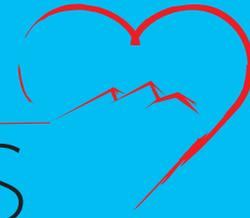


health awareness



A COUNTY HEALTH POOL PUBLICATION

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SELF-IMPROVEMENT MONTH

Your son or daughter may be excited about a new backpack, seeing old friends, making new friends, and getting to know a new teacher and classroom. You may be feeling the shift of the season from summer to fall. It's the time of year we think about changes. September is self-improvement month. Let's call it the adult version of back-to-school.

Autumnal Resolutions

According to NY Times bestselling author Karen Duffy, "The difference between January resolutions and autumnal resolutions is that New Year's vows are about will: losing weight, getting in shape, quitting smoking. September resolutions are about adjusting and reevaluating our goals. These ninth-

month reflections do not declare themselves with noisemakers, confetti and champagne. They are reinvigorated steps towards a positive change."

Changing Old Habits

How do you know what to improve and where to focus your efforts? Performance Psychology Specialist Dr. Linda Hamilton says in order to become more self-aware, you should first distance yourself to observe your behaviors. Hamilton suggests asking yourself:

- Are you a negative or positive thinker?
- Do you see possibilities, or just reasons why something won't work?
- Do you look for the best in others, or the worst? How about in yourself?

- Do you fill your day with so much busy work that there's no time to think?
- How often do you nurture yourself or focus on the best parts of your day?

"Answering these questions can open the door to a new way of being," says Hamilton.

Half Empty / Half Full

If you find you lean toward negativity, you might use this month to challenge yourself to become more of an optimist. See the glass half full. Have a smile on your face. Exude a positive attitude. Studies show that positive people perform better, achieve more - and yes, might even get hired more often. In fact, some companies seek out optimistic new hires on purpose. Why? Because optimists are

(article is continued on reverse side)

more persistent and less likely to give up, making them more likely to achieve success. Research also shows that optimists have increased longevity, less stress and better mental health. Changing whether you see your life as half empty or half full can make a dramatic impact.

Inhale...(Hold)...Exhale

September is also *National Yoga Month*. Give your muscles a stretch, reduce your stress, and center your “chi” in downward dog. According to the America Osteopathic Association, there are many benefits of yoga:

- increased flexibility, muscle strength and tone
- improved respiration, energy and vitality
- a more balanced metabolism
- weight reduction
- cardio and circulatory health
- improved athletic ability
- injury protection

Yoga is called a practice because even yoga instructors still “practice” yoga meaning - no one is perfect. Find a yoga DVD, or look for yoga classes in your community. Namaste.

Emergency Preparedness Month

September is also *Emergency Preparedness Month*. If your child gets hurt at home, or you have a fire in the kitchen, are you prepared? This is the month to make a game plan. Where would you take your son or daughter in an emergency? Do you have a fire extinguisher at home? Is it ready to go? Have you reviewed how to use it? Remember the acronym P.A.S.S.:

- **PULL**...pull the pin.
- **AIM**...aim low, pointing the extinguisher nozzle at the

base of the fire.

- **SQUEEZE**...Squeeze the handle to release the extinguishing agent.
- **SWEEP**...Sweep the flames.

Finances can also be a part of emergency preparedness. If your car breaks down and the repair costs \$1,000, do you have money in savings? Putting away extra money can make you more prepared and lower your stress.

More Ideas

- Grab a book. Read a chapter a day until you finish.

- Start a small home project.
- Venture out of your comfort zone: Public speaking, sky diving, swimming, diving.
- Exercise 30 minutes a day.
- Meditate.
- Quit a bad habit.
- Find your passion.
- Save a life. (You don’t have to be a first responder to save a live. Be the one who refused to let a friend drive drunk. Adopt a stray dog or cat.)
- Be grateful. At the end of the day, express gratitude. Close the day on a positive note.

BENEFITS CORNER

CHP Flu Shot Reimbursement Process

1. Available to members and dependents enrolled in a CHP medical plan on date of vaccination; Visit an in-network provider or pharmacy
2. Complete a CHP flu shot claim form (available on ctsi.org, from your entity contact or your CHP benefits administrator); One form per member/dependent
3. Make a copy of your flu shot receipt
4. Mail the claim form and the receipt to Anthem or to your CHP benefits administrator. Or submit to your entity contact with a completed HIPAA authorization form (this form provides consent allowing your entity contact to have knowledge of your PHI or protected health information)
5. Anthem, on behalf of CHP, will reimburse up to the usual and customary rate for the flu shot; You will receive a reimbursement check in the mail
6. Keep a copy of the paperwork for your records

