Winter Success & Wellness: Ideas from the Field to Start Your Incredible Year!

Presented by Providers across the state of New York & by the NYAPRS Training Collective:
Larry Hochwald, CPRP
Robert Statham, CESP
& David Ferencz
Welcome!
Our objectives today

- 1. Summarize the specific challenges winter brings to our wellness.
- 2. Evaluate ideas to combat the negative wellness affects of winter.
- 3. Produce a list of tools to use at work to start the New Year off successfully
Meet Our Collective Team

- Robert Statham, Training & Technical Assistance Facilitator
  Western & Central New York Region

- David Ferencz, Training & Technical Assistance Facilitator
  Hudson River & North Country Region

- Larry Hochwald, Collective Team Leader & Training & Technical Assistance Facilitator
  New York City & Long Island Region

- Ruth Colón-Wagner, LMSW, Director of Training & Development
What’s special about today?
And let’s meet & hear from today’s panel!
Allyson D. Huggins, LMSW  Quality Assurance Geel Community Services, Inc.
Allyson Huggins <ahuggins@geelcs.org>;;
Ashley Brown, LCSW-R Crisis Counselor Student Affairs SUNY Ulster
Brown, Ashley brownas@sunyulster.edu
Proud to be the go-to agency for older New Yorkers
What is JASA?

JASA is the go-to non-profit serving older New Yorkers. JASA supports more than 40,000 older adults and their families annually.

With over 50 locations and a staff of 2,000, JASA offers a continuum of services and programs to address vital needs and help older adults live safely and confidently in the community, including:

- Home-Delivered Meals
- Affordable Senior Housing
- Legal Services
- Senior Centers
- Elder Abuse Prevention

For more information: www.jasa.org   212-273-5200   help@jasa.org
What is a Friendship House?

- JASA believes that one of the greatest tools we have to improve the lives of older adults in New York are the older adults themselves. That’s why JASA offers Friendship Houses. Conveniently located in both Brooklyn and the Bronx, Friendship Houses are designed for adults 55+ with a mental health diagnosis.

- JASA’s Friendship Houses are psychosocial clubs, which utilize a model where staff and members work side-by-side to carry out the tasks of running the “house.” This kind of social and community engagement reduces isolation and promotes socialization, living skills, and self-esteem while also cultivating volunteer opportunities. The Friendship House assists with many types of recovery through health promotion, wellness programs, peer supports, and more.

- Friendship House members benefit from receiving a hot nutritious lunch, joint programming, limited van transportation, and connections to the greater JASA network of services.

Ronit Notkin, LMSW Program Director at JASA Bronx Friendship House
718-863-8833 rnotkin@jasa.org
Winter Success & Wellness

IDEAS FROM THE FIELD TO START YOUR INCREDIBLE YEAR!
Maintaining Your Wellness Toolbox

● Colder months can be challenging (drop in temperatures, increased darkness, etc.)
● Preoccupied with the day to day tasks
● Harder to make time to take care of ourselves
● The pandemic has exacerbated these challenges
Maintaining Your Wellness Toolbox

We can all benefit from increasing our wellness toolbox and strengthening our mental health by using these helpful tips from JASA colleagues and members of the Bronx Friendship House:

1. Improve Your Sleep
2. Stay Engaged
3. Find Time to Slow Down
4. Stay Active
5. Get Fresh Air
6. Connect with Others
7. Manage Your Time
8. Create Warm and Cozy Spaces
9. Be Mindful of Your Diet
10. Share & Learn Healthy Recipes
11. Take Time to Reflect
Tip 1: Improve Your Sleep

- Improving sleep can help shape how we manage our days
- Try to get more sleep by adjusting daily routines to prioritize consistent sleep habits
  - Avoid screens leading up to bedtime
  - Find calming things to do before bed:
    - Read
    - Draw
    - Journal
    - Listen to calming music
    - Bath/shower
    - Massage body with lotion (calming scents like lavender)
- Talk to a doctor, therapist if you could use assistance
Tip 2: Stay Engaged

