

# Mental Health Awareness Month

## PROCESSING BIG CHANGES

Change is a big part of life. Good or bad.

Having the tools to process change increases our ability to adapt more easily.

### FAST FACTS!

- People that journaled about significant events reported more satisfaction with their lives and better mental health over those who did not.
- Strong social support from family members following significant life events can seriously lessen depression symptoms and has lasting positive effect when dealing with changes.
- Adults who avoid problems struggle more with depression than those who actively use coping strategies to approach problems they are experiencing.



### TIPS FOR PROCESSING CHANGE



- ◇ **Focus on what you can control.** One of the hardest thing about big change is how helpless you can feel. One tool you can use is to control how you react to a situation such as how your start your day or how well you treat yourself or others. It can be comforting to know that there are still things that you do have control over when other things are changing.
- ◇ **Write out your feelings on paper.** When you are processing big changes, your brain can feel like it is constantly racing. It is easy to become overwhelmed with all the things you are thinking and feeling. Instead of holding it all in your mind, try releasing it. Writing is one of the best ways to do that. Using a journal or a note app on your phone can be a great way to get down a quick list of your thoughts and feelings. Sometimes if your feelings are towards yourself or another, write a letter to help clarify your thoughts. Just get it all out and onto “paper” so that it isn’t cluttering your mind.
- ◇ **Keep up your self-care when you can.** When so much of life feels different and overwhelming, it’s tempting to focus on work or avoid what is bothering you by not participating in the things that bring you joy. However, is it important to keep up normal habits and routines when it comes to protecting your mental health. Small familiar habits like exercise, walking to clear your mind, or taking a few moments to slow down and breathe deeply.
- ◇ **Know your Strengths and Find Support.** Big challenges can test you but it’s likely you will grow from it. Remind yourself that you are strong and capable to make it through whatever challenges come your way. Finding support from others who feel the same, including an online support group or mental health professional, whomever you turn to, to provide support and who can listen to help your through any transitions you are working through.