MHA PUTNAM
Mental Health Association in Putnam County

The Mindful Messenger:

September 2021

September 21st is World Gratitude Day. On this day, people from all countries are encouraged to reflect on the blessings that make them grateful. It's a time when individuals, nations, and organizations share their Gratitude in different ways.

The idea of World Gratitude Day was formed in 1965 at a dinner in the United Nations building. A spiritual leader and meditation teacher named Sri Chinmoy suggested a day of thanks that the entire world could celebrate together. Each of the countries agreed to hold a Gratitude gathering every year on September 21st. The hope was that this one day of the year would encourage reflection on our blessings and positively impact our well-being.

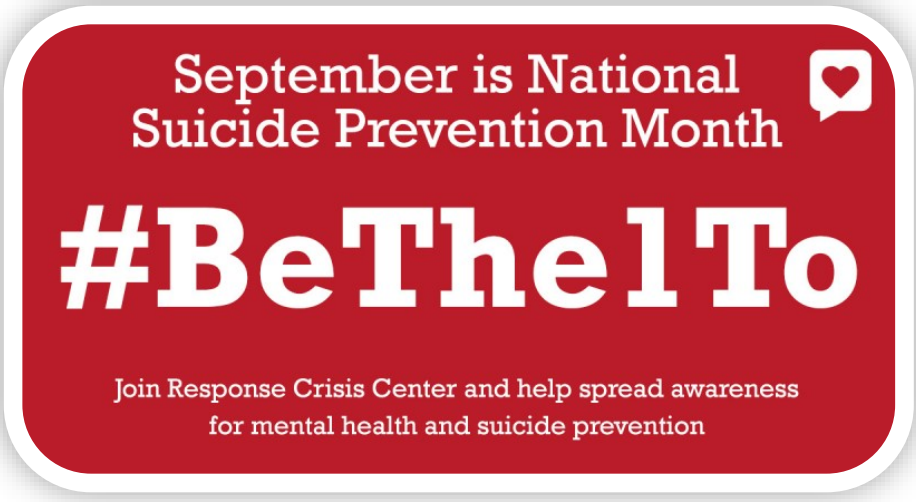
Gratitude has emotional and physical benefits. When we are grateful, our moods are enhanced, and our stress levels lower. Gratitude can be a great motivation at the workplace. People are happier when they are appreciated; feeling that they are acknowledged can improve performance.

There are several different things that you can do to celebrate World Gratitude Day. One thing is to have a Gratitude Dinner with family or friends. You all can share feelings of being grateful. Another way is to donate your time to those that are less fortunate. Self-Care is essential on Gratitude Day. You can take this time to engage in something you enjoy. Whatever our hardships and challenges are, it's necessary to stop and reflect on our blessings.

If you would like more information on World Gratitude Day 2021 visit:
https://www.daysoftheyear.com/days/world-gratitude-day/

I show Gratitude in a few ways. Nightly, I express thanks for my blessings. Simple things make me grateful. I'm inspired by nature. It calms me. A sunset or a moon-rise can make my day. I'm thankful for all I have, so I'm eager to give back. Seeing people smile because of my help means everything.

-Jessica Ryan, MHA Peer Bridger



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Back to School…..What Children Need for Good Mental Health

As we prepare for the beginning of a new school year, keep these things in mind as children and adolescents are also struggling to cope with the many changes the pandemic has imposed on them and their routines.

These tips can help support a child's mental health:

- **Communicate:** *Spend time every day listening and talking to your children about what is happening in their lives. Share emotions and feelings with them.*
- **Give Children Unconditional Love:** *Children need to know that your love does not depend on what they do.*
- **Nurture Confidence and Self-Esteem:** *Praise and encourage your children, and set realistic goals that test their abilities. Accept mistakes and failures as part of life.*
- **Encourage Children to Play:** *Playtime is important to children's emotional development. Play helps children be creative, develop problem solving skills and self-control, and learn how to get along with others.*
- **Give appropriate guidance and discipline:** *Be firm but kind and realistic with your expectations. The goal is not to control your children but to help them learn self-control.*
- **Provide a safe and secure environment:** *Fear can be very real for children. When they are frightened, try to find out why. Respond by being loving, patient and reassuring, not critical.*

If you are concerned about your child's mental health, consult with his or her pediatrician, teachers, guidance counselor or other adult who may have information about his or her behavior.