● Create opportunities for yourself to get involved and engaged with activities that help you in various ways
  ○ Keep active with volunteer work
    ■ One member started volunteering by reading books to children on zoom
  ○ Engage in meaningful activities
    ■ Members share that keeping connected with family, friends, and programs like the Friendship House helps a lot
  ○ Seek creative and new ways to help others
  ○ Learn something new
  ○ Looking at and taking photos helps connect with the past, present, and the future
Tip 3: Find Time to Slow Down

- Meditate, pray, or find alone time
- Practice different breathing and relaxation techniques
  - Deep breathing, Tai Chi, stretching exercises, etc.
- Intentionally carve out times to move slowly and not feel rushed
- Make time for moments of fun, playfulness, laughter
  - Staycation, quality time away from screens, check-in call with loved ones, caring for plants, spending time with a pet
Tip 4: Stay Active

- Make time for movement
  - Improves your health and quality of life
  - Prevent stiffness in joints
  - Reduces risk of chronic conditions

- Examples of movement
  - Chair exercises
  - Stretching
  - Walking
  - Dancing
  - Yoga/Tai Chi
Tip 5: Get Fresh Air

- Step outside
- Stand/sit in the sun
- Open a window
- Meet up with someone outside (keeping in mind wearing a mask and keeping physically distant)
Tip 6: Connect with Others

- Connect over the phone or in person when possible
  - Phone call, email, texts, cards, letters, etc.
- Recognize that everyone is struggling with something
  - Practice active listening
  - Don’t need to solve others’ challenges, being present is a gift
- Create opportunities for yourself and others to share their voice, ideas, experiences
- Share a joke, a meaningful experience with someone and give space to hear what they may have to offer
- Take note of where you see brightness in your life and share what you notice
- Find opportunities to celebrate small joys

** All of these things can add richness and brightness to our days
Tip 7: Manage Your Time

- Keep a calendar or use an app to track and structure your time
- Make a list of medical appointments that need to be made and create a plan to schedule them at times that work best for you
- Carve out time to do things that make you feel uplifted
  - Read a light book
  - Watch a funny video
  - Play a game
  - Try a new hobby
  - Connect with someone you care about
  - Etc.
Tip 8: Create Warm and Cozy Spaces

- Use warm blankets
- Wear layers
- Work on adjusting your environment so you feel your best
  - play light music
  - can add soothing scents to your space
    - boiling water with cloves, cinnamon sticks, citrus fruits, anise
    - scented oils
- Declutter and discard things that take up unwanted space and energy
  - A colleague shared the Danish concept of Hygge where you can create a mood of coziness and comfort to offer feelings of wellness & contentment
  - Seek help if needed
Tip 9: Be Mindful of Your Diet

- What we take into our body matters
  - Load up on nutrients that your body needs and that will give more energy (fruits and vegetables, vitamins, etc)
  - Check with a doctor to ensure it works for your body
  - Warm drinks and soups can be soothing and nourishing
  - Stay hydrated with water (caffeine dehydrates)
  - Allowing yourself to have some sweetness while keeping your personal health in mind
  - Reach out to a doctor, therapist, or service provider you trust if you are struggling to manage proper food and medication intake
Tip 10: Share & Learn Healthy Recipes

- Share and learn healthy and comforting recipes with others
- Some examples:
  - Hot chocolate
  - Homemade teas (ginger helps with inflammation, digestion, and has many other health benefits)
    - Ginger, apple, lemon, cloves, cinnamon sticks, turmeric, cardamon (honey at end)
    - Ginger, lime, pineapple
    - Ginger, lemon, honey
Tip 11: Take Time to Reflect

- Reflect on what has helped you in the past
- Reminisce with others
- Channel the wisdom you have learned from others over the years
- Write about your thoughts and feelings
  - journaling
  - poetry
- Practice being patient & flexible by trying to do things a bit differently...you may surprise yourself
Gita Enders, LMSW, MA, CPRP, NY CPS Director of Peer Services Office of Behavioral Health NYC Health + Hospitals
Enders, Gita <Gita.Enders@nychhc.org>
Gratitudes

I have a little box and a set of index cards in my office, and at the end of the day I write down something(s) I am grateful for at that moment. I always leave the office happy.

