

Your Wellness

Strategies for Mental Health, Career, and Family Success

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Dr. Recco's Corner

Lately, I have been asking people on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (great), how they would rate their lives and why. To my surprise, most of them gave a rating of 8.0 to 8.5 and shared eye-opening beliefs and views. Without hesitation, they proclaimed that the results they are seeing now are due to their hard work over the last 12 to 15 months.

They also said they finally “figured out” a few things and will never look back. I recall some of them suggesting that their current-day fulfillment in life is due to it being their “time to shine.” Time to shine is a good phrase to discuss.

It seems like after devastation, unprecedented struggles, worldwide calamity, and an abundance of uncertainty, the powers to be have determined that it is time. Time for what? I am glad you asked. It is a time to shine and revenge for those of us who, for the last “forever,” have kept the faith, endured like a good soldier, fought the fight of faith, and hoped against hope.

Right now, you can rise and have dominion, be blessed, and capture the glory of living your best life ever. We have been waiting for an opening, a chance, and a break. Well, it's here! It is time for things to be fulfilled according to the laws of life and the words of truth. The current season of life is that which was spoken of by our ancestors and fallen heroes/heroines.

Have you decided to rise and shine? I have decided. Have you purposed in your heart that everything you need is available? I have purposed.

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Your Child's/Teen's Summer Break

By: Chaunjona' Jennings-Verdun, Master's Level Counseling Intern

Summer is here, and children/teens have begun their school vacations. Summer break includes more travel, playing outside, hanging out with friends and family, and more social media and video game time. These activities can act as de-stressors for children/teens after having continuous months of attending school 5 days a week, 6-7 hours per day.

All children/teens should continue to have structure during summer break, especially those who have developmental or emotional challenges, while still having summertime fun. Below are some tips for helping your child/teen have a structured and safe summer.

1). Schedule: It is important to maintain a balanced schedule. Although the schedule at home will not be completely the same as school, try to make it as balanced as possible. Our offspring eagerly anticipate summer because it means they can stay up late and sleep in. However, keeping a school-like routine helps them adjust more easily and behave better when it's time to head back to class.

2). Be Visual: Children/teens who rely on predictable routines may experience increased anxiety during periods of transition. Posting a schedule on the wall that shows what will happen throughout the day will help with structure. Make the schedule friendly with colors, stickers, or anything that encourages them to pay more attention.



3). Make Plans: It is beneficial to schedule as many activities as possible, as early as possible, and keep them updated. Let them know they will be going to the pool, amusement park, trampoline park, or playground that day. This will assist them in being motivated throughout the day and have something to look forward to.

4). Be Outdoors: Children/teens should spend time outdoors as much as possible. No child/teen should spend hours in front of a screen, whether it is a phone, tablet, or television. For example, those who have Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder have a lot of energy to release. Have them go outside and run around to release this energy.

5). Behavioral System: Although children and teenagers might appear to resist rules set by adults, clear expectations and positive feedback helps them feel secure. Limiting guidelines to three positive behaviors is helpful. For preschoolers, using a chart with stickers as rewards for completed tasks can be particularly effective.

6). Strengths and Interests: Utilizing their strengths and interests also helps establish structure. Children enjoy playing sports, dancing, cooking, etc. It would be beneficial to find a team or class that your child may be interested in to give them a break from being at home.

7). Give Time for Adjustment: Children/teens may fear rejection or embarrassment when joining new groups. A parent's presence helps them feel at ease. However, begin to gradually distance yourself or leave at a certain time, so they become more comfortable.

8). Focus on the Parents: While this article focused mainly on supporting children/teens, it's important to consider the parents as well. Parents of children/teens facing developmental, behavioral, or emotional challenges often experience feelings of isolation and loneliness. Do not feel bad about getting a sitter and spending time with friends or simply relaxing more often.



Chaunjona' Jennings-Verdun
Master's Level Counseling Intern

"The summer months should feature structure and fun."

Welcome

To Our Team of Mental Health Therapists!