The following signs may indicate the need for professional help:

Decline in school performance - Poor grades despite strong efforts - Constant worry or anxiety - Repeated refusal to go to school or to take part in normal activities - Hyperactivity or fidgeting - Persistent nightmares - Continuous or frequent aggression or "acting out" - Continuous or frequent rebellion and/or temper tantrums - Depression, sadness or irritability

If you think there is a problem, seek professional help. Early identification, diagnosis and treatment can help children reach their full potential.

If you know someone who is in crisis now, seek help immediately.

Call 845-225-1222 to reach a 24 hour crisis center

or dial 911 for immediate assistance

This month marks the 20th anniversary of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. This will be a difficult day for many people, including those in our law enforcement and first responder communities.

If you, or someone you know, may be struggling with the anniversary, please reach out confidentially and anonymously to:

FIRST LINE

PEER TO PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

"We Understand and We Care"

845-745-0088

Who We Are…..

FIRST LINE, is a **confidential**, peer-support warmline/support program for law enforcement, first responders and their families. **FIRST LINE** is manned 24 hours a day by retired members of law enforcement.

Our mission is to support other members of the law enforcement community who may be struggling, experiencing stress on the job…at home, may be contemplating *suicide*, or just need someone to talk to. Statistically speaking, more police officers die by suicide than in the line of duty.

How We Help…..

FIRST LINE is not connected to any law enforcement entity, Employee Assistance Program or psychiatric services. **Calls are 100 percent confidentia**l and answered by retired members of law enforcement. Hence our tag line, **we understand and we care**. Please help us save a life by passing this along to the members of your group, their family members, or anyone else you feel would benefit from the information and support.

Join our FIRST LINE family……

If you are active duty or retired law enforcement, **we need you**. Please call us at (845) 745-0088 to find out how you can help. We need volunteers to help us with trainings, outreach and support calls. Family members are also welcome. Join us!

Help us reach out……

We welcome an opportunity to speak to your department/members either in person-or virtually, about **FIRST LINE**. **Let us share our passion for this program.** Outreach materials can also be delivered to you upon request.

Lending a helping hand, helping us to help this community.

All of our services are anonymous, confidential and free of charge

Find us on Facebook

First Line Peer to Peer Support

For more information locally, visit:

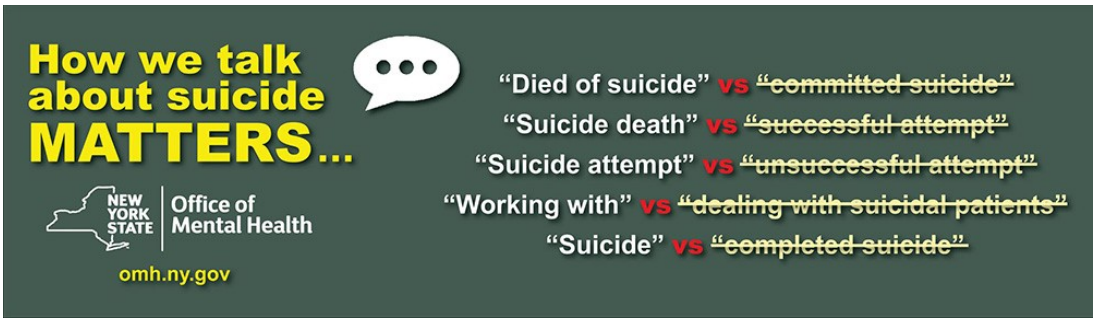
https://putnamcac.org/suicide-prevention-task-force/

For resources and training opportunities

On September 15th, NAMI-Putnam will be dedicating the Nicole Ettere Garden of Remembrance, a memorial garden for loved ones from Putnam County who have ended their lives by suicide. For more information, please contact NAMI-Putnam

https://namiputnam.org/

tel:1-845-363-1478



Dwyer Vet2Vet Program Coordinator, John Bourges, retires September 10th

It is with mixed emotions that we announce the retirement of our MHA Team Member, John Bourges.

John came to Vet2Vet in 2015 and stepped into the Program Coordinator role in 2016, growing the program to be widely respected and part of the fabric of the Putnam community. While we are sad to see his tenure end, we wish him well as he retires. In retirement, John will have the opportunity to spend more time with his family, friends, and doing the things he loves most-riding his Harley, fishing, writing and traveling. We welcome you to send your messages to John using this shared file link. Good luck John!

Thanks for making it matter….one Veteran at a time.

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