

Practice Management Insight

A report on events affecting behavioral health and substance abuse providers

February 2020

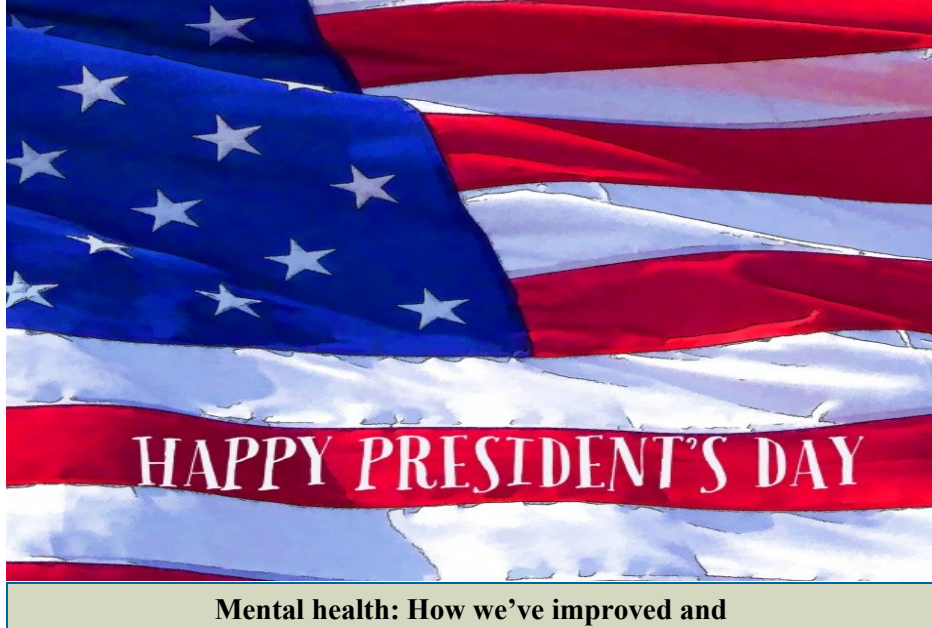
ThinkHealth Help Coming Soon!

OrionNet Systems has some exciting changes coming to ThinkHealth. It is the new ThinkHealth Help! It is designed around the idea that we can release help content here in our office and it will show up for all agencies.

The new ThinkHealth Help will have help content for every module. There will be Trending Help and General Help content, plus even Curriclums that can be used with each agency. You will have the ability to rate the help content using a star rating system. This will be very helpful to all of our ThinkHealth members.

The ThinkHealth Help will be released within the next few weeks. There will also be a training scheduled once this has been rolled out.

[For More Information](#)



Mental health: How we've improved and where we need to do better in 2020

With the help of mental health experts, we've taken a look at some of the most significant breakthroughs concerning mental health over the last 10 years, as well as where we need to do better. By and large, physical health is still more straightforward and (often) more tangible than mental health, but over the course of the past decade, there's been increased willingness to recognize mental health as an essential part of one's well-being. In short, we've come a long way. As a mental health advocate and reporter, I've seen the advancements up close and personal and can say with certainty that in 2010 I wouldn't have dreamed of writing pieces like "[How to talk about mental health issues at work](#)" or "[A mental health check-in: 14 questions to ask your child](#)" for a national news outlet. Such topics just weren't so, well, topical back then.

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After centuries of shame and misrepresentation, the term 'mental health' is losing the stigma

"Historically, when people have talked about 'mental health', they usually meant severe mental illness."

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One alternative therapy is crucial for better mental health

As many as [one in six adults](#) experience mental health problems like depression or anxiety every week. And not only is mental ill-health one of the most [common causes of disease](#) worldwide — it's also [on the rise](#). Finding ways to [improve mental health](#) is therefore essential.

One type of therapy that is starting to become more popular is "ecotherapy"; which advocates claim can improve mental and physical wellbeing. Sometimes referred to as [green exercise](#) or [green care](#), this type of formal therapeutic treatment involves being active in natural spaces. It's also sighted to be one of [2020's biggest wellness trends](#), though the practice is [far from new](#).

Although definitions of ecotherapy vary, most agree it's a regular, structured activity that is:

1. therapist-led

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Neuroimaging shows that meditation literally changes the brain for the better

Meditation is nothing new: It's a fixture of many religions, and has been practice for thousands of years. However, scientific understanding of how meditation changes the body is ever-increasing. Some [studies](#) indicate that meditation can physically change the brain and body, capable of reducing blood pressure, symptoms of anxiety and depression, and insomnia.

