

## **KEYS TO CREATING HOPE**

### **TAKE A GROWTH MINDSET:**

A Growth mindset means that you believe that you can grow from whatever circumstances life sends your way. This fosters an attitude of possibility and change. The concept of failure is replaced with opportunities for learning. Fear of risk is replaced with courage to try new things.

**TRY THIS:** Start a new hobby or connect with an old one. Hobbies allow us to find a place to increase our confidence and grow in humility. For something to be a helpful hobby it needs to be something that you value and desire to improve upon. It also has to provide you with a way to measure your growth.

### **LEARN OPTIMISM:**

Optimists Attribute their experience of setbacks in life to specific and temporary causes. Choose to see and speak about the good in your life because whatever you focus on will get bigger.

**TRY THIS:** Practice gratitude. During meal time share 3 things you are grateful for each day with family or loved ones. If you live alone, make a gratitude list. It is very difficult to be grateful and miserable at the same time. Choose to measure the “Presence” in your life rather than the “Absence.”

**DREAM:** Dreams are the goals and destinations we think about that lie ahead. Our engagement with our dreams feeds us spirituality and produces meaning and greater intentionality in our lives. It also helps us produce a greater sense of accomplishment.

**TRY THIS:** Share your dreams with those in your life and develop plans and accountability to make them take shape. Discussing the details of your future actually fosters the experience of hope in our lives.

## **4 Ways to Boost Your Mental Immunity**

**1. Maintain a healthy physical diet:** Certain foods, alcohol, and drugs all have an impact on mood and cognition. Recognize which foods bring on guilt, anger, frustration, or self-hate. Eat the foods that increase positive emotions and increase your energy. We make poorer decisions when fatigued.

**2. Maintain a healthy mental diet:** What you put in your mind, impacts you. Media, movies, music, books, gossip, etc, all can impact your mental state and rob you of your peace. Engage in conversations of hope rather than despair. Consume ideas that enhance your mood and limit those that upset you.

**3. Engage in behaviors and habits that support optimal mental health:** Optimize sleep patterns, exercise, and hobbies that you are passionate about.

**4. Spend time with people that love you and validate your worth:** Avoid or limit contact with people that rob you of your positive identity or deplete you of energy.

## **HELPFUL RESOURCES**

**Niagara County Crisis Services (716)285-3515**

**Erie County Crisis Services (716)834-3131**

**National Suicide Prevention Services 1-800-273-8255**

**American Foundation for Suicide Prevention [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)**

**Mental Health Advocates of WNY 716-886-1242**

**\*CALL 911 if you are concerned for someone's welfare and wellbeing.**

\*In the case of minors; if the person tells you about plans or thoughts, **inform the person's parents or guardian ASAP** to ensure they receive help immediately. Contrary to popular belief, people often times communicate about suicidal plans and thoughts, prior to carrying them out.

### **WARNING SIGNS**

#### **\*Suicide Threats**

Almost everyone who attempts or completes suicide has given warning signs through their words or behaviors. Do not ignore any suicide threats. The following statements may indicate serious suicidal feelings.

\***Depression** is one of the leading causes of suicide attempts. Depression can be exhibited in many ways including the following which are detailed in more depth:  
Sudden, abrupt changes in personality—Expressions of hopelessness and despair—  
Declining grades and school performance—Lack of interest in activities once enjoyed  
Increased irritability and aggressiveness—Withdrawal from family and relationships  
Lack of hygiene—Changes in eating and sleeping habits

#### **\*Lack of Interest**

You should be concerned if a friend suddenly starts to lose interest in sports or hobbies that they used to enjoy participating in.

#### **\*Pre-Occupation with Death and Dying**

#### **\*Previous Suicide Attempts**

\***Final Arrangements**—i.e. Giving away prized or favorite possessions