

MHA NEWSLETTER

A DIFFERENT KIND OF RESOLUTION

January is National Mental Wellness Month. Coming off the highs (or often lows) of the holidays in November and December, combined with the particularly cold, dark and challenging weather we experience this time of the year in Central, NY, make it an even more important time to ensure we are taking care of our own mental well-being.

Often people create New Year's resolutions that involve losing weight, gaining muscle, restricting sweets, eating more healthful foods, and becoming more active. This list is valuable in its own right, but goal setting with the topic of mental wellness in mind is not discussed nearly as often, yet it is just as important. What could your mental wellness goals look like for 2017? Some ideas that may be manageable for many include:

- Get outside for some fresh air, every day, even if only for a few minutes, and even if it means asking for help to get there.
- Take a hot bath or shower when that cold January wind really has you feeling down. While you're enjoying the warmth, have conscious gratitude for the indulgence of on-demand hot water, and in the history of the world, how relatively new that luxury truly is.
- Write. It doesn't have to be every day, but keeping pen and paper nearby to jot down ideas, thoughts, or something more creative can soothe the soul. But don't make it into a chore.
- Try something new as often at least once a month. It could be as simple as going for a walk in a neighborhood where you have never been on foot before.
- Clean something that has been bothering you – not your whole home, but one "bite-sized" cleaning or organizing task. Maybe it is the "junk drawer" in your kitchen, or the pile of papers on your desk your finally tackle. Then admire your good work.
- Watch a comedy that makes you laugh. If you have someone with whom to watch it, even better.
- Stand in front of your heating source, be it a wood stove, hot air vent, radiator or space heater, and appreciate the life-sustaining warmth it brings you.
- Spend quiet time by yourself every day, even if for 15 minutes. Be awake and not completing any other task – no music, no TV, no cleaning, no reading, and let yourself experience the quiet. If you can't do 15 minutes, try 5 minutes to start and build up to 15. And if you can't do every day, do it as often as you can – remember, these are goals, not rules.

If all of these goals sound completely unmanageable to you, make your number one goal to get some support. Maybe you need some assistance with your activities of daily living, financial help, some medical or psychological treatment, or just someone who can lend a friendly ear. Whatever it may be, if you aren't able to accomplish at least two to three items from this list on your own,

make your one goal to ask for help with achieving improved mental wellness. If you can't pinpoint what you need, schedule an appointment with your primary care doctor and bring this list with you to start the conversation – they may be able to make an appropriate referral. If you know what kind of help you need but aren't sure where to get it, from assistance paying your bills to finding a mental health counselor, call 2-1-1 from your phone and ask for assistance with locating a matching resource for your need or visit www.211cortland.org.

Susan Williams, LMSW

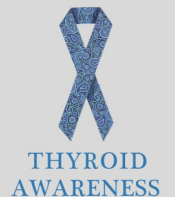
Also in this issue...

App of the Month	2
Take a Stand and Lend a Hand	2
Mykee Fowlin Presentation	3
Feeling Blue? It Could be S.A.D.	3
Community Events	4

COULD THERE BE A PHYSICAL CAUSE TO YOUR DEPRESSION?

Are you wondering if you have depression? Maybe someone close to you has suggested you seek help for depression. What are your symptoms? Do they look similar to this list?

- fatigue and low energy levels
- feeling depressed
- slow heart rate
- unexplained weight gain
- fatigued and aching muscles
- problems with concentration



If so, your doctor or a loved one might have suggested the cause to be depression. And they may be right. But sometimes these symptoms can also point in the direction of a physical illness. Do you also have symptoms such as these?

- intolerance to cold temperatures
- dry, coarse skin
- puffy face
- hair loss
- constipation

If so, might want to ask your doctor to screen you for hypothyroidism, which can be diagnosed by a physical examination and blood tests. Your doctor may also order an ultrasound or radioactive iodine scans to check the internal structure of the thyroid. January is National Thyroid Awareness Month.

Visit the American Thyroid Association at www.thyroid.org to learn more information.

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/thyroid-hypothyroidism>



App(s) of the Month: Speak UP!

Speak Up is a tool to contribute to safety and security in schools, both online and in real life. Students, teachers or other administrators can use the Speak Up for reporting bullying, harassment, or other activities that may affect the safety of students or school staff. Speak Up creates real-time reports as a support to the school to investigate, correct and prevent. Feature: ability to report anonymously, short introduction about what happened, attach the picture or screen captures (optional), send, and the report is received, investigated and remedied

The app only works for students and teachers that are connected to Speak Up.

iPhone: <http://apple.co/2he0AKd>

Android: <http://bit.ly/2hXzvdI>



TAKE A STAND AND LEND A HAND

Name-calling and bullying are problems that everyone must help to solve. It may not be your fault that some students bully, but if you ignore it, laugh at it, or do nothing in response to bullying that you witness, you may be a part of the problem. Being an ally or a friend to someone who is being picked on may feel uncomfortable or scary, but there are safe ways in which we can all "Take a Stand and Lend a Hand." Below is some great information from www.nonamecallingweek.org that you can share with the children in your life, and help them go from a bullying bystander to an ally.

What Do You Do When You See Someone Being Bullied at School?

Ask yourself, "Is it my job to help?" Think about how YOU might feel if the bullying was happening to you. You and other students can lend a hand, even when you aren't close friends with the people being bullied. Your school will be a better place if you help stop bullying. And making your school a better place is EVERYONE'S job!

What Can I Do?

Lots of things! Think about what may work for you:

- Don't just stand there...SAY SOMETHING!
- People who bully may think they're being funny or "cool." If you feel safe, tell the person to STOP the bullying behavior. Say you don't like it and that it isn't funny.
- DON'T BULLY BACK! It won't help if you use mean names or actions. And it could make things worse.

