

Happy New Year!

“Good riddance” 2020 and hello 2021! As we begin the new year, we are reminded now is a time of both reflection and projection. It’s time to evaluate what we’ve learned from the past and how these lessons can help prepare us for what remains an uncertain future. Hopefully, one fundamental lesson we’ve all learned is that we are survivors. For most of us, 2020 was the most historic and challenging year of our lives. Navigating through a pandemic was never something we could have imagined or truly prepared for but we’ve done it and at least for the foreseeable future, we will continue to do it. By acknowledging our ability to preserve, we build even more strength and resiliency as we face whatever lies ahead. We hope you will feel some level of accomplishment on this success and most of all we wish you a very happy, healthy, safe and even brighter new year.

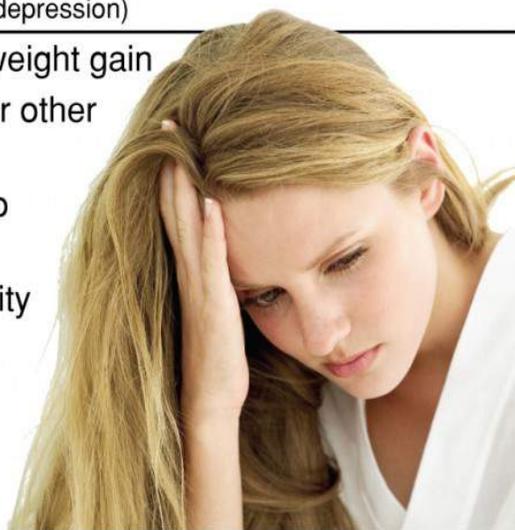
Feeling SAD?

According to the American Psychiatric Association, seasonal affective disorder is a form of depression with seasonal pattern. People with SAD experience mood changes and symptoms similar to depression. The symptoms usually occur during the fall and winter months when there is less sunlight and it usually improves with the arrival of spring. The most difficult months for people with SAD in the U.S. tend to be January and February. While it is much less common, some people experience SAD in the summer.

Symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder:

(May not apply to other forms of depression)

- Increased appetite with weight gain
- Loss of interest in work or other activities
- Less energy and ability to concentrate
- Unhappiness and irritability
- Increased sleep
- Hopelessness
- Sluggish movements
- Social withdrawal



Source: PubMed Health

Standard-Examiner

SAD FACTS

About 5% of adults in the US experience SAD and it typically last 40 % of the year.

SAD is more common in women than men.

SAD has been linked to biochemical imbalances in the brain prompted by shorter daylight hours and less sunlight in winter which helps explain why SAD is more common in people living far from the equator.

SAD is treatable. Consult your doctor or mental health professional or more information.

NEW YEAR: NEW YOU?

Making a New Year's resolution is a common tradition dating back to the Babylonians, who started each year with pledges to pay debts and return borrowed items.

In modern societies, New Year's resolutions have become a time in which a person resolves to change an undesired trait or behavior, to accomplish a personal goal or otherwise improve their life.

According to "Psychology Today," resolutions are important because they enable us to set and achieve goals. Most other creatures react based on instinct; we take action. It is the evolved area of the human brain that constitutes *executive function*, a cluster of cognitive abilities. These cognitive abilities help us regulate control and manage our thoughts and actions. It is these brain functions that set us apart from all other living things. So perhaps this is reason enough to make New Year's resolutions. Do it just because we can!



My New Year's Resolutions

- Diet
- Exercise
- Less Facebook
- Quit Smoking

New Year's Resolutions

1. Stop making so many lists.
- B. Be more consistent.
7. Learn to count.

Staff Share Their Personal New Year's Resolutions:

"My desire is to live in the light, take more walks, be more accepting, be a better listener, be easy." *Bonnie, Recovery Coach*

"I would like to focus on my self-growth. I hope to improve my mental health through education and helping others." *Jessica, Peer Bridger*

"To be a happier, healthier me." *Liz, Administrative Assistant*

"Be kinder to myself." *Nicole, Peer Bridger*

How Balanced Are Your 8 Dimensions?

For optimal physical and mental health, the start of the new year is the perfect time to do a self check-in and assess your 8 dimensions of wellness. Using the diagram below, you can explore the areas of your life that are in need of more attention. While it's not possible to feel completely balanced in all areas at all times, this guide can be a helpful tool for getting us to recognize and come up with a plan of action. Creating an action plan doesn't have to be something you do on your own. You can get support from resources such as family, friends, professionals and peers. In fact, consider contacting one of our Recovery Coaches at 845-278-7600. They are familiar with these 8 dimensions and can assist you with developing your own personal action plan.



UPDATE ON COVID VACCINES



"At least 80-85% of people would need to be vaccinated to meaningfully reduce infection rates." Dr. Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).

According to the Putnam County Department of Health, Phase 1 of the vaccine roll-out has already begun. The Putnam County Executive and Commissioner of Health are working together and following the New York State and CDC guidelines for prioritizing and dispensing vaccines.

Information for vaccine distribution to the general public will be shared as it becomes available. Up-to-date information on CDC COVID 19 vaccine recommendations can be found at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/8-things.html.

As with many areas throughout the country, COVID cases continue to rise in Putnam County. Everyone is urged to please continue to practice all safety precautions to help reduce the spread of this highly contagious virus.