



Nuggets of Wellness

January: Resolving to support our mental health

"Mental health...is not a destination, but a process. It's about how you drive, not where you're going."

— Noam Shpancer, PhD.

The January routine has become pretty predictable: some people make resolutions and some people recommend NOT making resolutions.

How about another option? In honor of January being Mental Wellness month, how about we resolve to WOOP up our mental health all year long? This benefits you and makes you a good example for the young people in your world.

The WOOP goal-setting plan:

W - WISH: What do you Wish would happen? This is a good opportunity to define mental wellness for yourself. It's about feeling balanced, not about being happy all the time.

O-Outcome: This leads to O, which stands for Outcome. Imagine how mental wellness will look and feel.

O-Obstacle: This is what makes WOOP a good reflection of real life: What Obstacles might get in the way of your progress as you try to reach your hoped for Outcome.? What people, places, things or events may trigger anxiety or depression or other painful feelings?

P-Plan: So now you're ready to think about what you're going to do. What helps you stay mentally balanced on a daily basis?

Most people are familiar with mindfulness, breathing techniques, the importance of good sleep hygiene and nutrition. Here are a couple of other ideas that can help when you are in the middle of feeling stuck. These are great to share with young people.

Butterfly Hug: Give yourself a hug, then move your hands like a butterfly, tapping your arms or shoulders in an alternating rhythm at whatever speed feels most comfortable.

TIPP is another technique to try when you

Crucial Conversations Challenge:

We challenge you to create a WOOP goal for the next three weeks and invite a young person in your life to create one for themselves.

need to get back in balance: **Temperature:** run cold water over your hands or face or hold ice. **Intense Exercise:** aerobic exercise for 20 minutes is recommended, but even running in place can help release built up emotions.

Paced Breathing: rhythmic breathing communicates to your body that you are safe. **Paired Muscle Relaxation:** tense and relax muscles in your body from one end to the other.

Remember, a new start can begin any day, there's nothing magic about January. If your WOOP starts strong and you lose your momentum, you can give yourself permission to start again.

Happy WOOP Year, 2023!



CONTACT THE COUNSELING TEAM IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

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