

THE ISSUES

FROM THE DESK OF MU EXTENSION
HOME & FAMILY FIELD FACULTY



MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Mental Health First Aid teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among adults. On average 130 people die by suicide every day and nearly 1 in 5 in the U.S. lives with a mental illness. This class covers common signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use challenges. It also covers how to interact with a person in crisis and how to connect them to help.

Learn how to assess for risk of suicide or harm, listen nonjudgmentally, give reassurance and information, encourage appropriate professional help, and encourage self-help and other support strategies.

There are three ways to take the class, In-person, blended with a portion online, or completely virtual.

If interested in signing up for a class or receiving more information, contact Katie Pemberton at pembertonk@missouri.edu or 660-446-3724

WHAT'S NEW?

Mental Health First Aid

Cultivating Hope

State of Mind

New Years Resolution

CULTIVATING HOPE

BY AMBER ALLEN

Hope is an important protective factor when we are faced with common daily stressors but also hope is a science with measurable elements. Nearly 2,000 published studies related to hope have been done in the past decade. The question however, is how can we take this research and cultivate hope in our day to day lives. Hope is on a continuum and it takes steps to nurture and grow hope in our lives. The hope theory says, "Hope is the belief that your future can be brighter and better than your past and that you actually have a role to play in making it better." Research findings are consistent within studies that hope is about goals, willpower, and pathways. Hope affects all aspect of our lives including our overall well-being, personal, professional, and relational goals.



Here are some ways to nurture and grow hope in your life:

- **Goal Setting:** To nurture hope the desirable goal must be known in specific detail and exist within the realm of possible attainment.
- **Build agency:** Motivation toward your goal.
- **Pathway Focus:** Viable pathways to goal attainment can be developed with specific attention to measurable benchmarks.
- **Future Memories:** Create future memories of what your life will look like once this goal is achieve.
- **Hope gives Hope:** If you are nurturing hope both willpower and pathways should be elevated reflecting the idea of Hope. You will see the possibility for other goals. Small goal will start inspiring bigger goals.

Snyder's hope theory assumes that hope leads to higher levels of subjective well-being when we experience success in pursuing our goals. People who are more hopeful are more creative and show more perseverance in pursuing their goals, which in turn could result in higher levels of happiness by gaining more successful experiences.

STATE OF MIND

BY AMY BARTELS, M. ED.

According to the Collins English dictionary, “state of mind” is your mood or mental state at a particular time. The Cambridge English dictionary defines state of mind as a person's mood and the effect that mood has on the person's thinking and behavior. The Urban dictionary says that a state of mind is to have an objective or “feeling” in mind which is unchangeable for the moment. No matter which definition appeals to you, one thing is certain. Our collective state of mind has taken a direct hit over the past few years. For many of us, the events of the past year and a half have impacted our lives in ways that we may never have imagined. Whether we are dealing with loss, isolation, fear, trauma, grief, illness, or a combination of factors, our state of mind can deeply impact the way we move through our lives.

According to author Srinivas Rao, your state of mind is one of your most precious assets. In his conversations with business partners working in sales industry, performance is directly impacted by state of mind. If you are feeling down and out, chances are you will lack the motivation needed to successfully drive your business. Therefore, maintaining an optimal state of mind is key. Finding ways to channel positive energy through exercise, meditation, and other healthy habits can benefit you over the long run. Limiting access to distractions, whether that is social media or the 24-hour news cycle can reduce anxiety and tension that contributes to poor state of mind. Remember that the environment you design is conducive to the person you want to become. For example, getting in to a clean car or making your bed every morning can positively impact your state of mind. The people you surround yourself with, think positive and uplifting, can rub off on you, thus creating a sustained improved state of mind. Your environments are either adding energy or draining energy. And together, that created environment will increase or decrease your focus and ultimately affect your state of mind.

When thinking about state of mind, another word that has grown in use and recognition over the past several decades is well-being. Well-being is subjective, meaning it relies on an individual's self-perceived health and overall feelings, despite your circumstances. Similar to state of mind, well-being is your personal view of yourself and your current situation. Feelings of wellbeing are fundamental to the overall health of an individual, enabling them to successfully overcome difficulties and achieve what they want out of life. Past experiences, attitudes and outlook can all impact wellbeing as can physical or emotional trauma following specific incidents. Using humor in difficult times can be a helpful way of coping with difficulties, easing our worries, and getting on with life. In addition, the use of affirming language or affirmations can increase feelings of well-being. According to Catherine Moore, psychologist and researcher, positive phrases or statements are used to challenge negative or unhelpful thoughts. Affirmations may seem awkward at first, but with practice, you can boost self-esteem and change your state of mind.

NEW YEARS RESOLUTION

BY JESSICA TRUSSELL

The end of 2021 may have perhaps passed a little differently this year than in previous years. The family gatherings may have been socially distanced, or even via Zoom, and the holiday travel may have been a little bit more relaxed this year. However, before we realize it, it's now 2022 and time to decide what changes we want to make in our lives and time to set a New Year's Resolution. For many people, these resolutions with focus on losing weight, eating more healthfully, exercising or smoking cessation. Several years ago, Jon Gordon, a motivational speaker put forward this idea of the "one word" concept. This concept means that instead of focusing on multiple things, that you focus your time and energy on one thing. For instance someone might pick joy, present, accountability, create, or any other word that you would like to make your focus of 2022. Before you can decide how you will accomplish your new resolution or even what word you want to focus on, you first must decide what change you want to make.

Here are some things to keep in mind when you are setting your New Year's Resolution:

- Only agree to make changes that you personally want to make. If your resolution is something that is important to you, then you are more likely to stick with your life changes.
- Start by making small goals and reward yourself. If your goal is to lose weight then do not set a goal of 50 pounds in one month. Make a goal to lose 1-2 pounds a week as this is a healthier rate of weight loss. Therefore, your goal could be to lose 5 pounds a month (this would be 60 pounds a year!). Once you've reached this goal, celebrate in some small way: go to a movie, read a book, cook a special dinner. But remember to celebrate your successes and know that one or two mistakes should not keep you from reaching your ultimate goal.
- Find a resolution friend to share in your plans. This friend can act as a motivator, confidant, and cheerleader.
- Keep a resolution journal. This will allow you to keep track of your progress and give you a written affirmation of your success. This also gives you a guide to see if there are patterns in your behavior that you might not realize. For instance, do you smoke more when you are angry or board? If so, the journal might help you realize this and find alternatives.
- And finally, be positive. It is very easy to focus on the negative and not emphasize the positive.

Remember to talk to your physician if you are increasing your physical activity, especially if you have any medical conditions.

MU EXTENSION: FAMILY AND HOME

For more research-based programs and tips on housing, parenting, relationships, divorce, senior living, and personal finance visit <https://extension2.missouri.edu/find-your-interest/youth-and-family/family-and-home-education>

Editor: Katie Pemberton pembertonk@missouri.edu
Contributing Authors: MU Extension Home & Family campus and field faculty



To learn more about programs in your area, contact your local Extension office.

Find your local extension office:
<https://extension2.missouri.edu/locations>



MUEXTFAMILYHOME