



NATIONAL EMOTIONAL WELLNESS MONTH

CARING FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is a part of overall health — and like physical health, it responds to small, steady care. October is National Emotional Wellness Month, and October 10 is World Mental Health Day: a good moment to build habits that support a calmer, steadier mind. Here are five that make a real difference.

- 1. Move your body.** Regular activity is one of the most effective ways to lift mood and ease anxiety and depression — even a short daily walk helps.
- 2. Stay connected.** Time with people who care about you is protective for mental health. Reach out, even briefly, when life gets busy.
- 3. Protect your sleep.** Sleep and mood are closely linked. A regular schedule and wind-down routine support both.
- 4. Practice mindfulness.** A few minutes of slow breathing or meditation can lower stress and help you feel more grounded.
- 5. Ask for help.** Reaching out to a professional is a sign of strength, not weakness. Support works — and it's okay to need it.

Source: National Institute of Mental Health; World Health Organization; American Psychological Association.

A FIVE-MINUTE RESET

When stress spikes, a short pause can settle your nervous system. Try one of these anytime:

Breathe in a box. Inhale 4 counts, hold 4, exhale 4, hold 4. Repeat a few rounds.

Name three things. Notice three things you can see, hear and feel to return to the present.

Step outside. A few minutes of fresh air and daylight can reset your mood.

Stretch it out. Gently roll your shoulders and neck to release held tension.

You can't always control what a day brings — but a small reset can change how you meet it.

Source: American Psychological Association; National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health.

BUILDING EVERYDAY RESILIENCE

Resilience isn't about never feeling stressed — it's about bouncing back. The good news: it's a skill you can strengthen with practice. A few habits that help:

- **Keep gentle routines.** Predictable anchors — meals, movement, bedtime — steady you when things feel uncertain.
- **Set limits on the scroll.** Constant news and social media can fuel worry; give yourself regular breaks.
- **Talk to yourself kindly.** Speak to yourself as you would a good friend. Self-compassion builds resilience.

Resilience grows in small moments. Each time you cope, you build a little more.

Source: American Psychological Association.

A REMINDER ABOUT SCREENINGS: OCTOBER IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

October is a good prompt to stay on top of recommended cancer screenings. Screenings can find problems early — often before symptoms appear — when they're most treatable.

- Talk with your provider about when to begin mammograms and how often, based on your age and history.
- Know your family history and share it with your care team.
- Keep up with all recommended screenings, not just this month's focus.

Not sure what you're due for? Your provider or your plan's preventive care list is the best place to start.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; American Cancer Society.

IN THE KITCHEN

HEARTY LENTIL & VEGETABLE SOUP

A cozy, fiber-rich soup that's easy on the budget and freezes beautifully. Perfect for a crisp October evening. Makes 6 servings.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup dried brown or green lentils
- 1 (14-oz) can diced tomatoes
- 6 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 tsp cumin; 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 2 cups chopped kale; salt & pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oil in a large pot; cook onion, carrots and celery 5–6 minutes.
2. Add garlic, cumin and paprika; stir 1 minute.
3. Add lentils, tomatoes and broth. Simmer 25–30 minutes until lentils are tender.
4. Stir in kale until wilted; season with salt and pepper.

Per serving (approx.): 230 cal · 13 g protein · 38 g carbs · 12 g fiber · 3 g fat · 320 mg sodium. Nutrition information is approximate.

Source: Wellbeing for Your WORLD kitchen.