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 the ways that the quality of our relationships has an impact on our behaviors, thoughts, and overall mental health.

In this edition, we'll examine how unhealthy relationships can affect one's mental health and the importance of letting go of relationships that hurt us.

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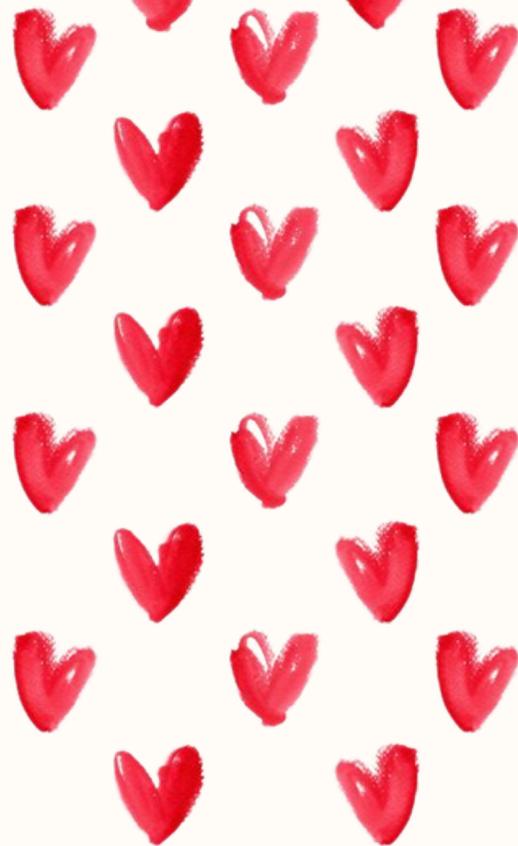
DID YOU KNOW...

According to a 2024 report by the American Psychological Association, individuals with strong social support networks are 50% more likely to have better health outcomes.

Conversely, individuals who are in conflict-ridden relationships (platonic, professional, familial or romantic), are at a higher risk of developing mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder.

The Role of Relationships in Mental Health

Tazewell County Health Department
Established 1970

The Impact of Negative Relationships on Mental Health

All relationships can have a profound influence on our mental health. Toxic relationships can exist within romantic, platonic, familial and professional connections. Issues like constant conflict, harassment, neglect, abuse and unhealthy competition/comparisons can have a tremendous impact on your stress levels and the way we view ourselves. The presence of these unhealthy behaviors, paired with the absence of healthy and loving behaviors can increase the likelihood of developing a mental health challenge such as anxiety, depression, burnout, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The Importance of Letting Go

"Letting go" can look different across different relationships. For some, that may mean letting go of things you can't control, like the behavior, actions and choices of those we are connected to, and focus on the things you can control, such as setting boundaries, communicating your needs and expectations differently, or seeking extra support outside of the relationships. For others, that may mean letting go of a relationship completely, for the sake of your own mental health. Regardless of how you choose to cope with the negativity, the important thing is being able to recognize when something isn't healthy for you anymore and to not feel guilty for making a decision that will positively impact your mental health moving forward.

Severing the tie in a relationship, regardless of the type of relationship it is/was, is never easy, even when you know it is the right decision. The effects of a toxic relationship on your mental health can last even after the relationship ends, and can make it hard to see the situation for what it is. If you need help taking the leap, consider these things: how do you feel in their presence – drained? Or alive? Does this person have your best interests in mind? Do they belittle you when you share your feelings? Is everything a competition?

When the pain of holding on is worse than the pain of letting go, it's time to release it.

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