But it's perhaps the changes to the brain that meditation can induce that are the most striking. In 2011, researchers [reported](#) in *Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging* that eight-weeks of engaging in an average of 27 minutes a day of meditation results in differences in the brain. The study included two groups of people who had never meditated any more.

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Five ways to improve mental health in 2020

It's a difficult birth for this new decade. The year 2020 kicks off under the shadow of divisive politics, international security threats, a spate of hate crimes, and a planet in environmental peril, plus all the reasons we're stressed individually: work, health problems, life changes and more.

No wonder so many of us are [anxious](#) or [depressed](#).

But you can take scientifically validated steps to improve your mental outlook, and - because the mind and body are entwined -- these behaviors also will improve your overall health.

1. Practice optimism

The studies are positive: Looking on the bright side of life really is good for you. Optimists have a [35% less chance](#) of having a heart attack or stroke, are more likely to eat a [healthy diet](#) and [exercise regularly](#), have [stronger immune systems](#); and even [live longer](#). In fact, a 2019 study found people with the most positive outlook had the greatest odds of living to 85 or beyond.

[More Information](#)

Can Mindfulness Help When You're Depressed?

While these statistics are alarming, there is some good news: Mounting research points to the promise of [mindfulness](#)—paying attention to your present thoughts, feelings, and sensations without judging them—in helping people alleviate depression. Studies have suggested that mindfulness-based cognitive therapy is just as effective as medication in [preventing depression relapse](#) among adults with a history of recurrent depression, and in [reducing depressive symptoms](#) among those with active For many people, depression is a lifelong battle. If you have one episode of depression, there is a [30 percent chance](#) of recurrence within 10 years, increasing to an [80 percent chance](#) after two episodes. Only about [one quarter](#) of people achieve remission after six months of antidepressant medication treatment.

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Promoting Empathy in Our Kids (And in Ourselves)

I don't think I fully grasped how empathetic my son, Edwin, was until I had my second child. When we brought newborn Charlie home from the hospital, Edwin went through an understandable transition; there were a lot of tantrums, "no's", and power struggles. What was most noteworthy though, was Edwin's reaction when Charlie cried. As a newborn, Charlie cried a lot, and while the tantrums and "no's" simmered down as Edwin got used to sharing his parents' [attention](#) with his little brother, the crying that remained was the crying in response to Charlie's cries—and as it turns out when anyone cries.

When Edwin sees another person, child, or a baby crying, his face immediately changes shape

[For More Information](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

February 2

[Ground Hog Day](#)

February 5

[Advanced ASI/ASAM](#)

February 5

[Wellness Coach Training](#)

February 14

[Valentines Day](#)

February 17

[National Random Acts of Kindness Day](#)

February 17

[Presidents Day](#)

February 19

[Trauma Informed Criminal Justice Workshop](#)

February 19

[Housing First Training](#)

February 21

[Mental Health First Aid Adults](#)

February 20

[IPS 101 Training](#)

Self-care is how you take your power back.



HealthyPlace.com

Can Mindfulness Evolve From Wellness Pursuit to Medical Treatment?

Roughly a third of all adults in the United States have high blood pressure, a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. It's a condition that can be largely controlled with diet, exercise and medication, yet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [estimates](#) that only about half of the 75 million people who have high blood pressure manage to keep it in check. In November, Eric Loucks, director of the Mindfulness Center at the Brown University School of Public Health, and colleagues published [a study in Plos One](#), a science journal, that put forward a possible solution: an eight-week mindfulness-based program.

[For More Information](#)

I WILL BREATHE.

I WILL THINK OF SOLUTIONS.

I WILL NOT LET MY WORRY CONTROL ME.

I WILL NOT LET MY STRESS LEVEL BREAK ME.

I WILL SIMPLY BREATHE.

AND IT WILL BE OKAY.

BECAUSE I DON'T QUIT.

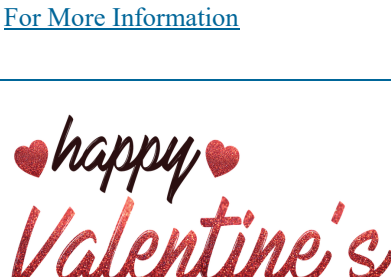
— SHARON FEELGOOD

The best mindfulness apps in 2020

The best mindfulness apps can help with all manner of mental and physical health problems, and improve overall life quality. In our culture of information overload, many people find they need to make an active effort to manage their stress levels in order to help prevent burnout.

From eating enough leafy greens to getting more shut-eye, there are plenty of tactics you can use to keep creative burnout at bay. Mindfulness — a proven method of helping to train your mind to more effectively manage anxiety and stress — is one of several strategies you can use to make yourself more resistant to burnout, your creativity).

[For More Information](#)



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