You can decorate a jar or envelope to keep your gratitudes in. Index cards can be purchased at the dollar store.
Free or low-cost self-soothers

- Meditation
- Epsom salt baths
- Self-help books
- Podcasts
You don’t have to take on a whole project to get a little bit fit! Here are some short easy workouts that are free on YouTube. Don’t be put off by the names – you can be any age or shape to benefit. Search for:

- **Pahla B Fitness** and **Senior Shape Fitness** both have 20-minute workouts for beginners
- If you’re up for more of a challenge, search for **Team Body Project**, which is a little tougher
You can do yoga right from your own home! Try some of the live or recorded sessions at: www.yogainternational.com (paywall)

Try searching YouTube for free yoga classes too!

Dr. Omar Fattal
Deputy Medical Director
There is a saying in the outdoor community: There is no bad weather, just bad gear. So invest in a good coat and boots, layer up, wear a hat, and get outside no matter what the weather!

Money doesn’t have to stand in the way of warm outerwear. Thrift shops are excellent places to find name brands at a fraction of their retail prices. Remember, Central Park is always free!

Curtis Dann-Messier
Director H+H Peer Academy
Time to Smell the Roses

“I stay connected with the NYC gardens I love! My go-to-places are the NY Botanical Garden in the Bronx and the Brooklyn Botanical Garden. In the winter, I enjoy walking meditation, admire the bare beauty and simplicity of the surroundings, and envision how nature grows, changes and evolves. Then, I become filled with hope.”

NYBG offers free or low-cost grounds-only tickets for NYC residents. BBG admission winter weekdays Tuesday-Friday pay what you wish.

Rosalie Sanchez
Mental Health Service Corps Trainer
A heartfelt THANK YOU!! To all of our presenters, as well as to all of those who contributed the following tips!
Rob, David, Ruth & Larry will tell us about some tips, including those they received from their regions—
I get up and exercise 3 times a week before work
Winter walks
Once a week get togethers with friends- Lisa Turnquist, BSW- PROS Director – Rochester Rehabilitation Center – Ventures PROS

To help me get thru the dreary days of winter, I engage in projects that need to get done that I don’t want to have to do when it is hot and/or that will help me have fun when the season changes. For example, I planned to clean out my basement during the winter because during the summer it is humid, and the spiders are more active. I also spend some time researching fun things to do in the summer. Even with NO budget to work with, I can look for free activities and determine if I need anything in order to participate. The benefit is that I keep my body and mind engaged while accomplishing something and creating something to look forward to.  - Michele Eckert- Senior Career Navigator – Rochester Rehabilitation Center
Here are things I've been doing to keep myself mentally healthy, of late:

- Reaching out and talking about how I'm feeling with a trusted person
- Exercising!!
- Reducing caffeine intake
- Acupuncture
- Being more intentional about my personal schedule
- Taking care of others

• Hope that helps!
Aromatherapy  Mood Lighting

Cooking  Soups or Stews
Robert Statham

• Journaling – All kinds from the traditional journal, gratitude journals, art journals, music journals, traffic journals, visual journals, food journals and natural journals

Benefits include:
• Gives you a space to get out anxious thoughts and remind yourself that you are enough
• Helps you manage stressful situations—studies show even just a small amount of time spent journaling can lower blood pressure
• Gives you clarity by letting you work through decisions you’re uncertain about and helping you stay in tune with your needs and desires
• Helps you focus on the things that are most important to you and gain a stronger understanding of your values
• Strengthens your emotional resilience and help you find more joy in life
• Taps into your right brain and help you grow creative expression
From David Ferencz, Trainer for the Hudson Valley

I have intentional “play-dates” with a friend.

Every Wednesday, we take the time to carefully go through our week and invite the other to give feedback.

