

EMBRACING
TRANQUILITY EDITION:

#13 | JANUARY 2025

HEY, HOW ARE YOU?

Embracing Tranquility:



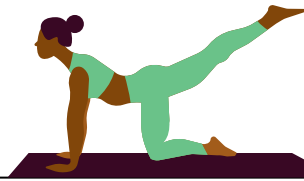
Self-Care and You: Embracing Self-Love Month

This January, our top feature is all about you! Practicing self-care and self-love has been shown to reduce stress, improve mental health, and boost physical well-being. With over 70% of individuals reporting that intentional self-care leads to higher productivity and happiness, there's no better time to prioritize yourself.



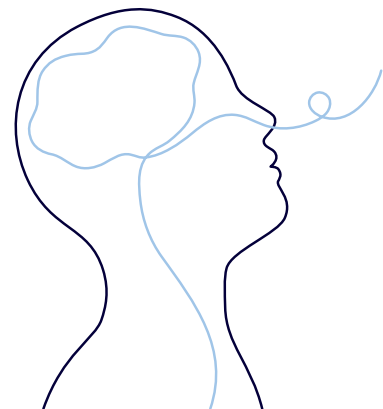
Yoga Classes:

Stay on the look out for yoga dates!



Breathwork and Stress Reduction Techniques:

Your breath is your anchor. We explored the transformative power of breathwork and stress reduction techniques. Participants learned how to harness the breath to calm the nervous system, reduce anxiety, and cultivate inner peace.



YOUR GUIDELINE FOR BREATHWORK HERE

Why We Love Self-Love



Much of who we are as individuals is shaped by our genetics, even before we're born. Genetics influence our confidence, self-esteem, and how we approach challenges, such as grief and loss. These factors can play a key role in whether we are naturally inclined to be go-getters or struggle to push forward. However, maintaining a healthy lifestyle can give our bodies the vital nutrients needed for physical strength, mental clarity, and emotional resilience.

Developing self-esteem is crucial for building what we like to call "emotional immunity." This helps us handle adversity and adapt to life's changes with greater ease. It's easy to view "me time" as self-indulgent, but in reality, nothing can function at its best without proper care. Not your home, not your car, not your livelihood and certainly not you. So, why not nourish yourself?

Self-love has been shown to reduce the risk of suicidal thoughts and self-harming behaviors. People who prioritize self-care experience benefits in physical health, mental functioning, and emotional flexibility.

At Embracing, we understand the importance of a holistic health plan that nurtures your physical, psychological, and emotional well-being. We believe in the power of self-love and self-care. By helping clients develop healthy self-care habits now, we aim to support their long-term health and happiness.

Health Benefits: Studies show that practicing self-love is associated with reduced levels of stress and anxiety, leading to a 30% lower risk of chronic illnesses like heart disease. Engage in activities like journaling or meditation to foster self-awareness and resilience.

Positivity: Research indicates that self-love correlates with higher levels of happiness and satisfaction. When you value yourself, you're better equipped to build strong, healthy relationships.

Encouraging Growth: A survey by the American Psychological Association found that individuals who prioritize personal development are 60% more likely to achieve their goals. Use January to set intentional milestones for your mental and emotional well-being.



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Tips for Practicing Self-Love:



- **Create a mental health wellness plan:** Create a guide of coping skills, people to talk to in stressful situations, and enjoyable activities to ensure that you maintain the balance between your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.
- **Practice self-acceptance:** Use the new year as an opportunity to practice self-acceptance and self-esteem.
 - **Acknowledge Your Worth**
 - Use daily positive affirmations ("I am worthy," "I am enough").
 - Reflect on your strengths and accomplishments.
 - **Cultivate Self-Compassion**
 - Be kind to yourself, especially during difficult moments.
 - Forgive yourself for past mistakes and focus on growth
 - **Set Realistic Expectations**
 - Break goals into manageable steps.
 - Celebrate small progress and be kind to yourself during setbacks.
- **Put yourself first:** Self-care isn't selfish. It's important to take time every day for yourself and your mental health. Engage in something that is meaningful and brings you joy. Do what helps you relax and recharge, and seek out experiences that have a calming effect. You can't pour in to any one else if your glass is empty!.
- **Be Grateful:** Practicing gratitude every day can invoke feelings of thankfulness and optimism. When you take the time to be grateful, you tend to notice more positives. Don't beat yourself up when you make a mistake—everyone makes them.
- **Get Enough Sleep:** Most health authorities recommend adults get between 7 and 9 hours of sleep daily. Consistent lack of sleep can negatively affect your mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being.
- **Slow Down:** Do things with intention. Take the time to think about what you are doing and why. Is it worth your time and energy? Draw awareness to positive moments and savor them.
- **Seek Support:** Asking for help when you need it is a sign of strength. Reaching out to resources and supports can make a significant difference in maintaining mental wellness.
- **Follow an End-of-Day Checklist:**
 - **Review:** Acknowledge a challenge you faced, take a deep breath, and let it go.
 - **Reflect:** However small, consider and appreciate positives in your day.
 - **Regroup:** Offer support to your colleagues and ask for help when you need it.
 - **Re-energize:** Take the time to tend to your needs by resting, relaxing, or doing something you enjoy

