Mental Wellness in Another Pandemic Winter

Sometimes our mental health can suffer during the winter months. When you add in another winter of coping with COVID-19, it can make it even harder to get through the lack of sunshine and cold NY weather. Here are a few tips that might help boost your mental wellness this winter season.

1. **Plan ahead to keep yourself occupied.** Imagine yourself moving through the next few months. What do you want to be doing? Get some supplies or set up your space to get yourself started.

2. **Move your body every day.** Staying active can boost your mental wellness. Set a goal that works for you; like 10 minutes of dancing or getting a certain number of steps in each day.

3. **Improve your mood with fresh air and sunshine.** Bundle up and get outside every day. Consider getting snowshoes, a sled, or whatever else might make it fun to get outdoors.
   - You can always take a brisk walk to keep yourself warm.

4. **Reach out to someone every day.** Staying connected is so important for your mental health. Ideas to Connect:
   - Collaborative playlists
   - Cook together on Zoom
   - Watch parties
   - If you don’t have anyone in your life to reach out to, call a local nursing home and ask if you can send a letter

5. **Do something for someone else.** When you are feeling down, acts of service can be uplifting. Consider volunteering for a cause, knitting for a homeless shelter, or making a meal for a neighbor who is overwhelmed.

6. **Try something new.** When you’ve been in the same routine for a long stretch of time, your brain benefits from doing something out of the ordinary. Need some fun, new ideas?
   - Break out the tent and camp in the living room.
   - Celebrate an un-birthday!
   - Dress up for a fancy night in.
   - Pick a new album and listen to the whole thing in an afternoon.

7. **Don’t forget your basic self-care.** Make sure you get enough sleep. Eat nutritious food and drink enough water. These go a long way in helping you stay emotionally well.

8. **Get enough light during the day.** If you can’t get outside, hang out in sunny rooms. If your living or working space is dark, consider getting a light therapy lamp.

9. **Limit your news intake.** Try not to stay plugged into the latest COVID news all day long. If you want to stay informed, check trusted sources once a day and then detach.

10. **Reach out for help.** It’s okay to feel overwhelmed and burnt out right now. Admitting things feel tough and talking about it can help. Visit NYProjectHope.org.

NY Project Hope Emotional Support Helpline
8 am - 10 pm, 7 days a week
1-844-863-9314