing life's challenges or simply seeking new ways to grow, Counseling and Certified Life Coaching can offer the guidance and tools you need to move forward.

Why Counseling and Life Coaching?

Both counseling and Certified Life Coaching are powerful resources designed to support your mental and emotional health in different ways:

- **Counseling** creates space to work through emotional challenges like stress, anxiety, grief, or relationship struggles with a licensed professional.
- **Certified Life Coaching** helps you set meaningful goals, build new habits, and create a path toward personal growth with a trained coach who focuses on future possibilities.

Both options offer personalized support that meets you where you are—whether you're seeking healing, clarity, or a fresh start.

Key Benefits:

- **Build Stronger Coping Skills:** Learn effective strategies to manage stress, navigate challenges, and feel more resilient.
- **Strengthen Relationships:** Improve communication and foster healthier, more supportive connections in your personal and professional life.
- **Relieve Emotional Strain:** Counseling can help ease feelings of anxiety, depression, or overwhelm, offering tools and support to lighten the load.
- **Gain Clarity and Confidence:** Coaching provides a forward-focused space to set goals, identify strengths, and take actionable steps toward the life you want.
- **Feel Heard and Supported:** Both counseling and coaching offer a safe, judgment-free space where your thoughts, feelings, and dreams are respected and supported.

Breaking the Stigma

Even today, reaching out for mental health or coaching support can feel daunting. Here's how we can all help normalize these conversations:

- **Learn More:** Educate yourself about mental health and the benefits of counseling and coaching.
- **Share Your Voice:** Talking openly about your own experiences—when you feel ready—can encourage others to do the same.
- **Support Others:** Remind those around you that seeking help is a sign of strength and self-respect, not weakness.

If you're ready to take the next step in caring for your mental health or pursuing personal growth, Bree offers confidential Counseling and Certified Life Coaching designed around your needs. Log in anytime to explore the support available to you.

HELPLINES & CRISIS CENTERS:

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

- Call or text 988 for free, confidential support for anyone in distress.
- (www.988lifeline.org) Suicide prevention resources, chat support, and self-help guides.

Crisis Text Line

- Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) HelpLine

- Call 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) for mental health resources and support.

Veterans Crisis Line

- Call 988, then press 1, or text 838255 for support tailored to veterans.

Trevor Project

- Call 1-866-488-7386 or text START to 678678 for LGBTQ+ youth crisis support.
- (www.thetrevorproject.org) LGBTQ+ crisis support, online chat, and educational materials.

SAMHSA's National Helpline

- Call 1-800-662-HELP (4357) for free, confidential help with substance use and mental health services.

National Domestic Violence Hotline

- Call 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or text START to 88788 for support and safety planning.

Disaster Distress Helpline

- Call or text 1-800-985-5990 for crisis counseling related to natural or human-caused disasters.

Trans Lifeline

- Call 1-877-565-8860 for peer support services run by and for transgender people.

YouthLine


- Call 1-877-968-8491 or text teen2teen to 839863 to connect with trained youth crisis volunteers.



YOUR WELL-BEING COMES FIRST

As we recognize Mental Health Awareness Month, it's a good reminder that taking care of your mental health is just as important as your physical health. Whether you're navigating stress, seeking balance, or simply looking for new ways to support your well-being, know that you're not alone in this journey.

Bree is here to offer tools, guidance, and resources that fit your needs—anytime you need them. No challenge is too small to reach out for support.

 (800) 327-2255

 login.breehealth.com

 Mobile App: Bree Health