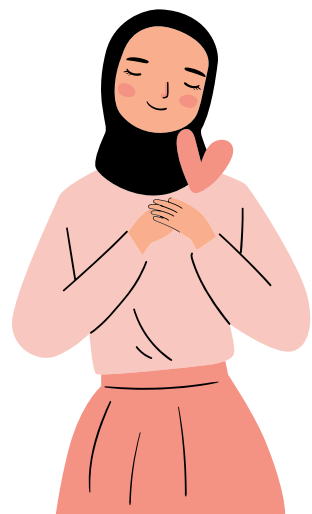


Reflect on one challenge and one positive from your day. This practice helps improve mood by creating a balanced perspective.

More Tips, Resources, and Activities:



- **Attend Our Group Sessions:** Gain actionable advice from mental health experts in our supportive group discussions. Share your journey and learn strategies to navigate stress, build resilience, and embrace self-love.
- **Engage with Free Mindfulness Apps:** Apps like [Insight Timer](#) or [Stoic App](#) offer journals, guided meditations, mindfulness exercises, and sleep aids to support your mental well-being. They're accessible and easy to incorporate into your daily routine.
- **Read Inspirational Self-Help Books:** Nurture your growth with these highly recommended reads:
 - [How We Heal: Uncover Your Power and Set Yourself Free](#) by Alex Elle
 - [The Sugar Jar: Create Boundaries, Embrace Self-Healing, and Enjoy the Sweet Things in Life](#) by Yasmine Cheyenne
 - [The Gifts of Imperfection](#) by Brené Brown
- **Participate in Community Events or Volunteer:** Engage with your local community by attending events or volunteering for causes you care about. It's a great way to nurture connections and find fulfillment.
- **Check Out TED Talks:** Expand your perspective with thought-provoking TED Talks on mental well-being and self-improvement.
- **Take Advantage of Nature Trails or Parks:** Spending time outdoors improves mood and reduces stress. Whether it's walking, jogging, or simply picnicking, reconnecting with nature can be a rejuvenating form of self-care.



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National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention



January also marks National Human Trafficking Prevention Month, a critical time to unite efforts in combating and raising awareness about this global issue.

Understanding the Scope: Human trafficking affects over 40 million people worldwide, with victims often subjected to forced labor, sexual exploitation, and domestic servitude. In the United States, the National Human Trafficking Hotline received over 10,000 reports in the last year alone, showcasing the prevalence of this crime even in local communities.

Types of Human Trafficking:

- **Labor Trafficking**
 - **Description:** Victims are forced or coerced to work in industries such as agriculture, construction, hospitality, domestic work, or manufacturing. They often endure poor working conditions, long hours, and little to no pay.
 - **Signs of Labor Trafficking:**
 - Victims working long hours with little to no breaks.
 - No personal identification or documentation.
 - Living in substandard conditions or crowded housing provided by the employer.
 - Fear of employer or law enforcement.
 - Victims having restricted or no freedom of movement, unable to leave their place of work.
 - Lack of communication with family or friends.
 - Fear of being reported to authorities or deported.
- **Sex Trafficking**
 - **Description:** Individuals are exploited through sex for commercial gain, often through coercion, threats, or force. Victims may be manipulated by traffickers into the sex trade, sometimes under the guise of work, love, or protection.
 - **Signs of Sex Trafficking:**
 - A person who seems under the control of someone else (they are always accompanied by someone, or their movements are heavily controlled).
 - Sexualized behavior or knowledge beyond their age, or signs of physical abuse such as bruising, cuts, or injuries.
 - Refusal to speak for themselves or constantly being interrupted by someone.
 - Unexplained absences from school or work.
 - Appears disoriented, fearful, or confused, especially in public.
 - The individual has a lack of freedom and is being moved between locations frequently.
- **Domestic Servitude**
 - **Description:** A hidden form of trafficking where individuals (often women and children) are forced to work in private homes as domestic workers. They may experience physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, and are denied basic rights such as rest or communication with others.
 - **Signs of Domestic Servitude:**
 - Unusual restrictions, such as no access to a phone, family, or friends.
 - The individual appears isolated, avoids interacting with others, or seems frightened of their employer.
 - Victimization signs like burns, cuts, bruises, or other untreated injuries.
 - Excessive working hours with little to no pay.
 - Victim is often unable to leave the employer's home or workplace.
 - A lack of personal possessions or belongings.

