

STRATEGIES for MINDFUL LIVING

Courtesy of UAB Employee Assistance & Counseling Center

Tips for a Successful New Year

The New Year can be a time of positive change. The tips below are a great place to start on your journey to a happy, healthy and productive year.



SET “SMART” GOALS AND PLAN TO SUCCEED.

New Year’s resolutions can help you kick start your goals, but many people get discouraged after a few weeks. Research shows that you’re more likely to succeed throughout the year by making your goals SMART:

- **Specific:** Call mom once a week vs. Improve relationship with mom.
- **Measurable:** Walk three times per week vs. Get more exercise.
- **Attainable:** Lose two pounds per week vs. Lose 10 pounds by this weekend.
- **Relevant:** Save 5 percent each paycheck vs. Be a millionaire next year.
- **Time Specific:** Stop drinking sodas by March 1 vs. Cut down on sugar.

GUARD YOUR MENTAL HEALTH LIKE A WATCHDOG.

Your mental health is important, right? So be cautious about acting or thinking in ways that limit your potential. Negative self-talk when things go awry puts you at risk for undermining your other goals. Defeat destructive thought patterns by banishing them as they arise. Use a mental keyword such as “enough!” and refocus into positive territory.

GET MORE EXERCISE.

Regular exercise helps you feel better physically and emotionally, and is a great way to manage stress. If you have trouble sticking to an exercise pattern, set small goals and start incorporating more movement into your everyday life. Take the stairs, walk around the block, stretch during TV commercials, dance with the kids to music on the radio. Finding an exercise buddy is also a great way to stay motivated.

PRACTICE MINDFULNESS.

Incorporating mindfulness and meditation into your everyday schedule can help you stay focused, cope with stress, and cultivate inner strength. Access guided sessions or simple breathing exercises through the UABWell app (uab.edu/app/uabwell) or the myStrength app (go.uab.edu/mystrength) to embark on a path towards a more mindful and balanced lifestyle.

SEEK SUPPORT WHEN NEEDED.

Remember, if you encounter ongoing difficulties, reaching out to a professional for assistance demonstrates resilience rather than vulnerability. Experts in mental health can provide valuable advice, encouragement and effective techniques for managing challenges. Visit uab.edu/eacc to learn about available services from the UAB Employee Assistance & Counseling Center.

