

# WORDS OF Wellness

May 2024

*emotional - physical - financial - social - spiritual - environmental - intellectual - occupational*

**May is Mental Health Month** is to raise awareness about mental health issues, reduce stigma surrounding mental illness, and promote the importance of mental health and well-being for individuals, families, and communities. Throughout May, activities and initiatives are organized to educate the public about mental health and provide resources and support.

**Mental Health Month** encourages people to prioritize self-care and take proactive steps to maintain mental wellness. The following are some ideas to consider fostering a holistic approach to mental health and impacts across various dimensions. Professional or peer professional support is available when dealing with more complex mental health challenges.

## **Establishing Routines: Consistency is Good for Mental Health**

Create a daily checklist of the wellness activities that keep you calm, balance and at ease. This can include a mix of environmental, emotional, social, and intellectual tasks to maintain a balanced routine.

Ensure consistent and quality sleep. Plan to go to bed and wake up at the same time as much as you can throughout the week. Create a bedtime routine that includes activities promoting relaxation, contributing to emotional and environmental wellness. Include bedtime rituals like reading or listening to calming music, or whatever helps you prepare for sleep.

While technology can help in work, school and social contexts, excessive screen time, especially on social media and news websites, can contribute to feelings of stress, anxiety, and comparison. Set boundaries around screen use. Set times you unplug from devices. Prioritize activities even for short periods of time that promote emotional wellness.

**Gratitude Practice:** Reflecting on positive aspects of life cultivates emotional wellness and strengthens social connections when shared with others.

Express gratitude to friends, family, or colleagues often. Acts of kindness and appreciation contribute to emotional and social wellness. Reflect on positive aspects of your day, even small moments of joy. Gratitude doesn't have to involve material possessions.

Share gratitude with those around you. A simple thank you or acknowledgment costs nothing but can have a profound impact.

**Connect with Nature:** Spend time in nature. Whether it's a hike, a day at the beach, or a simple walk in the park, connecting with the natural environment can have a positive impact on mental health. Cultivate indoor plants or create a small garden space. Taking care of plants can provide a sense of accomplishment and a connection to the environment.

Take advantage of public spaces, even if you don't have a personal outdoor area. Local parks or community gardens can provide a sense of connection to nature.

If outdoor access is limited, consider incorporating low-maintenance indoor plants. Even a small potted plant can contribute to a sense of environmental wellness. Spend time outdoors during the evening.

**Build and Nurture Connections:** Schedule regular social activities, whether in-person or virtual. Connecting with friends and family fosters a sense of belonging and support.

Engage in activities with like-minded individuals. Whether it's a book club, sports team, or volunteer group, shared interests create social bonds.

Check out local community centers for free or low-cost events. It's an opportunity to connect with others without spending money. Online support groups or forums also provide a space for sharing experiences and connecting with people facing similar challenges.

**Create a Mood-Boosting Music Playlists.** Curate playlists with uplifting and calming music. Listening to music can positively impact emotions and is accessible to everyone.

Overall, **Mental Health Month** serves as a reminder of the importance of mental health in our daily lives and emphasizes the need for ongoing support, understanding, and resources for individuals and families affected by mental illness. By working together to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and promote mental wellness, we can create communities that support mental health for all.



For more information about wellness resources,  
contact [pswarbrick@cspnj.org](mailto:pswarbrick@cspnj.org) or check out our website at [cspnj.org/wellness-institute](http://cspnj.org/wellness-institute)