Continued...

- **Child Trafficking**

- **Description:** Children are exploited for labor, sexual exploitation, child soldiering, or illegal activities like organ harvesting. Traffickers often target vulnerable children, and the exploitation may happen through deceptive means, such as promises of a better life or education.
- **Signs of Child Trafficking:**
 - Children are frequently seen with an adult who does not appear to be their family member or legal guardian.
 - Signs of physical or emotional abuse, neglect, or malnutrition.
 - Children who are constantly moved, live in unsafe conditions, or are forced to perform illegal activities.
 - Children who exhibit signs of distress or fear when approached by strangers or authority figures.
 - Lack of education, irregular school attendance, or disappearance from school

- **Child Criminal Exploitation**

- **Description:** Children are coerced into committing criminal acts, such as selling drugs, stealing, or participating in illegal activities. Often, traffickers manipulate the child through threats, emotional manipulation, or promises of protection or belonging.
- **Signs of Child Criminal Exploitation:**
 - A child found in possession of drugs, stolen goods, or weapons.
 - Sudden change in behavior or appearance, especially if they start showing signs of being involved in crime.
 - The child seems fearful, anxious, or protective of an adult or group.
 - Unexplained absences or being forced to run errands or make frequent trips to specific areas, such as known crime hubs.
 - Children who appear to be out of control or are often in trouble with the law.

Online Recruitment Risks: 85% of human trafficking cases start online. Social media platforms are commonly used to exploit vulnerabilities, making education about online safety critical. Ensure that you and your loved ones know how to recognize and report suspicious behavior.

Prevention Strategies:

- Build resilience in communities by supporting education, economic mobility, and safe housing programs.
- Advocate for legislative measures that target trafficking networks and protect victims.
- Educate others about the connection between trafficking and other forms of violence, including domestic abuse and child exploitation.

How You Can Help:

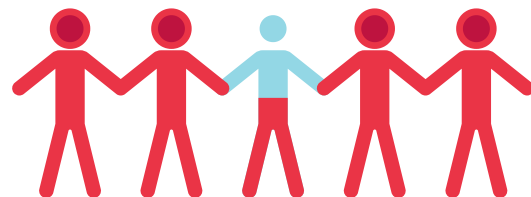
- **Learn and Share Knowledge:** Utilize resources from organizations like the Polaris Project or NCMEC (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children) to educate yourself and your community.
- **Volunteer or Donate:** Support non-profits that provide aid to trafficking survivors. Consider donating to local shelters or volunteering your time.
- **Report Suspicious Activity:** Use the National Human Trafficking Hotline (1-888-373-7888) to report potential trafficking or seek assistance.
- **Participate in Advocacy:** Join events and campaigns this month to raise awareness and support anti-trafficking policies.

Resources for Involvement:

1. **Maryland Human Trafficking Hotline**
 - Phone: 1-888-373-7888
2. **Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS)**
 - Phone: 1-800-332-6347
3. **The Maryland State Police - Human Trafficking Unit**
 - Phone: 1-800-492-8477
4. **House of Ruth Maryland**
 - Phone: 410-889-0840 (Baltimore)
 - Toll-Free: 1-877-988-8348



Wellness Spotlight: Blood Donor Month



January is Blood Donor Month—a chance to save lives. Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood, and a single donation can save up to three lives. Blood supplies are often critically low during the winter, making your contribution even more vital.

Why Donate Blood?

- **Life-Saving Impact:** One donation can save up to three lives. Hospitals depend on a steady supply of blood for emergency situations, surgeries, and chronic conditions.
- **Community Support:** By donating blood, you directly help members of your community. Local donations often stay within the area, aiding those in need nearby.
- **Health Benefits for Donors:** Regular blood donation has been linked to improved heart health and iron level management. Plus, it offers a sense of fulfillment knowing you're making a difference.

