



# START FRESH: BUILD GOOD MENTAL HEALTH HABITS FOR THE NEW YEAR



As another year comes to a close, many of us take time to reflect. What went well? What would we like to improve? A new year offers a fresh opportunity to focus on our mental health and emotional well-being, no matter our age.

For older adults, focusing on your mental health can improve your mood, strengthen relationships, and increase resilience. You don't need to make sweeping changes to see improvements. Small, consistent habits can have a big impact over time.

## **Focus on What Matters Most**

When setting goals for the new year, try to focus on areas that truly support your peace of mind. That could mean reducing stress, building social connections, finding new interests, or taking more time to relax and reflect. Mental health habits should feel personal and meaningful to you.

Setting realistic goals is another important part of building healthy habits, especially for older adults. Instead of aiming for drastic changes, focus on small, achievable steps that fit your current lifestyle and energy levels. Goals that are specific, manageable, and meaningful are more likely to become lasting habits and help you feel motivated instead of overwhelmed.



***See the next page for more.***

## Start Simple and Build Slowly

Instead of overloading yourself with resolutions, try starting with one or two small goals. For example:

- Write down three things you're grateful for each day.
- Spend 10 minutes outside in the fresh air.
- Call or visit a friend once a week.
- Try a relaxing activity like reading, listening to music, or meditating.



When mental health goals are simple and manageable, you're more likely to stick with them and feel encouraged by your progress.

## Make it Easy to Stick With

Look for ways to work new habits into your regular routine. Set a gentle reminder to pause and check in with yourself. Keep a notebook by your bed for reflections or journaling. Post uplifting notes or quotes where you'll see them. And be kind to yourself. Progress doesn't have to be perfect to be powerful.

## Stay Connected and Accountable

Mental health thrives on connection. Talk to someone you trust about your goals or how you're feeling. Join a local group, visit a senior center, or participate in community activities that lift your spirits. Just knowing you're not alone can be incredibly grounding.



## Look Forward with Kindness

This new year, try to offer yourself more compassion and patience. Forming new habits for your mental health is not about fixing something that's wrong, it's about supporting what helps you feel calm, capable, and connected. Celebrate your wins, learn from the tough days, and keep moving forward.

You deserve a new year filled with clarity, comfort, and care. Here's to supporting your mental well-being one step at a time.

## **WE CAN HELP.**

Our hospital-based outpatient program is designed to meet the unique needs of older adults experiencing depression and/or anxiety related to life changes that are often associated with aging or a chronic diagnosis. Anyone can make a referral to our program, including self-referrals, provider referrals, or community consultations.

**Call us today at**