Jianda Leslie Hu, BA
Master's Level Counseling
Intern



Chaunjon'a Verdun-Jennings, BA
Master's Level Counseling
Intern



Hannah Rau, BA
Master's Level Counseling
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"Now is a good time to
contact our office for
an appointment."

The Benefits of Routine & Structure

By: Hannah Rau, Master's Level Counseling Intern

How Routines Can Support Mental Health

Having a routine often gets a reputation for being boring or restrictive, but it can be one of the most supportive tools for mental health. Predictable patterns help reduce uncertainty, which is a common trigger for stress and anxiety. For individuals living with depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety, ADHD, or trauma-related disorders, routines can make daily life feel more manageable by providing a sense of stability and direction.

When fewer decisions are required throughout the day, mental energy can be saved for coping, connecting, and problem-solving. At the same time, routine is not only helpful for those with mental health diagnoses. For anyone navigating busy schedules, life transitions, or ongoing stress, routine can offer grounding and consistency. It creates a steady rhythm that helps people feel more organized, capable, and supported in their day-to-day lives.

The Impact of Sleep, Meals, & Movement

At the core of most healthy routines are sleep, nutrition, and movement. These basic needs strongly influence mood, focus, and emotional regulation. Consistent sleep schedules help regulate the body's internal clock, which can improve energy levels and reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. Regular meals provide steady fuel for the brain and body, helping prevent irritability, fatigue, and emotional swings.

Movement, whether gentle or more active, supports mental health by reducing stress and improving overall mood. When these elements are part of a routine, they are easier to maintain and less dependent on motivation alone. Even small steps toward consistency, such as waking up at the same time or taking a short daily walk, can have a meaningful impact over time.

Flexible Routines

While routines can be helpful, they should not feel rigid or unforgiving. Life changes, unexpected events, and fluctuating energy levels are inevitable. Thus, routines need room to adapt. Flexible routines focus on intention rather than perfection. Instead of viewing a disrupted routine as a failure, it can be seen as an opportunity to adjust and continue. This approach encourages self-compassion and reduces the pressure to "do it right" every day.

Flexibility is especially important for individuals managing mental health challenges, as symptoms can vary from day to day. A routine that allows for adjustment is more realistic and far more sustainable than one that requires strict adherence.



Hannah Rau
Master's Level Counseling Intern

"Having a routine
is beneficial."

Having a Routine During Major Life Changes

Periods of transition can disrupt even the most established routines, making daily life feel unpredictable and overwhelming. Changes such as starting a new job, moving, relationship shifts, health challenges, or loss can affect energy levels, emotions, and motivation. During these times, routines can act as an anchor, providing familiarity when other aspects of life feel uncertain.

Even simple, consistent habits like waking up at a similar time, eating regular meals, or setting aside time to decompress can create a sense of stability. These routines do not need to be elaborate to be effective. In fact, during transitions, it is often helpful to simplify routines and focus on basic needs. Maintaining some level of structure can help reduce stress, support emotional regulation, and prevent individuals from feeling completely lost or overwhelmed. As life begins to settle, routines can be gradually adjusted to fit new circumstances, offering continuity while allowing room for growth and adaptation.

Balancing Structure & Free time

A healthy routine includes both structure and unstructured time. Structure helps ensure that responsibilities and self-care needs are met, while free time allows for rest, creativity, and enjoyment. Without balance, routines can become overwhelming or restrictive, leading to burnout or avoidance.



Scheduling time to relax or engage in hobbies can make it easier to fully enjoy those moments without guilt. Free time also offers space for reflection, connection, and emotional processing. When routines are balanced, they support productivity while still honoring the need for rest and personal fulfillment. This balance helps routines feel supportive rather than controlling.

Small Changes to Make Routines Stable

The most effective routines are built gradually. Making small, realistic changes increases the likelihood that routines will last. Starting with one habit at a time, such as setting a consistent bedtime or planning regular meals, can feel more manageable and less overwhelming. Pairing new habits with existing ones can also help routines stick.

