OCTOBER WELLNESS TOPIC:

MENTAL WELLNESS

West Suburban Health Group

Mental Health America (MHA) is an organization that promotes overall mental health to everyone, and addresses the needs of those living with mental illness. It offers screening tools, information and resources on many mental health topics.

Here is one of the management tools used for decreasing anxiety: ***"Keep Your Mind Grounded"***

This exercise can be helpful if you find that your mind is racing, or if you are having difficulty sleeping, staying focused or being around others. It is intended to help you calm down if your mind is wandering, or if you feel your anxiety level is getting too high. It can also be helpful if you are feeling that you are about to have a panic attack.

Using the guideline that your mind can really only focus on one thought at a time, the goal is to bring your brain to a calmer place. Try these steps to keep your mind grounded:

1) ***"Hop off the Train".*** *First, it is imperative to get off the anxiety "train." Notice if you are about to go down the anxiety thought road, or are already there. If so, catch yourself from going or staying there. You may actually have to say "Stop It!" to get to a neutral place to begin the copying skill.*

2) ***After "hopping off the train", try one or both of the following:***

   ~ ***"Stay Grounded Physically"*.** Use the power of "touch" to keep your mind in the here and now. You can use an object to fidget with to help you refocus. Or, you can use your surroundings, such as touching a tree if you are outdoors or feeling the softness of a blanket if you are indoors. Find something to touch and really focus on it.

   ~ ***"5 Senses"*.** Really explore your environment using all 5 senses to complete one or all of these sentences: I see____, I feel____, I hear____, I smell____ and I taste____. Let your mind take you to one or all of the experiences of these senses. As you do this, feel your mind and body calm down.

   With the above 2 exercises, Staying Grounded Physically or 5 Senses, you can also try using positive affirmations, such as: *"I've got this"* or *"I'm going to be okay."*

For more on this mental wellness tool, click here: **Keep Your Mind Grounded**

For additional tools, such as mental health screenings, a stress test, information on topics such as fulfilling voids and challenging cognitive disorder, worksheets on topics such as controlling risky behaviors, a guide to finding help, and much more, click here:

Tools from Mental Health America

West Suburban Health Group Website: westsuburbanhealth.com

Health Provider Websites: Fallon: fchp.org Harvard Pilgrim: harvardpilgrim.org

Tufts: tuftshealthplan.com Blue Cross Blue Shield: bluecrossma.com