

Mental Health Awareness Month

The phrase “You are not alone” is repeated often, especially during Mental Health Awareness Month. Even though it has become almost cliché, the phrase is so important and so true. A common symptom of mental health conditions and substance use disorder is that people can feel isolated and alone, which is why it’s important to be reminded that you are not alone. There are caring people, effective resources, and meaningful self-care practices available.

Gratitude

According to mindful.org, “gratitude encompasses the willingness to expand our attention so that we perceive more of the goodness we are always receiving.” Expressing gratitude, whether in writing or out loud, can improve our mood and our overall outlook on life. Try keeping a gratitude journal for a week and be attentive to the changes in your mood. End each day by writing down three things you are grateful for, no matter how small they may seem.

Affirmations

Another self-care tool is the use of affirmations. Affirmations can help build self-confidence as they work to counter the brain’s negativity bias. According to MentalHelp.net, “Proven benefits of self-affirmation include a stronger sense of personal worth, less negative self-talk, and reduced anxiety and defensiveness in challenging situations.”

Here are some affirmations to start with:

- The forces of positivity and hope are healing me.
- I am a powerful expression of hope and honesty.
- Life’s goodness comes to me in surprising and delightful ways.
- Inner peace is possible in this moment as I breathe deeply. I inhale possibility and exhale doubt.
- By reaching out, I am making genuine, healing connections with others.
- My self-worth is inherent and unchanging.

“My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together.” -Desmond Tutu

