

May 2026

# Wellness NEWSLETTER

## HEALTH OBSERVANCE

# Mental Health Awareness Month

### Wellworks For You

Mental health shapes how we think, feel, and navigate everyday life. It influences how we handle stress, connect with others, and respond to challenges at work and at home. Mental Health Awareness Month serves as a reminder that caring for mental health is just as important as caring for physical health, and that seeking support is a normal and meaningful part of maintaining overall wellbeing.

Mental health is not separate from the rest of our health; it sits alongside it, influencing sleep, energy, concentration, and overall well-being. When stress builds or emotional strain goes unaddressed, it can begin to affect both the mind and body.

For those struggling emotionally or facing mental health concerns, professional support can help. Treatment may include therapy, medication, or a combination of both. Many people begin by speaking with a primary care provider, who can help identify concerns and connect them with a mental health professional such as a psychologist, psychiatrist, or licensed counselor.

Additional support may also be available through insurance providers, local health departments, community organizations, universities, or Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) offered through an employer.

In urgent situations, immediate help is available. The **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** provides free, confidential support 24 hours a day for individuals experiencing emotional distress or suicidal thoughts. Trained counselors are available by calling or texting 988 or through online chat services.

Reaching out for support is a meaningful step toward caring for your mental health and overall wellbeing.

### Ways to Support Your Mental Wellness

- Take short breaks during the day to recharge and manage stress
- Maintain healthy routines, including regular sleep and movement
- Stay connected with supportive friends, family, or coworkers
- Practice stress-management techniques such as mindfulness or deep breathing
- Reach out for professional support or community resources when needed

Source: <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/find-help>



### 2 EMOTIONAL WELLBEING THROUGH LEARNING

## Staying Mentally Engaged at Any Age

Lifelong learning supports emotional wellbeing by giving people purpose and keeping the mind engaged.



### 3 MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

## Recognizing Burnout and Overwhelm

When prolonged stress pushes the brain's stress response system into overdrive, simple strategies can help restore balance and improve focus.



### 4 Featured Recipe



CONNECTEDNESS  
**HEALTH TIP  
CORNER**



## Emotional Wellbeing Through Learning: Staying Mentally Engaged at Any Age

Caitlyn Keenen

The famous artist, Leonardo da Vinci once said, “Learning never exhausts the mind.” Learning gives us an objective. It allows people of all ages to set goals, giving them direction and purpose. Having a sense of purpose promotes motivation, connection, and ultimately leads to fulfillment. These are all important feelings for emotional wellbeing.

Emotional wellbeing is the ability to comprehend, control, and express your emotions adequately while handling the stress and unexpected situations experienced in everyday life. But, how can learning help us understand and control our emotions?

- 1.** Actively participating in learning allows us to engage and be present, steering us away from being passive. Being present and engaging with others improves our social relationships. It promotes interaction and lessens feelings of loneliness. In steering us away from passiveness, it bolsters our ability to deal with stress and the challenges of life.
- 2.** Learning cultivates an encouraging environment, leaving a positive effect. The positivity created from learning reduces feelings associated with depression and anxiety. It can improve these mental health conditions and even help prevent them. Gaining new knowledge gives us a sense of achievement and boosts our self-esteem and confidence.
- 3.** The brain is a muscle for which learning is the exercise. “Working out” your brain increases cognitive function. Increased cognitive function helps improve memory, our ability to focus, and our processing skills. Plus, mental engagement is shown to lower risks of dementia.

The benefits of learning effect people of all ages, but how can you easily incorporate learning into your life? Try any of the items below as a starting point to launch your lifelong learning journey.

- Take an online class or listen to an educational podcast
- Attend workshops in your local community
- Explore a new hobby
- Read regularly
- Volunteer as a coach or mentor

Source: <https://positivepsychology.com/healthy-mind/>

## Recognizing Burnout and Overwhelm

*Katherine Kline*

Burnout rarely makes a dramatic entrance. It doesn't knock on the door and say, "Hello, I'm here to ruin your week." Instead, it slips in quietly. A simple task starts to feel oddly complicated. Your patience runs thin. You read the same email three times and still aren't entirely sure what it says.

Part of this feeling is happening in your brain. When you feel overwhelmed, the amygdala, the brain's threat-detection center, starts flagging situations as stressful or unmanageable. This activates the body's stress response system, releasing cortisol into the bloodstream. Meanwhile, the prefrontal cortex, the part responsible for planning and decision-making, begins to struggle under prolonged pressure.

### **Burnout often shows up as:**

- Constant fatigue, even after rest
- Trouble concentrating or making decisions
- Feeling emotionally drained or unmotivated
- Irritability over things that normally wouldn't bother you
- Difficulty shutting your brain off at night

When overwhelm hits in the moment, one of the fastest ways to reset is surprisingly simple: breathe. A technique called the physiological sigh [two short nose inhales followed by one long mouth exhale] helps restore the balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the body. This signals the nervous system to shift out of stress mode and begin to calm down.

Once the immediate wave of overwhelm passes, the goal becomes reducing mental overload. One effective approach is time blocking, setting aside dedicated windows of time to work on a single task without interruption. Research shows people who consistently use focus blocks report lower stress levels, better sleep, and less work-related rumination in the evenings.

Burnout is not a sign of weakness or lack of resilience. More often, it's a signal that your brain has been running at full capacity for too long. Recognizing the signs early, and giving yourself permission to pause, breathe, and simplify, can help restore the balance your mind needs to function at its best.



Source: <https://scienceinsights.org/feeling-overwhelmed-why-it-happens-and-how-to-cope/>

## FEATURED RECIPE

# Hot Honey Chickpea Bowls

Vegetarian, Gluten Free

 4 SERVINGS |  20 MINUTES

## INGREDIENTS

### Hot Honey Chickpeas

- 1 Tbsp [avocado oil](#)
- 2 tsp minced garlic
- 1 15 oz. can chickpeas (drained)
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 Tbsp [sriracha](#)
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1/8 tsp cayenne (optional)
- 1/4 tsp [crushed red pepper](#) (optional)

### Bowls

- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 4-5 stalks celery (chopped)
- 4 medium carrots (chopped or shredded)
- 4 Tbsp [healthy ranch dressing](#) (optional, for topping)
- cilantro (for topping)

## DIRECTIONS

1. In a skillet or sauce pan, heat up the oil and garlic over medium heat.
2. Add in the chickpeas.
3. Whisk together the honey, sriracha, salt, pepper, cayenne, and crushed red pepper in a bowl.
4. Pour the hot honey sauce over the chickpeas and bring to a simmer.
5. Cook for 5-6 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sauce begins to thicken and reduce.
6. Remove from heat and let cool as the sauce continues to thicken for 3-5 minutes.
7. Serve the hot honey chickpeas over cooked rice along with celery, carrots, cilantro, and a drizzle of ranch dressing!

## NUTRITION

<b>Per Serving:</b>	<b>1 Bowl</b>	<b>Per Serving:</b>	<b>1 Bowl</b>
<b>Calories:</b>	359	<b>Protein:</b>	10g
<b>Carbohydrates:</b>	68g	<b>Dietary Fiber:</b>	10g
<b>Saturated Fat:</b>	1g	<b>Sodium:</b>	1133mg
<b>Total Sugars:</b>	25g		

Source: <https://www.jaroflemons.com/hot-honey-chickpea-bowls/>