How to Participate:

- **Donate at nearby locations like:**
 - Children's National Edward J. Miller, Sr., Blood Donor Center: Washington, DC · (202) 476-5437
 - Octapharma Plasma: Hyattsville, MD · (240) 478-6085
 - BioLife Plasma Services: Riverdale, MD · (301) 276-9943
 - Octapharma Plasma: Riverdale, MD · (240) 667-7035
 - CSL Plasma: Landover, MD · (240) 791-5142
 - ADMA BioCenters: Laurel, MD · (240) 891-2220
- **Host a Blood Drive:** Partner with your workplace or community organization to create a local impact. Resources and support are often provided by blood donation organizations.
- **Schedule Your Donation:** Use apps like [App Name] to book your slot and learn about donor eligibility. Most donors can give blood every 56 days, so consider setting a recurring reminder.

Tips for First-Time Donors:

- Stay hydrated and eat a healthy meal before your appointment.
- Bring a valid ID and any required paperwork.
- Rest and replenish with snacks provided at the donation center.

Get Involved Beyond Donating:

- Volunteer at donation centers to assist with events.
- Spread awareness by sharing your donation experience on social media.
- Encourage friends and family to join you in making a difference.



Together, we can ensure hospitals and patients have the lifesaving resources they need.

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Embrace Wellness: Local Free Events for January

Welcome to December! This month, we're excited to bring you a variety of free local events in the DMV area, offering opportunities to connect with your community, support important causes, and enjoy family-friendly activities. Whether you're looking to experience a long-standing festival tradition, sample delicious local cuisine, or participate in events promoting awareness and advocacy, November has something for everyone. From the vibrant streets of Fells Point to the culinary delights of Bethesda, join us in celebrating the spirit of community, wellness, and fun for all ages.

1. Ice Skating at Baltimore's Inner Harbor

- Dates: November 9, 2024 - January 20, 2025
- Time: 12-10 p.m.
- Location: 201 E Pratt St, Baltimore, MD 21202
- Kick off the season with free opening night activities at the outdoor ice rink, including hot chocolate and treats. It's a festive way to enjoy the season with family-friendly fun.

2. Kids Kaboose at Old Bowie Welcome Center

- Date: Friday, January 10, 2025
- Time: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- Location: Old Bowie Welcome Center, 8614 Chestnut Avenue, Bowie, MD 20715
- Enjoy a fun story and engaging activities suitable for children.

3. Bird Feeder Craft at sweetFrog Kent Island

- Date: Sunday, January 5, 2025
- Time: 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM
- Location: sweetFrog, 101 Crier Drive, Stevensville, MD 21666
- Participate in a free craft session to create bird feeders.

4. Howard County Child Care Fair 2025

- Date: Saturday, January 25, 2025
- Time: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- Location: East Columbia 50+ Center, 6600 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045
- Description: Explore child care options and resources available in Howard County.

5. Parents of Neurodivergent Kids Workshop: Community Safety

- Date: Sunday, January 5, 2025
- Time: 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
- Location: Children at Play, LLC, 1000 N. Rolling Road, Suite 204, Catonsville, MD 21228
- Description: Workshop focusing on community safety for parents of neurodivergent children.



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Free Resources:

NAMI Maryland (National Alliance on Mental Illness)(410-884-8691):

- NAMI Maryland provides free mental health education, support groups, advocacy, and resources for individuals and families affected by mental illness. They offer programs such as NAMI Family Support Groups and NAMI Peer-to-Peer classes.

Mental Health Association of Maryland(443-901-1550):

- The Mental Health Association of Maryland offers free mental health resources, advocacy, and support services to promote mental wellness and recovery. They provide information on mental health topics, support groups, and educational programs.

Mosaic Community Services(410-453-9553):

- Mosaic Community Services is a nonprofit organization that offers free and low-cost mental health and substance use disorder services in Maryland. They provide counseling, therapy, case management, and other support services for individuals of all ages.

Maryland Coalition of Families (410-730-8267):

- The Maryland Coalition of Families is a nonprofit organization that provides free support, education, and advocacy for families of children and youth with mental health, substance use, and other behavioral health challenges. They offer support groups, workshops, and resources for families navigating the mental health system.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255):

- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a national network of crisis centers that provide free and confidential support to individuals in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. Trained crisis counselors are available 24/7 to offer support, intervention, and resources to those in need.

Crisis Response Team (301-429-2185):

- This team likely consists of mental health professionals who are dispatched to respond to crisis situations, such as mental health emergencies or suicidal threats, in the community. They provide on-the-ground support and intervention to individuals in crisis.

