

Jan
2023

mental health awareness



A New Year, A New Beginning

While many of us may have given up on making new year's resolutions, it's often beneficial to set goals and put into place behaviours that will steadily elevate our wellbeing. This month we're raising awareness of Belly Laugh Day and Blue Monday to speak about positive psychology, the effects that language can have, and how we can combat the winter blues.

We remain fully equipped to deal with all the challenges of the new year. If you would like to talk to somebody, please give us a call. We're here 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Julie Murrell Clinical Director – Wellbeing Solutions



Beating the Winter Blues

The medical definition of winter blues is seasonal affective disorder (SAD). Unlike depression, SAD is characterised by seasonal patterns usually appearing in the winter months, which can contribute to feelings of sadness, physical or mental fatigue, increased sleepiness and difficulty concentrating.

We can be proactive in tackling SAD by adopting remedies such as sun lamp therapy, taking vitamin D and probiotic supplements, getting plenty of sunlight and exercise, and managing our circadian rhythms through good sleeping habits. If needs be, mental health professionals also suggest counselling for support through the winter months.

What's Going on This Month?



1st - 31st January | Dry January

Dry January challenges you to go alcohol-free for 31 days and aims to raise awareness of the effects of alcohol.



16th January | Blue Monday

The third Monday of January has this gloomy title because of the colder, darker days. Remember your mindfulness and positive psychology skills to banish the blues!



24th January | Global Belly Laugh Day

Whether it's reading from a joke of the day calendar or seeing something funny on the internet, getting a good laugh each day is an excellent practice.

New Year Resolutions

Here are eight resolutions to improve your mental health in 2023:

- ✓ Be kind to yourself
- ✓ Work on improving your sleep
- ✓ Exercise regularly
- ✓ Eat healthier
- ✓ Focus on the present
- ✓ Prioritise your happiness
- ✓ Limit screen time
- ✓ Get comfortable asking for help



The Positive Psychology Movement

One of the benefits of practicing a positive psychological outlook, as well as feeling happy and experiencing pleasing emotions, is that it can actually increase our chances of success. Let's delve into some examples of positive psychology in practice and raise awareness of this influential movement.

Positive psychology is based on the idea that building on our strengths is often a more effective path to success than trying to force excellence in areas we are simply not suited for. In practice, this technique involves identifying one's strengths and working to provide yourself with more opportunities to use them.

An effective way of identifying and reflecting on the good in our lives is to keep a gratitude journal. Interventions often involve prompting people to write down three things they are grateful for each day, with the only caveat being that they need to be different each day. Within a week, many people experience a boost in wellbeing along with an increase in gratitude.

And lastly – the belly laugh. We're used to hearing about endorphin in the context of a runner's high, which they only get if they run to the point of pain. A safe (and painless) way to trigger endorphin lies in the all-powerful belly laugh! It jiggles your innards and boosts your wellbeing in a way few things can.

Managing Money and Mental Health

- ✓ Sort your monthly expenses into high-priority versus middle and low-priority items and debts.
- ✓ Use a budget planner to help you plan and set your spending for the year ahead.
- ✓ A budget check of your incomings and outgoings will help guide your spending.
- ✓ If you are in any debt, always prioritise higher priority repayments ahead of lower priority costs.
- ✓ Ask for help if you're worried - you are not alone, and there is help available.

Counselling & Advice Helpline

Your counselling & advice helpline covers a variety of personal and workplace issues such as:

- ✓ Anxiety or depression
- ✓ Everyday financial or legal struggles
- ✓ Workplace stress

This service is paid for by your employer and is provided by an independent company, Wellbeing Solutions. There is no cost to you and all calls are confidential.



24/7 freephone:
0800 328 1437
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Mental health



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Older people



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Managers