Suicide Prevention – Self Awareness & Self Care

We often spend so much time taking care of others we can forget to take care of ourselves. You may recognize you don't feel like yourself, but not realize how it's affecting your life or those around you. Good mental health helps you bounce back from stresses and thrive in your daily life.

The first step to improving and maintaining good mental health, is self-awareness. Without taking the time to check-in, you may find yourself stuck in the same cycles that are harming your mental health. You can't perform at work or take care of your family if you're unwell – mentally or physically.

Answer these simple self-awareness questions then think about how you answered them. Are you struggling and need some support? If you are struggling, practice self-care.

- How are you feeling today, really? Physically and mentally.
- What's taking up most of your headspace right now?
- What and when was your last full meal, and have you been drinking enough water?
- How have you been sleeping?
- What have you been doing for exercise?
- What did you do today that made you feel good?

What is self-care?
Self-care activities are things you do in your daily life to establish and maintain good health and improve your wellbeing. Self-care can help you manage mental health challenges such as stress, depression, and anxiety.

What does self-care look like?
Self-care is very personal. What helps one person maintain wellbeing, might not work for others. Self-care can be simple, such as taking a deep breath when you notice you are stressed, or it can be more involved, like setting boundaries or creating new routines.

Consider creating an action plan
- Step 1: Evaluate your life and identify where you are feeling unbalanced
- Step 2: Determine what self-care practices will meet your needs.
- Step 3: Decide what you want to try – is it something new, something easy?
- Step 4: Set up a realistic plan that you can stick with.

- Step 5: Determine when/where/how to start.

Take the time to check-in and get help if you are struggling. Your family doctor, employer's EAP / MAP, or your insurance company can all provide support and mental health resources. As you stay on top of your mental health, over time you will realize you're starting to feel better, and your family and coworkers will notice it too.

SAFETY REMINDER
Self-care helps you bounce back in the face of challenges. You are better able to care for others and handle stress when you are feeling your best.