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) (410-402-8300):

- The DHMH Behavioral Health Administration oversees mental health and substance abuse services and programs at the state level in Maryland. They may provide funding, coordination, and oversight for various mental health initiatives and organizations.
- School Max has changed over to Synergy please register

Maryland Programs Addressing Hunger and Homelessness



Maryland Food Bank

The Maryland Food Bank is a statewide nonprofit that provides millions of pounds of food to residents in need every year. It works with more than 1,200 community organizations, including food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters. Programs include:

- **Mobile Pantries:** Delivering food directly to underserved areas across the state.
- **School Pantry Program:** Offering nutritious food to children and families at over 40 schools in Maryland.
- **SNAP Outreach:** Assisting residents in applying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to access nutritious food.

2. Moveable Feast

Moveable Feast provides nutritious meals and grocery items to individuals facing serious health challenges, such as HIV/AIDS, cancer, and diabetes, in Maryland. This program not only helps reduce food insecurity but also addresses the specific dietary needs of individuals with chronic illnesses. Volunteers are central to Moveable Feast's operations, helping prepare, package, and deliver meals throughout the state.

3. Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

The Maryland DHCD provides several programs aimed at preventing homelessness and supporting affordable housing initiatives. Key programs include:

- **Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG):** Funding for emergency shelters, rapid rehousing, and homelessness prevention.
- **Rental Assistance Programs:** Offering financial support to low-income residents, including the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program.
- **Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA):** Providing housing support to individuals with HIV/AIDS.

4. Homeless Persons Representation Project (HPRP)

The Homeless Persons Representation Project offers free legal services to people experiencing homelessness or those at risk of homelessness in Maryland. HPRP assists with issues like eviction prevention, public benefits access, and veteran's benefits. Their work is essential for protecting the legal rights of homeless individuals and families.

5. Health Care for the Homeless (HCH)

Health Care for the Homeless in Baltimore provides medical, mental health, and substance abuse services to homeless individuals. HCH's approach emphasizes integrated care, addressing both physical and mental health needs alongside housing services. They also provide case management to help individuals find stable housing and other community support.

6. Project PLASE (People Lacking Ample Shelter and Employment)

Based in Baltimore, Project PLASE provides transitional and permanent housing to homeless individuals, especially those with complex medical or behavioral health needs. They also offer support services, including job training, mental health counseling, and case management, to help residents gain stability and self-sufficiency.

7. Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless (MCCH)

The Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless works to reduce homelessness in Montgomery County by providing housing, advocacy, and supportive services. MCCH's programs include:

- **Safe Havens and Permanent Housing Programs:** For individuals with chronic homelessness or severe mental health needs.
- **Housing Stabilization Services:** To prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless.
- **Veteran Housing:** MCCH provides resources specifically tailored to veterans experiencing homelessness.

8. Baltimore City's Mayor's Office of Homeless Services (MOHS)

- The Mayor's Office of Homeless Services in Baltimore City is responsible for coordinating homeless outreach, housing programs, and resource distribution. MOHS works closely with local shelters, nonprofits, and community programs to deliver essential services such as:
- **Street Outreach:** Connecting people with shelters, healthcare, and support.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing Programs:** Offering stable housing and case management services to chronically homeless individuals.
- **Family Stability Programs:** Providing support for families facing homelessness or housing instability.

Maryland Domestic Violence Resources:

Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV)

- Phone: 1-800-634-3570
- Website: mnadv.org
- Provides information, support, and a directory of local service providers for victims of domestic violence.

Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA)

- Phone: 1-877-988-7800
- Website: mcasa.org
- Offers support and resources for sexual assault survivors, including those experiencing domestic violence.

Crisis Intervention Services

- Phone: 1-800-322-4043 (available 24/7)
- Provides immediate support and crisis intervention.

Local Shelters and Services:

- Montgomery County:
 - Phone: 240-777-4195
 - Website: montgomerycountymd.gov
- Prince George's County:
 - Phone: 301-883-7870
 - Website: pgcmls.info
- Baltimore City:
 - House of Ruth Maryland
 - Phone: 410-828-6390
 - Website: houseofruth.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline

- Phone: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
- Website: thehotline.org
- Connects Maryland residents to local services.

Legal Aid Bureau

- Phone: 1-877-261-8807
- Website: mdlab.org
- Provides free legal assistance for protective orders and other legal matters related to domestic violence.



Director's Corner...



Erica Coleman CPRP Founder/ Director

"Be patient with yourself. Self-growth is tender; it's holy ground. There's no greater investment." –Stephen Covey