



A NEWSLETTER FROM THE THE OFFICE FOR COMMUNITY WELLNESS

Wellness Matters



Join us and be part of the change to support community, friends, neighbors and thier furry friends! page 5 for details

DON'T MISS OUR 6TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY HOOPLA!



Visit: newpaltzhoopla.org
see page 4 for details

As the year winds down, many of us tend to reflect on the gifts and challenges of the passing year. So often we regret or long for the past, or fear or anticipate for the future... Maybe we might consider mitigating these usual thought processes and substitute them with practicing mindfulness more...

Mindfulness: a psychological praitce involving paying attention only to the present moment. **see page 2 for more**

KEY ASPECTS OF MINDFULNESS

- 1. Non-Judgment:** Observing thoughts and feelings without labeling or judging them.
- 2. Acceptance:** Accepting experiences as they are, without trying to change or avoid them.
- 3. Present Moment Focus:** Paying attention to what is happening in the here and now, rather than dwelling on the past or anticipating the future.
- 4. Attention to Bodily Sensations:** Noticing physical sensations throughout the body.
- 5. Curiosity:** Approaching experiences with an open and inquisitive mind.



Seasonal Affctive Disorder (SAD)

it's a real type of depression that occurs during fall and winter months

see page 3 for info on signs & symptoms, prevention, and treatment



Cultivating Mindfulness



~ Mindfulness meditation is an effective practice for improving your mental and emotional health ~

SOME STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER:

- Watch but don't engage with distracting thoughts. The goal of mindfulness and mindfulness meditation isn't to eliminate all distracting thoughts. That's virtually impossible. Instead, you're developing the skill of "seeing" your thoughts without latching on to them. That can seem like an odd concept at first, but in time, it can become second nature. So, you're washing your hands and focusing on the sensations when the thought of a difficult task you have to accomplish later pops into your mind. Your response is, "Oh, there's a thought. Now, back to my hands."
- Focus on physical sensations first. The handwashing example above is a mindful activity that's easy to do. Later, you may want to practice "sitting meditation," where you focus only on your breathing. But to start, just try to be more present periodically throughout your day.
- Set modest goals. Mindfulness is easy to practice but not so easy to master. When you're first trying to be more mindful, it may be difficult to be mindful for more than a few seconds at a time. Your mind will naturally wander. That's OK. Little by little, a few seconds will become several seconds and then a minute and then multiple minutes. Even then, thoughts will intrude on your mindfulness, but you'll simply acknowledge them and let them dissipate.
- Experiment with different types of mindfulness. There are several ways to practice mindfulness. For example, some people perform a "body scan" as a way to be more mindful. Focus attention on a particular part of the body and the sensations there, then move on to another part – big toe, other toes, sole of the foot, ankle, etc. Practicing outdoors and engaging your senses to experience sounds, smells, etc. around you can also be refreshing. Mindful walking is another option. Walk a path that's 20 feet or so in length, turn when you reach the end, return to your starting point, and repeat. Focus on all the sensations of walking – the pressure increasing and then decreasing on the different parts of your foot, gravity pulling downward on your arms as they move, and so forth.
- Practice acceptance. It's normal to judge our experiences. The water isn't warm enough, your shoes are a little too tight as we walk, etc. Unfortunately, judging often leads us down the path to other distracting thoughts. "I should buy a new pair of shoes. But can I afford a new pair? Maybe after I get my next paycheck." As much as possible, try to accept experiences as they are. You should also work on accepting yourself and your meditation efforts. You're working on being more mindful, and that's what matters.

SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER



hope

~ Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all the darkness ~

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that follows the seasons, typically starting in late fall and early winter and ending in spring and summer.

Symptoms

- Feeling sad, hopeless, or worthless
- Loss of interest in activities once enjoyed
- Low energy and fatigue
- Difficulty sleeping or oversleeping
- Changes in appetite, such as carbohydrate cravings and weight gain
- Social withdrawal
- Trouble concentrating

Treatment and management

- Light therapy: This involves using a special light box to expose yourself to bright light, mimicking natural sunlight.
- Psychotherapy: Talking therapies, such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), can provide coping mechanisms to manage the seasonal changes.
- Medication: Antidepressants may be prescribed, but it is crucial to inform your doctor if you have a history of bipolar disorder, as these treatments could trigger a manic episode.

Lifestyle changes

- Increase sunlight exposure: Spend more time outdoors during daylight hours and arrange your home or office to maximize natural light.
- Exercise regularly: Regular physical activity can help improve mood.
- Maintain a healthy diet and sleep schedule: Getting enough sleep and eating a balanced diet can support overall well-being.

When to seek professional help

If you think you might have SAD and are struggling to cope, consider seeing a doctor for an assessment. They can help diagnose the condition and recommend a suitable treatment plan.

Get Involved Today
HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW YOU CAN
MAKE A DIFFERENCE?
Click [HERE](#) to learn about



LET'S CHAT!
(845) 275-5413

If you or someone you know is struggling please reach out for help
Hope is just a phone call away

Call 988 for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Mobile Mental Health Team: 1-844-277-4820

hope

Family of Woodstock Helpline: 845-679-2485

6th Annual New Paltz Hoopla

December 6th & December 13th



Welcome, everyone!

As we continue to grow and evolve, so too does our annual celebration!

This year's 6th Annual New Paltz Hoopla celebration is expanding to a 2-Day event with both days offering different opportunities to come together as a community, share some sweetness and smiles, and provide important information about local resources.

6th Annual New Paltz Hoopla

TWO DAYS OF FREE FAMILY FUN IN NEW PALTZ!

December 6th: Holiday Hoopla Parade and Merriment & More

Holiday Hoopla Parade



New Paltz Middle School
1pm - 2pm

Rain/Snow Date: December 7th

**Prizes for Most Creative, Most Festive,
and Children's Favorite Float**

Merriment & More



Elting Memorial Library
2pm - 4pm

**Gourmet Hot Chocolate Bar & Special
Storytime with Ellen Kalish (and Friends)
Author, Wildlife Rehabilitator & Educator**

December 13th: Winter Carnival



*Winter Carnival

Saturday, December 13th
Historic Huguenot Street
12pm - 3pm

Rain/Snow Date: December 14th

***Children's Arts & Crafts, DJ Jay Smooth,
Face Painting, Food Trucks, Holiday Dog
Costume Contest, Little Brays of Sunshine,
New Paltz High School Caroling Choir,
Outdoor Carnival Games, and More!**

Visit NewPaltzHoopla.org for more info!





Community Food Drive: December 1st - December 15th

Join us and support the “Be the Change New Paltz” food drive for our neighbors and their canine and feline companions.

Together, we can support Holiday Hoopla’s mission to help bring joy and light to those who may be experiencing hardship at this time of year.

A special drop box has been built and will be placed near the Book Drop in Elting Memorial Library’s parking lot. Community members can place their donations during regular business hours. The box will be locked when the library is closed.

Please look below for the list of new, unused items that are most needed at this time. All donations will be delivered to Family of New Paltz and support members of our community.

Types of helpful items include:

Tea, Coffee & Hot Chocolate

Macaroni & Cheese and Ramen

Personal Care Items

Cereal (Oatmeal & Cream of Wheat)

Peanut Butter & Jelly

Feminine Hygiene Products

Pancake & Waffle Mix

Jellies and Jams

Dry Dog Food

Rice & Pasta

Canned Meats (Tuna, Chicken, etc.)

Dry Cat Food

Gluten-Free Pasta

Snack Foods

Canned Cat & Dog Food

Soups

Condiments & Spices

Dog & Cat Treats



Thank you for supporting this community effort!

