

LIFE IN **BALANCE**

Your guide to healthy living.

Bored? It Could Be More Serious Than You Think!

Boredom (noun) bore·dom | \ 'bôr-dəm \ Definition: the state of being weary and restless through lack of interest.

From the definition above, we know what boredom is but how does it impact daily living? Boredom can take two directions – a risky state that can cause depression, anxiety or other mood issues. But, it can also be a lack of motivation to find other excitement-producing stimuli. July is Anti-Boredom Month, which is a great time to look at these two concerns.

When considering a state that can cause depression, anxiety or other mood issues – boredom needs to be taken very seriously. An ongoing state of boredom can potentially affect work, relationships and overall physical health. It could be most helpful to speak with a counselor or other professional to see what steps can be taken to improve the person's overall feeling that something is consistently negative, lacking, or missing.

However, what can be done when it's simply a lack of motivation? The first step is to acknowledge the lack of motivation starts with the person him or herself. Next, is making the decision to improve this state. It can be setting new personal goals, setting higher personal goals, finding an interest in learning something new, stepping outside your comfort zone, or even reaching out to others for suggestions.

Regardless of the direction, your Employee Assistance Team is always available to help you navigate to a better place. So, if you feel pulled in a direction you don't like, **give us a call at 800.236.4457!**





Independence and Your Teen

Independence for a teen means establishing their identity and becoming a separate individual. It may help parents to consider that this is actually an important part of the “work” of being a teenager. This means making for him or herself a number of choices that were previously made by parents.

Teens often want more say about family matters. To put it in political terms, they want a democracy in which they are a voting member, rather than a dictatorship run by parents. As they age, there are likely to be changes in curfew, bedtime, responsibilities, and chores. Inviting teens to share in the decision-making – or at least give input – may lead to better cooperation.

Teen Rebellion

Some rebellion can be expected as teens naturally struggle for their independence. Teens will push boundaries, argue for the sake of arguing, and compete with you in an ongoing battle for power. Finding the balance between giving them too much freedom and being overprotective is one of the biggest obstacles to overcome. Next time your teen fights you over curfew or battles to make their own choices, have some perspective on the situation. A teen’s desire to become independent is an innate characteristic that assists them in growing into adulthood.

As teens struggle for their independence, there may be times when it is appropriate to give in. This doesn’t mean to give them free reign in every situation. However, you may want to pick your battles. Teens should start exercising control over some of their own choices. Therefore, ask yourself if the issue at hand poses an immediate threat to your teen or their safety. Although you may not agree with all the choices your teen makes, they should still be entitled to make decisions independently when it is feasible.

Teaching independence to your teen goes hand in hand with teaching responsibility. It may not be as important for your teen to always make the right decisions as it is for them to learn accountability for the decisions they make. Set up a system of rewards and consequences that correspond with the goals you have for your teen. If they chose not to take out the trash, they learn that they cannot borrow the car. This allows teens to exercise power to make their own choices, while learning accountability and growing into independent adults.

Adapted from: www.teenhelp.com/teen-issues/teen-independence/



Summer Struggles

for those Diagnosed with Mental Illness



SHOWING YOUR SELF-HARM SCARS, AND WEARING SUMMER CLOTHES

Sometimes people hide scars from self-harm with clothing. That is harder to do when the weather is so warm, that it mandates less body coverage.

THE PRESSURE TO HAVE A “SUMMER BODY”

When a person goes outside while battling body dysmorphia and/or anxiety, they are afraid of what people think. Experiencing summer while working through anorexia is very difficult. Many people become obsessed with achieving a “swimming suit goal weight” but end up taking it to an extreme.

LONGING FOR CHILDHOOD, OR STRUGGLING WITH ADULT CHALLENGES

Summer is often looked at as a time to be carefree, almost as when you were a child. But, for those with mental illness it's even more pronounced because even every day adult demands can be unbearable to achieve.

LESS CONTACT WITH YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM

Not being able to see people that mean the most to you because of vacations, varying work schedules, and so forth, can be exceedingly hard on those who already feel isolated, alone, and rely on their support system.

If you find yourself struggling during the summer months, remember you're not alone. We need to remind ourselves that struggling with mental illnesses won't just disappear or fade into the distance as the sun comes out. We still need to be gentle with ourselves and allow room to grow. Be honest and reach out. Ask for help if you're struggling, it is not a weakness – it is being brave. Taking care of our body and mind is always going to be important, no matter what the season.

Adapted from: 15 Reasons Summer Can Be Hard for People With Mental Illnesses www.themighty.com/2018/05/summer-hard-mental-illness/

For many, summer is a time of picnics, barbeques, “get-togethers”, and overall relaxation. However, for those diagnosed with a mental illness, that doesn't “turn off” because the weather is getting warmer or a vacation is planned (as it would for those without mental illness). This persistence can make it hard to enjoy what many deem to be a “happier” or “more exciting” time of year.

The Mighty is an internet-based health community created to empower and connect people facing mental health challenges and disabilities. When those with mental illness diagnoses (such as depression or anxiety) were polled, they were easily able to identify some of the most common summer struggles.

THE EXPECTATION THAT SUMMER IS FUN

Some people struggle as they see everyone enjoying themselves socializing, and generally having fun, and constantly feel like they are letting others down when they are not involved.

IT'S HARDER TO UNDERSTAND WHY SOMEONE ‘COULD BE DEPRESSED’ DURING THE SUMMER

Many hold out hope that once the sun is out and it's warmer, they'll feel better. But, then summer comes, and nothing's changed in their mind. People tend to be hard on themselves for having depression.

THE SUN, AND EXPERIENCING “REVERSE SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER”

This means becoming more depressed when it gets sunnier outside. Also, it is just so sticky and hot it triggers migraines in some people, and they feel horrible.

Creatively Increasing Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Intake

Fruits and vegetables are an important part of an overall healthy eating plan because they're typically high in vitamins, minerals and fiber and low in calories and saturated fat. Most fruits and vegetables also have no or little sodium. Avocados are even a good source of healthy fats your body needs. Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables may help you control your weight and blood pressure and reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke.

You can easily add color to every meal and snack with a little creativity. For example, sandwiches are a quick and easy meal, whether you make them at home or order out. Vegetables and fruits can make a sandwich healthier, tastier and more filling. Add a variety of sliced or shredded produce, such as apple, avocado, carrot, celery, cucumber, greens, mushrooms, onion, peppers, radish, tomato and zucchini.

Replace some of the meat with extra veggies to cut back on sodium and saturated fat. For a hearty meatless sandwich try grilled veggies like portabella mushrooms or eggplant.

Experiment using flavorful spreads like guacamole, horseradish, hummus, pesto, salsa and tzatziki. They can take the place of traditional condiments like ketchup, mayo and mustard, which can have a lot of sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.

Vegetables provide key nutrients that many of us don't get enough of, such as calcium, fiber, iron, potassium, and vitamins A and C. Creatively adding vegetables to your favorite dishes are a great way to enhance flavor, texture, all the while making a positive impact on your health.

Source: www.heart.org



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Confidential Helpline

800.236.4457

Counselors available 24/7

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