



Keep Resolutions Manageable for Healthy Outlook

Making New Year's resolutions is a tradition, and many people consider the New Year is the best time to make positive changes. Common New Year's goals range from getting more exercise, improving finances, to eating healthier.

University of Scranton psychology professor John C. Norcross, who has studied resolutions for decades, told CNN that 40% of Americans set resolutions around January 1, about 40% to 44% of them will be successful at six months.

How can we be more successful in making positive changes this year?

According to Elizabeth Woike-Ganga, LCSW-R, chief operating officer, BestSelf Behavioral Health, Inc., New Year's resolutions are generated by an artificial deadline.

"Fresh starts can happen anytime when there is positive motivation," Woike-Ganga said. "Reframe your goals in positive language as opposed to negative."

Instead of having one giant resolution such as "to lose weight," consider easier, doable smaller goals.

Perhaps a reasonable goal is to be more active by getting up earlier to walk. Instead of saying you will go to the gym every day, set a goal of two times a week.

"Another example is if you eat two scoops of ice cream every day, cut back to one scoop. If you eat fast food two times a week, cut it to one time a week," she said.

Continued on Page 2

Continued from Page 1

Woike-Ganga also suggests paying attention to our mental health as we begin the new year. A good start is to make a change and re-incorporate something fun and positive into your routine, such as walking or knitting.

"Pay attention to self-talk and try to cultivate self-compassion," she said. "What would you say to a family member or friend to encourage them?"

Consider meditation, yoga and cultivating gratitude as ways to improve your mental wellness. There are a variety of podcasts to get you started, including The Percent Happier and Happier with Gretchen Rubin.

Anytime you seek to make changes, social support is important, so Woike-Ganga suggests engaging family and friends to support you as you make positive changes. ■

Five Resolutions That Will Benefit Your Mental Health:

1. Stand Up to Stigma
2. Take Care of Your Physical Health Too
3. Share Your Story
4. Make a Commitment to Stay Informed
5. Do Something That You Love Every Day

Courtesy of NAMI

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO STOP STIGMA?

We invite you to join us and fight the stigma of mental illness. When we talk about mental health, we help everyone find his or her voice.

Some simple things you can do to end stigma is avoid using words like "crazy," "psycho," "nuts," and "insane" in everyday conversations, speak out against mental illness stigma and discrimination and share your story to increase acceptance of mental illness.

Sign the pledge (it's free) and learn about resources in our community.



Visit our events page at

LETSTALKSTIGMA.ORG/EVENTS

For a list of local mental Health Events in your community

ERIE COUNTY
ANTI-STIGMA
COALITION

Erie County Anti-Stigma Coalition Founding Members:

BryLin Behavioral Health System • Children's Mental Health Coalition of Western New York, Inc.
Community Partners of Western New York • Compeer • Crisis Services of Erie County
Erie County Department of Mental Health • Erie County Office for People with Disabilities
Fellows Action Network • Fuerst Consulting Corporation • Jewish Family Service of Buffalo & Erie County
The Mental Health Advocates of WNY • Millennium Collaborative Care • Patrick P. Lee Foundation
Preventionfocus, Inc. • Telesco Creative Group • The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT Child and Family Services

Child and Family Services dedicates its resources to meet the needs of children and families. One of Western New York's oldest human service agencies, Child and Family Services fosters safe and healthy environments for children and families in local homes, schools, workplaces and communities.

Francisco M. Vasquez, Ph.D., President and CEO, shared his perspective when Child and Family Services joined the Anti-Stigma Coalition.

I am committed to a world in which mental healthcare services are deemed a basic human right and it begins with supporting the work of the Erie County Anti-Stigma Coalition.

I work in a business serving people who by many accounts are unjustly viewed as "broken," as lacking somehow, as "problems" – as burdens of society. Some present with mental health issues and carry the weight, the stigma that relegates them to objects of pity, of fear, and of contempt.

Yet, each person we serve has a unique story to tell – many of these stories are not pretty, nevertheless, most are hopeful chronicles of redemption, of recovered lives because somebody cared. I am mindful that anyone of us is one traumatic, life-changing event from needing the types of supports we often consign to "others." ■

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS



Visit letstalkstigma.org/current-members for more information on our current members



BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ERIE COUNTY ANTI-STIGMA COALITION

Does your organization, church, temple, or community group want to combine forces with our organization? Do you individually want to engage with us to stop the stigma of mental illness? Please consider becoming a member of our Coalition by completing our membership form at letstalkstigma.org/support/pledge.

It is going to take a massive community effort to move the needle on stigma, please become a part of the solution. Questions? Please contact Karl Shallowhorn, Chairperson, at kshallowhorn@chcb.net.