

May We Be Safe, Happy,  
Healthy and at Peace



Let's Stand Together to Raise  
Mental Health Awareness

# Mental Health Matters

*A Monthly Newsletter from Atlantic Behavioral Health*

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS | May 2024

## May Is Mental Health Awareness Month

Visit [atlanticealth.org/grow](http://atlanticealth.org/grow)  
to find resources and mental health activities  
for people of all ages!



**Behavioral Health ACCESS Center:**  
**888-247-1400**

**Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: 988**

In this edition of  
Mental Health Matters,  
learn how  
**Loving Kindness Meditation**  
can be a positive influence on  
your mental health.



## **Using Loving Kindness to Make a Better Life and World**

In the fast-paced and demanding world in which we all live and work, we need all the tools we can to be safe, happy, healthy and at peace. We can use compassion to be an effective resource that can help support our mental well-being. This month, we delve into the powerful practice of loving kindness and its transformative impact on mental health.

### **Understanding Loving Kindness Meditation**

Loving Kindness Meditation (LKM), also known as "Metta," originates from ancient traditions and has gained widespread recognition for its positive effects on mental health. It involves directing warm and loving thoughts towards oneself and others, fostering feelings of compassion and goodwill.

### **Applying Loving Kindness in Healthcare**

Our days are often filled with challenges and high-stakes situations balancing work demands, family ups and downs, and worries around the world. Incorporating loving kindness into your routine can have a positive impact on your mental health. Begin by setting aside a few minutes each day for LKM. Focus on cultivating feelings of love and compassion towards yourself, your colleagues, friends, and family, and even those you find challenging. This may feel unusual at first, but as you practice LKM, it will become more natural, so give it try!

### **Self-Compassion for Resilience**

In the demanding world we live in, self-compassion is often overlooked. In fact, we sometimes mistake self-compassion for selfishness. Many of us are more comfortable offering kindness to others than we are offering it to ourselves. Embrace the idea that you, too, deserve kindness and understanding. Think of it as filling up your gas tank to face the day. Use LKM to send warm wishes to yourself, acknowledging the difficulties you face and expressing self-compassion. This practice builds resilience and can help you navigate stressors with a more open heart.

### **Building a Supportive Community at Work and at Home**

Loving kindness extends beyond personal practice; it's a tool for building a supportive community. Try using LKM in the work place. In the health care world research suggests that healthcare professionals who practice LKM exhibit increased empathy, leading to improved patient satisfaction and outcomes. You can also try this at home with your children and family. This collective practice can create a positive and compassionate home environment, essential for maintaining mental well-being.

[Loving-kindness meditation: a tool to improve healthcare provider compassion, resilience, and patient care | Journal of Compassionate Health Care | Full Text \(biomedcentral.com\)](#)



**Atlantic Health System**  
Behavioral Health

## Mindfulness and Loving Kindness

Combine loving kindness with mindfulness for a holistic approach to mental well-being. Mindful awareness allows you to observe thoughts and emotions without judgment, while loving kindness infuses these observations with compassion. Together, they create a powerful synergy, promoting mental clarity and emotional balance.

*In the hectic world in which we live, prioritizing mental well-being is essential; it's also a gift we can easily offer to the world around us. Loving kindness offers a simple yet profound way to nurture compassion for oneself and others. As good citizens of the world, your commitment to the well-being of others starts with cultivating kindness within. Embrace the practice, share it with your colleagues and family, and watch as it transforms not only your mental health but also the environment in which you live and work.*

### Quick Loving Kindness Exercise

- Find a quiet space.
- Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths.
- Focus on yourself and silently repeat phrases like "May I be safe, may I be healthy, may I be happy, may I be at peace."
- Gradually extend these wishes to others – colleagues, patients, loved ones, and even those you find challenging.
- Open your eyes and notice the subtle shift in your emotions.

May 10<sup>th</sup> is AHS Wear Green Day in support of Mental Health Awareness.

Show your support by wearing green all month and take pictures to share with friends and family.

Encourage them to visit:

[atlanticealth.org/grow](http://atlanticealth.org/grow)



# Mental Health Awareness Month Discussions



**Tuesday, May 7, 2024,  
6:00pm**

**"It's OK Not To Be OK"**  
Join us to discuss a modern understanding of the how's and whys of suicide and what we can do about it.

Presented by Adam Silberman, MD



**Scan to register.**

**Tuesday, May 14, 2024,  
6:00pm**

**"Parents & Coping Skills: Building Your Own Toolbox"**  
Join us to explore coping skills essential for navigating the challenges of parenting. We will discuss common stressors faced by parents, the impact on family dynamics, as well as the importance of developing coping strategies. Learn interactive exercises, resilience-building techniques, and practical tips for integrating these skills into your daily life.

Presented by Jaclyn Bennett, LPC and Madalynne Martone, LSW, Behavioral Health Clinicians



**Scan to register.**

**Thursday, May 23, 2024,  
6:00pm**

**"Raising Awareness about Mental Health – Breaking the Stigma & Demystifying Paths to Wellness"**  
Join us as mental health professionals share their personal experiences as they model a support group of what it's like living with mental health issues. Examples of supportive dialogue to increase understanding of mental health, decreasing stigma & fostering a community that embraces mental health are all part of the webinar.

Presented by Nilda Rodriguez LPC/LCADC & Christopher Fowler CPRS



**Scan to register.**

Zoom Virtual Webinar  
Pre-registration is required.

Visit [atlanticealth.org/events](https://atlanticealth.org/events) or call 1-800-247-9580 to register



For more information, call  
Community Health at 1-844-472-8499.

## CRISIS RESOURCES

**If you feel you or someone you know may harm themselves or someone else:**

**988** Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: **988**

The Trevor Lifeline for LGBTQIA + Youth : **1-866-488-7386**

Veterans Crisis Line: **Dial 988 and Press 1**

**Dial 211:** 211 provides callers with information about and referrals to social services for every day needs and in times of crisis

National Domestic Violence Hotline at **1-800-799-SAFE**

National Sexual Assault Hotline at **1-800-656-HOPE**

## ADDICTION RESOURCES

**SAMHSA's National Helpline** is a free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service (in English and [Spanish](#))

[Also visit the online treatment locator.](#) Call: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

**Alcoholics Anonymous** - [Northern New Jersey AA - Meeting Finder \(nnjaa.org\)](#)

**Narcotics Anonymous** - [NA Meetings in NJ \(narcoticsanonymousnj.org\)](#)

**NJ Self Help Clearinghouse** 800-367-6274 - [FIND A GROUP | NJSHGCH \(njgroups.org\)](#)

## CONCERN

**Your Employee Assistance Program:**

**973-451-0025**

Atlantic Behavioral Health Crisis Intervention Services

**24/7 Hotlines:**

**Chilton Medical Center: 973-831-5078**

**Hackettstown Medical Center: 908-454-5141**

**Morristown Medical Center: 973-540-0100**

**Overlook Medical Center: 908-522-3586**

**Newton Medical Center: 973-383-0973**

**Email: [CONCERN-EAP@atlanticealth.org](mailto:CONCERN-EAP@atlanticealth.org)**

