



After the holiday season, a new year can be an excellent time for a fresh start, and a chance to begin the year with a healthy mind-set. You may have considered joining a gym, spending more time with family, looking for a new job or career path, or making healthier diet choices.

If you make New Year's resolutions remember to keep them realistic. It is important to take time to reflect on the change you wish to see and what you realistically can do to achieve that change. By taking smaller, more achievable steps towards your goals, there is a greater chance that you will achieve them.

You may also be looking for ways in which you can improve your mental health in 2023. Drastic changes and goals can be stressful to stick to --- who says you need to take a traditional approach to self-improvement? Instead, take a gentler approach – one where you choose smaller, more achievable goals that can give you space to think about what you want to change to feel better.

Here are some ideas you may wish to use to get started!

Stay Active

Physical activity is as good for the brain as it is for the body. Regular exercise or activity can have a major impact on your mental and emotional health, relieve stress, improve memory, and help you sleep better.



Don't Skimp on Sleep

Sleep matters more than you think. Sleep is our body and mind's best way to recharge and rejuvenate. One way to sleep better is to take a break from the stimulation of screens in the hours before bedtime — TV, mobile devices, tablets or computers. Consider reading or listening to relaxing music instead.

Appeal to your Senses

Yoga, mindfulness, meditation and deep breathing can help reduce overall levels of stress.



Practice Gratitude

Including gratitude in your life is a way to create a positive outlook on your life. More than that, it has tangible benefits for your mental health, including reducing stress, lessening depression symptoms and boosting your mood.

Gratitude is a simple concept, but sometimes difficult to keep up with. This year, take time for self-reflection and share your gratitude with the people around you. If you like to journal, regularly write down a list of things you are grateful for.

STOP! Being So Hard on Yourself

Are you being too hard on yourself? It's time to STOP! The first step to stop being so hard on yourself is to set up a positive inner voice. You can do this by saying things like, "You're doing just fine, don't worry." You might be surprised at how much power this simple act has. Once you start using positive self-talk, you begin to have more confidence and be able to overlook your mistakes.



Life is not perfect all the time and neither are people. By letting go of perfectionism, you become more aware of just who you are and believe that you are good enough "just the way you are".



Ask for Help

As simple as this sounds, it is often very difficult for many people to seek help, especially for our mental health. Humans are social creatures, and we benefit from living in social groups, supporting each other, and relying on one another's strengths. Reaching out for help is a big step, and one that shows significant courage.

If you or someone you love needs help, ask for help. The Employee Family Assistance Program offered through Homewood Health, provides assistance to eligible UofR employees and their eligible dependents – 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days of the year. For more information about the EFAP Program and how to seek help, logon to UR Source [here](#).

Additional resources on the Mental Wellness Hub can assist you in making 2023 a year where you make your mental wellness a priority.

*There's only one person in the world you'll always have a relationship with, and that's yourself.
Be kind to yourself and live your best life!*