

Conquering Year-End Stress & Embracing a Fresh Start

The end of the year can cause many emotions, including anxiety. It can be stressful to think about how your past year went and what comes next. “Post-holiday depression” is when we may feel low after the highs of the holiday season. This can also make a new year feel overwhelming. According to the American Psychological Association, 41% of adults say that they stress more during the holiday season.

However, you can change your perspective. These tips can help you approach the new year with hope rather than anxiety:

Rethink January 1

Resolutions can add pressure to your life. Understand that a new beginning can happen at any time of the year. There’s no rule that says you must wait until January 1st to make changes in your life.

Focus on what you have accomplished

Acknowledge your successes from the past year, big and small. Reflecting on your accomplishments can make you realize all the reasons you have to be grateful.

Embrace the present

Mindfulness, or focusing on the present, is known to help with anxiety. You can reduce your worries about the future with deep breathing, meditation or simply taking a walk in nature.

Set intentions, not resolutions

Intentions are more flexible than resolutions. They’re about the direction you want your life to take rather than outcomes. For example, you can

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American Psychological Association

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think, “I want to make healthy changes to my routine” rather than “I need to lose thirty pounds by March 1.” Set intentions to be kinder to yourself and avoid unnecessary pressure in your life.

Practice compassion for yourself

Be kind to yourself as the year ends. You may face challenges that change your plans, and that’s okay. Treat yourself with the same kindness that you would show a friend.

Use your resources to rest

Make time for rest as you start a new year. Take advantage of resources in your employer’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to help with stress, finances and wellness. The end of the year is also a good time to use any paid time off (PTO) you may have so you can recharge before the new year.

You can embrace a fresh start with the right mindset. Remember, the new year is just a date on the calendar. It’s what you make of it that truly matters.

Reviewed by Clinical Director, EAP (Certified Employee Assistance Professional)

#StressLess

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health issue, help is out there.

Contact the Mental Health America 24/7 Crisis Text Line (Text MHA to 741-741).