But What if I Don't Feel Safe Telling Students Who Bully to Stop?

That's OK. No one should put himself or herself in an unsafe situation. How ELSE can you lend a hand when bullying happens?

- Say kind words to the person who is being bullied, such as "I'm sorry about what happened," and "I don't like it!" Help them understand that it's not their fault. Be a friend. Invite that student to do things with you, like sitting together at lunch or working together on a project. EVERYONE NEEDS A FRIEND!
- Tell that student to talk to someone about what happened. Offer to help by going along.
- Pay attention to the other students who see the bullying. (These people are called, "bystanders.") Are any of them laughing, or joining in with the bullying? These people are part of the problem.
- Let those bystanders know that they're not helping! DON'T be one of them!
- Tell an adult. (This is IMPORTANT!!) Chances are, the person who is being bullied needs help from an adult. AND the student who is doing the bullying probably does, too. Often, the bullying does not get reported. Think about who you could tell in your school—a teacher, counselor, cafeteria or playground aid, principal, bus driver, or other adults you feel comfortable telling. If you need help telling, take a friend along.

Why Don't Some Students Tell When They See Bullying?

They may not want others to think they are "tattling." They may be afraid that the students who bully will pick on them next. They may think their friends will make fun of them for trying to help. Telling is very important! Reporting that someone is getting bullied or hurt in some other way is NOT "tattling." Adults at school can help. Ask them to help keep you safe after telling. Explain to your friends that bullying is NOT fair and encourage them to join in helping!

What if the Bullying Doesn't Happen at School?

If there is an adult around, report the bullying to an adult (your youth group leader, sports coach, etc.) No matter where the bullying happens, you should talk to your parents about bullying that you see or know about. Ask them for their ideas about how to help. We ALL must do our part! People who are bullied deserve to feel safe and welcome at school and in their neighborhoods. Everyone does!

<http://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Student%20Handout%20Take%20a%20Stand%20and%20Lend%20a%20Hand.pdf>





We are a volunteer Board of Directors that act to initiate and promote advocacy services, educational presentations, prevention programs, and information and resource referrals.

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To learn more about the Cortland MHA visit:

<http://www.mhacortland.com>
or contact:
mhacortlandny@gmail.com

Please join the
MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF CORTLAND
in welcoming
Mykee Fowlin



In his one-man presentation, “You Don’t Know Me Until You Know Me”, Dr. Mykee Fowlin; Clinical Psychologist, takes the audience on an experimental journey, reexamining core precepts that were taught early on. He has done extensive research in prevention and treatment with clientele who have a broad range of mental health diagnoses. This work has included, but not limited to depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, and maladaptive behaviors. Dr. Mykee Fowlin touches on mental health diagnoses in his presentation through various characters and discusses his own personal experiences.

<http://mykeefowlin.com/>

January 27, 2017

11:30 AM to 1:30 PM

at the

Port Watson Mini Conference Center

(131 Port Watson Street, Cortland, New York 13045)

FREE Event and Lunch will be provided

RSVP by Jan. 13th to Mike Pisa at 756--5992 ext. 142



FEELING BLUE? IT COULD BE SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER

Are you feeling gloomy as the winter months roll in and the temperature starts to drop? If so, you're not alone! According to the Mayo Clinic, nearly 3 million Americans suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) every year around this time.

SAD is a type of depression that comes and goes with the seasons, typically starting in the late fall and early winter and going away during the spring and summer. Depressive episodes linked to the summer can occur, but are much less common than winter episodes of SAD.

- Having low energy
- Hypersomnia
- Overeating
- Weight gain
- Craving for carbohydrates
- Social withdrawal (feel like hibernating")

Symptoms of the Winter Pattern of SAD include:

To learn more about the signs, causes, and treatments for SAD visit the National Institute of Mental Health www.nimh.nih.gov.

Addressee

Questions, comments, or feed-back on the MHA Newsletter?
We appreciate your thoughts!

EMAIL OPTION:

If you'd like to receive the MHA Newsletter electronically in
color as a PDF, please send your full name and email to:
erin@sevenvalleyshealth.org

Community Events & Support

CORTLAND COUNTS - COMMUNITY FORUM

Wednesday, January 18th
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Ramada Cortland

Attendance is free
Reservations are **REQUIRED**
RSVP to (607) 756-4198 or
susan@sevenvalleyshealth.org
by January 6th.

Who should attend?
All citizens interested in the
health and well-being of Cortland County.
For more information, visit:

<http://www.sevenvalleyshealth.org/cortland-counts>

Cortland LGBT Men's Group (Monthly)

- Where: Cortland LGBT Resource Center, 73 Main St.
- Contact: (607) 756-8970

Parents & Change Support Group (Monthly/2nd Monday)

- When: 6:00 to 7:00 PM

Jan 9	Feb 13	Mar 13	Apr 10	May 8
Jun 12	Sep 11	Oct 9	Nov 13	Dec 11

- Where: 90 Central Avenue

- Contact: Beckey Trippp (parentsandchange@yahoo.com)

Caregivers Support Group (Monthly)

- When: 4th Thursday at 12:30 PM

- Where: County Office Bldg (Dining Rm.)

- Contact: The Area Agency on Aging @ (607) 753-5060



If you have an upcoming community event or article you would like considered for admission to the MHA Newsletter, send your submission to ben@sevenvalleyshealth.org by the 7th of the month prior.

Disclaimer: The information presented here does not constitute professional medical advice. Individuals respond to treatment for mental health conditions in different ways, and treatment plans often need adjustment over time. Patients should work closely with their doctor and other health professionals in order to achieve optimal control of symptoms.