It is important to regularly check in and adjust routines as needs change. What works during one season of life may not work in another. Viewing routines as evolving tools rather than fixed rules allows them to remain supportive. With patience and flexibility, routines can become reliable foundations that support mental health and overall well-being.

“Balance and small change are still very important.”

Therapist's Spotlight

Featuring: Tamera Huntley, LPC, CAADC, NCC

For the Month of June, Tamera "Tammy" Huntley is the Therapist Spotlight. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor. She is also a Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CAADC) and a National Certified Counselor (NCC). She completed intense and extended trainings to obtain the certifications. Tamera works contractually as a mental health therapist for Recco S. Richardson Consulting (RSRC) and A Hand Above. She also has a full-time counseling position at a local agency.

Tammy has worked in substance abuse counseling for many years and has been a mental health therapist for over 10 years. Here at RSRC, she sees individuals aged 3 years and older. Few therapists are willing or able to see clients who are age 5 or younger. Tammy understands the importance of seeing individuals of all ages to ensure mental health treatment for anyone in need.

1). Why are friendships important, and what is the key to them lasting a long time?

Tammy offered that it is important to have friendships because having connections with people is essential for well-being. Friends can help a person feel valued and give a sense of belonging and connection. They can help someone when there are problems or just need someone to talk to. Tammy went on to say that friends lift each other up and can help you to stay motivated towards reaching your goals. Honesty, healthy communication, and support of each other are the keys to having lasting relationships.

2). What in life are you and your clients trying to protect?

The thing in life that Tammy and her clients are trying to protect is having a work life balance. She stated that it is easy to get burnt out if all we do is work. It is of great value to also do things that we enjoy. Having a good work-life balance has a profound effect on success and our well-being.

3). Why is it important to celebrate accomplishments?

When asked, Tammy reported that it is important to celebrate accomplishments because the things that are being celebrated are achievements and our success. It is easy for people to look at the negative things that are going on in the world today. It is important to remember the good that happens in our lives. Doing this can promote a more positive attitude. Celebrating achievements can be rewarding when a goal has been achieved. Celebrating can also help us stay on task.

4). What seems to be something that your clients have a difficult time accepting?

Tammy quipped that there are many different things that can be difficult for clients to accept. One thing that people have a difficult time addressing is traumatic experiences. Traumatic exposure can affect people in many ways, such as emotional disturbances and having trust issues. For others, the experiences can leave a lasting impact on how the person is able to connect to other people. For some, the awareness of the trauma experience can lead to feeling anxious or on edge. This could be due to feelings of guilt or shame.



Tamera Huntley
MA, LPC, CAADC, NCC

**"Tammy remains an
outstanding and
caring therapist."
Dr. Recco**

5). To ensure our happiness, what are things we should do daily?

She suggested that there are things that individuals can do daily that would allow them to feel happier. One thing that people can do is give themselves a routine, which features them getting up at the same time every day, getting ready for the day ahead, eating at the same times every day, getting daily exercise, etc. For some individuals, it can be beneficial to prepare the outfits and meals that they will have the following day.

If the individual believes in a higher power, they can use prayer to communicate with their higher power. Another thing that can be done is to use a planner. This can be helpful, especially when they have one or more projects or deadlines that must be completed in a timely manner. It allows an individual to see what needs to be prioritized, which can help them feel less stressed. It can also help the individual see when they have time to work on projects. For some people, it can be overwhelming to look at the big picture of the goals that they have or want to meet. The use of a planner can break the goals down and into more manageable tasks. Another thing that can be done is to cut toxic individuals out of their lives.

6). What is the best way to overcome fear?

According to Tammy, one way to overcome fear is to face the fear head-on. For instance, if a person is afraid of heights, that person can find a place where they can safely go and look out a window. Taking small steps can help work through the fear.

7). What should a person do to get out of a toxic/abusive relationship?

