Talking Tazewell

The Wellness Playbook

Throughout February, we're surrounded by shades of red and pink, images of Cupid, Valentine's Day cards, gifts, and reminders to celebrate love. But we also know that this season doesn't feel joyful for everyone. For many people, it can bring up complicated emotions — loneliness, worry about relationships, or memories that don't match the picture–perfect scenes around us. That's why it's so important to talk openly about what healthy relationships really look like and how they can support our well-being.

In this edition, we will discuss the protective impact that healthy relationships both with ourselves and others can have on our mental health. As you can probably guess, in our next edition, we'll look at the contrast: how unhealthy relationships can affect your mental health and the importance of letting go of relationships that hurt you.

Together, we can continue to create communities where safety, healing, and hope are possible for everyone.

DID YOU KNOW...

In 2022, less than 80% of people reported they have social support, or someone to talk to about their mental and physical health[1].

A longitudinal study that followed participants over the course of 20 years found that a person's level of happiness was related to the happiness of their social networks[2].

Let's talk about it!

[1] Healthy People 2030 – Increase the proportion of adults who talk to their friends or family about their health

[2] Social Support: Getting Connected and Staying Connected

Building healthy relationships with ourselves and others serve as a critical protective factor by fostering emotional and physical well-being, reducing stress, support healing, encourage healthier habits, strengthen our sense of purpose and even contribute to a longer life[3]. Strong social connections decrease the risk for depression, suicide, substance use and violence[4].

We often think about relationships with friends, family or partners, but those connections start with the one we have with ourselves. When we treat ourselves with respect and compassion, we're better able to form strong relationships with the people around us.

Tips for Building A Healthy Relationship With Yourself

1. Practice self-compassion: treat yourself with the same kindness you offer to people you care about. Making mistakes is inevitable, so when it happens, speak to yourself gently and acknowledge your efforts rather than focusing on flaws.
2. Listen to your needs, emotionally and physically. Check in with yourself regularly. What feels overwhelming? What brings you energy? Trusting your own cues builds self-awareness and confidence.
3. Set healthy boundaries: protect your time and energy. Say yes to things that align with your values and give yourself permission to say no when something doesn't align.
4. Prioritize rest and recharging: rest isn't something you earn, it's a basic part of caring for yourself.
5. Celebrate progress and embrace being a "work-in-progress". Notice (and celebrate) your small wins and the major milestones. Growth takes time and accepting your evolving self helps build self-resilience.

Tips for Building A Healthy Relationship With Others

1. Communicate openly and regularly: healthy relationships thrive on honest communication. Share your feelings clearly, listen without interrupting and aim to understand, even if you disagree.
2. Show appreciation and gratitude: Regularly acknowledge what you value in the other person and your relationship. Recognizing someone's efforts strengthens connection and trust.
3. Practice empathy: can help you respond with patience and care, especially during conflicts or stressful moments.
4. Support each other's growth: healthy relationships leave room for people to evolve. Encourage goals, progress, and individuality.
5. Maintain balanced boundaries: honoring the needs and limits of others helps both parties feel safe showing up as their full selves without losing their sense of identity.

[3] Five Benefits of Healthy Relationships
[4] Building Healthy Relationships for Mental Health

HAVE AN IDEA OR TOPIC YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT?
SEND IT OUR WAY!
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