Sometimes the session lasts 15-20 minutes, but they have gone for as long as three hours. The average is about an hour.

We’ve been doing this for around 20 years.
We can work on being happy...

• Some tools you can use (here’s how I use them):
  • Fasting – refraining from impulsive eating, spending, watching...
  • Silence – keeping the radio off in the car. No screen time after 8:00 PM
  • Solitude – Limiting social media. Spending intentional time alone.
  • Meditation and prayer – staying in touch with my deepest values.
1. **Set reasonable and specific goals.** The surest way to fall short of your goal is to make your goal unattainable. When establishing your goals, be selective. It’s better to move one thing forward a mile than ten things forward an inch.

2. **Create a plan.** Once you’ve set your goal(s), work backwards so that you know exactly what you need to do to get where you want to go.

3. **List new skills you’ll need.** You’ll likely need new skills to move ahead with your career plans or keep up with the times in your business. Take note of what you’ll need to learn this year and develop a strategy for mastering these skills.

4. **Be sure your goals are measurable.** What gets measured gets done. Keep track of your success and reward yourself along the way.

5. **Talk about your goals.** Tell friends, family members, and trusted colleagues about your plans so that they can support you.
6. **Make course corrections if necessary.** If you find yourself heading in the wrong direction, don’t hesitate to course correct. Goals are not carved in stone. It’s okay to adjust your goals as you go.

7. **If things aren’t going according to plan, ask for help.** There’s no shame in admitting that you need assistance.

8. **Avoid repeating past failures.** Doing things, the same way, when you didn’t get the results, you are seeking won’t change the outcome. Instead, take a different approach.

9. **Schedule time for yourself.** Schedule time on your calendar where you can get away and be free from distraction.

10. **Balance work and play.** In most cases, our jobs and work take priority over many other things in our life. Work isn’t going anywhere. The greatest wealth you can build is discretionary time. Think about this and then say yes to doing something you love!
Tips Continued…

11. **Manage your reputation.** You're nothing without your reputation; make sure that your reputation speaks for itself. How can you influence what other people know about you? Create online profiles in all of the networks you intend to use. LinkedIn, Twitter and Google+ are all useful and allow you to post streams of information to highlight your expertise. Make sure your online profiles feature the information you want people to know about you when they Google your name.

12. **Keep an eye on the future.** Have you thought about the outlook for your company and industry? Are jobs moving overseas? Are opportunities going to freelancers instead of full-time employees? Is your job easily automated? Now is a good time to start thinking about the outlook for next year and beyond. Be realistic and brutally honest and consider what action you should take if prospects aren't promising.

13. **Break out of your rut.** Be honest: is it time to take on something new? If you've been doing the "same old" for years, now may be the perfect time to plan for a change. Have you been thinking of taking classes or volunteering for a project that could position you for a bigger job? There's no time like the present.

14. **Join a professional association or take a more active role in one where you are a member.** Professional organizations provide many opportunities to volunteer. Look for a small job to start, and plan to ramp up your involvement, especially if you have career aspirations that involve using leadership skills.
15. Be flexible. It's difficult to go very far at work if you aren't flexible. Try your best to be open to new ideas and new ways to do things and make a goal to try to say "yes" more than "no" at work when it comes to suggestions from your colleagues and supervisors.

16. Make new friends. You've heard that networking is the best way to get a job; take that advice to heart and make a point to expand your circle of contacts. The more people who know, like and trust you and think you are good at what you do, the better the chance of you finding and landing new opportunities in the new year.

17. Keep an eye on the important things. Don't forget to stop and smell the proverbial roses. If you've been neglecting your health, your family or friends, make a point to address those concerns in the new year and you'll be more likely to be successful in your work life as well.
One last tip! A favorite (though studies show EVERY pet is helpful!)
And of course, Pets are helpful all year round, but especially when we are stuck inside…
To arrange free training (for all NYS OMH licensed and/or funded) Agencies and Programs:

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Thank you!
Q&A