



Mental Health Matters

A Monthly Newsletter from Atlantic Behavioral Health

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS | November 2023

Making Time for an Autumn Renewal and Cultivating Gratitude

Have you noticed the seasons are changing? If you are mindful, you can see the colors changing on the trees, smell the earthiness in the air, feel the crisp fall days reminding you to bring a sweater, and hear the crunch of leaves under foot as you walk. This season is a time to gather some things up, let go of some things, and connect with gratitude for the hard-earned harvest you have planted in your life.

Taking time to reflect, pause, and cultivate gratitude is good for your mental health. This builds resilience to help you grow forward in your relationships, your work and your personal development.

It really is a great time for an Autumn Renewal.



Did You Know?

- Expressing gratitude has been shown to release oxytocin, dopamine, and serotonin. These are hormones that help us feel good and connect with people.
[Expressing gratitude to improve health - Mayo Clinic Health System](#)
- Gratitude may increase grey matter in the brain and that is a good thing! "People who express and feel gratitude have a higher volume of grey matter in the right inferior temporal gyrus (Zahn et al., 2014).
[The Neuroscience of Gratitude and Effects on the Brain \(positivepsychology.com\)](#)"
- "By consciously practicing gratitude everyday, we can help these neural pathways to strengthen themselves and ultimately create a permanent grateful and positive nature within ourselves."
[The Neuroscience of Gratitude and Effects on the Brain \(positivepsychology.com\)](#)"

How can you increase your gratitude this season?

Try asking yourself these questions:

What do you have to harvest this Fall?

- Think about the goals you set at the start of the year. Those were the seeds you planted. Was it a health care goal? A career aspiration? A dream vacation you wanted to take? Or did you want to increase your appreciation and gratitude?
- Do your own inventory of what you accomplished so far. These can be small steps in a larger plan or fully executed dreams. Take some time to celebrate.

This is your harvest! It's ok to feel grateful.

- Take note of the things that withered on the vine as well. This might not be easy or fun, but it is important to learn what worked and what did not. We can feel grateful even for the difficult lessons in life. From there, you can **reset** your goals.
- Check to see if those goals, aspirations, and dreams are still important to you. Now it is time to reflect on what is important to you and what you are feeling grateful for in this moment.

What do you need to let go of this season?

Just like the trees are shedding their leaves, we can also let go.

- Clearing out the clutter at home and at work is a good place to start. You will think better and feel better.
- Check in with your relationships. Who needs a little "fertilizer" and nurturing? Maybe a call or a text to let them know you are grateful for them in your life. Think of some relationships that might need "pruning" this season.
- This season can be an invitation to let go of old habits, beliefs and routines that no longer serve your life and make room for more gratitude.

"Be thankful for what you have, you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never ever have enough."

-Oprah Winfrey

Count Your Blessings

- Try starting each day with "Thank You" as your first thought. This really does change the way you look at the day.
- Taking note of the good things is shown to increase happiness and gratitude. See how many you can count in a day.
- Start a gratitude journal. Writing things down will help you connect more deeply with the experience of gratitude.
- Even when times are hard, leaning into gratitude can help lift us up to face the challenges. [Practicing Gratitude | NIH News in Health](#)

GRATITUDE

*"Gratitude can transform
common days into thanksgiving,
turn routine jobs into joy, and
change ordinary opportunities
into blessings."* **-proverb**

CRISIS RESOURCES

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

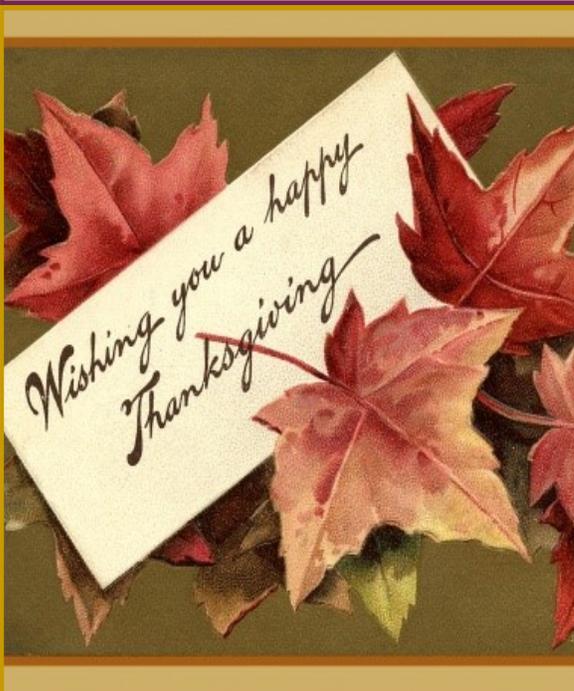
- **988** Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: **988**
- The Trevor Lifeline for LGBTQIA + Youth : **1-866-488-7386**
- Veterans Crisis Line: **Dial 988 and Press 1**
- **Dial 211:** 211 provides callers with information about and referrals to social services for every day needs and in times of crisis

For more information or to get help:

- National Domestic Violence Hotline at **1-800-799-SAFE**
- National Sexual Assault Hotline at **1-800-656-HOPE**
- Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)
24/7 Hotline **1-800-656-4673**

Website:

Atlantichealth.org



Atlantic Behavioral Health

ACCESS Center:

888-247-1400

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: Nomorewhispers@atlantichealth.org

 **Atlantic Health System**
Behavioral Health