Intently, Tammy stated that the first thing a person should do is recognize that they are in a toxic relationship. The next thing is to prove that they deserve better than how they are being treated. To get out of a toxic relationship, a person can confide in a trusted friend, live with a family member for a short period of time, or seek out a woman's shelter. Seeking assistance and emotional guidance can be helpful for safety, especially when children are involved. Tammy went on to say that it is important to have a safety plan, a sense of where to go to get help and a list of emergency contacts. It can be helpful to slowly disengage from the relationship if the relationship is not violent.

8). Share with us the importance of having peace of mind.

Tammy shared that having peace of mind is important because it can help us stay calm. It can help the planning process and improve our sleep. Getting good quality sleep is important because it helps to regulate our moods and promotes faster healing. She went on to say that having peace of mind can help improve our connection with others, enhance our listening, and help us to accept or tolerate difficult situations.

9). What do you encourage your clients to do to enhance their self-esteem level?

According to Tammy, self-esteem can be enhanced by challenging negative thoughts. Looking at the facts of what is causing the negative thoughts can be beneficial to improving self-esteem. Another thing that can be done to improve self-esteem is focusing on things that we can be grateful for. This helps to train the brain to look for the positive things that are going on. To protect self-esteem levels, it is good to avoid comparing ourselves to other people.

**"Facing our fears
is a must."**

Securing More Success in Life

By: Recco Santee Richardson, Ph.D., LPC

Along with water, food, and love, success is something that we all need and desire. There is nothing wrong with wanting to be successful. The typical ills and problems associated with reaching success are rooted in how a person goes about achieving it. There is a right way and a wrong way to achieve success.

Not only should the goal be to reach success the correct way, but a focus should be placed on having success in every area of our lives. It does us no good to be successful financially only to have unsuccessful marriages and exceptionally poor health. I personally believe that we can achieve levels of success across the spectrum of our lives.

The goal of this writing is to share tips and strategies that I (and my close friends) use to attain various levels of sustained success in life. I am not perfect, and I surely have a long way to go to reach optimum success in my deeds, words, relationships, and career path. Yet, I can speak on success with conviction and some level of authority.

I will tell you right now that there are no shortcuts or miracles associated with being successful. Rather, the path of success requires the following.

1). A Plan/Vision: The world in which we live is enormous. Our pursuit of success is small when compared to the vastness of what is out there in the galaxy. With this in mind, it would be foolish to not have a plan to achieve the success that we desire. A written-down plan is the starting point that everything else launches from.

It is from the strength of planning and preparation that life is given to our vision, mission statement, goals, desired outcomes, productivity, program components, assessments, and eventual success.



where we start or where we end, so long as we end up in the right place at the right time. There is a place called “there.” We will know within ourselves when we are “there” and in the “right place.”

2). Keep The Passion: Success at any level requires passion. There must be a passion for the thing that is being pursued. Passion does not fizzle out. It keeps us up late at night and maintains the flame to achieve. I have found that passion is something that somewhat imprisons us and captivates our imagination and energy.

3). The Right Place: To be successful, we must know where we are and where we are going. It does not matter

“Success will cost something.”

Dr. Recco

4). Stay Positive: Setbacks, negativity, failure, and soothsayers are all part of the road to success. We must take them in stride and keep moving towards the desired goals and success. One way to do this is to stay positive, focus on the good, proclaim what is still possible, be convinced and sure of ourselves, follow our convictions, set our will to endure, and face adversity with an eternal hope.

5). Be Willing to Change: Success often requires us to change aspects of our nature, beliefs, and personage. When change calls our name, just accept it, make the necessary adjustments, create new processes, and move full steam ahead. When change is absent, refused, or viewed as an enemy, success is driven away. Success feeds off change, and change feeds off success.

6). Embrace Truth: The presence of ongoing success features a love for and the embracing of truth. It is difficult to be successful when lying, cheating, and manipulation are depended on. Truth is a sure foundation that can prompt sustainable growth and success. It is pure, unadulterated truth that stands the test of time and rises from the dust with success in its palm.

**"Truth always comes
out on top."
Dr. Recco**

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**"You can and
will succeed."
Dr. Recco**