

BC SAFE



Broome County Suicide Awareness for Everyone

A local suicide prevention coalition in Broome County whose mission is to reduce the number of suicides and suicide attempts by increasing public awareness and providing educational and training resources.

Depression Among Veterans Can Escalate During the Holidays

For many, the holiday season brings depression and, in more severe cases, thoughts of suicide. This includes many veterans who, upon returning home from overseas tours, may be struggling to process their experiences as they a time of year that's expected to be festive. A professional who works in mental health with the Department Veterans Affairs in Buffalo offers pointers for recognizing when a veteran may be in need of help. There are many similarities among veterans and non-veterans in the symptoms of depression but veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder may show some of their own warning signs. "There's sometimes during the holiday season more pressure to be social and to be out in large groups of people," said Joan Chipps, manager of the Behavioral Health Outpatient

Clinic at the VA Western New York Healthcare System. "Sometimes people who have issued with PTSD are very uncomfortable in large gatherings." Often times, it may be well-intentioned remarks by family or friends that instead drive away the veteran. Chipps says when a veteran has returned from active duty, one thing you should not ask him or her is "so, how was it over there?" "A lot of the way we communicate with our veterans in the community can go a long way with helping them feel calmer and more accepted and more able to be in different situations," she said. "Talking about their home life and being back, and how good it feels to see them, can be better ways to start a conversation than getting directly into 'hey, what happened to you over there?'" The warning signs that a depressed

veteran may be pondering suicide are similar to those displayed by non-veterans but the triggers that contribute to the problem may differ. An increase in alcohol or drug use is one of the warning signs. So, too are outbursts of emotion. "It can bring out a lot of reactions that have people scratching their heads, that can push people away because they don't know how to respond to it," Chipps told WBFO. "A lot of times the veteran is not comfortable talking about their experiences or they don't know how to talk about their experiences." Veterans in need of assistance, or their loved ones, may contact the Veterans Crisis Hotline at 1-800-273-8255. <https://www.wbfo.org/health-wellness/2017-12-22/depression-among-veterans-can-escalate-during-holiday-season>)

Veteran Resources around Broome County

- American Red Cross Service to Armed Forces**
620 E. Main St, Endicott, NY—607-785-7207
- Binghamton Vet Center**
53 Chenango St, Binghamton, NY—607-722-2393
- Broome County Veterans Service Agency**
44 Hawley St, Binghamton, NY—607-778-2319
- Clear Path for Veterans** <http://www.clearpath4vets.com>
- New York State Division of Veterans Services**
44 Hawley St, Binghamton, NY—607-724-1299
- Southern Tier Veterans Support Group (STVSG)**
For more info, email info@stvsg.org or call (607) 205-8332.
<https://stvsg.org/>
- Stand with Me Assistance Dog Team Training**
<https://www.standwithmeorg.com/index.html>



The Difference Between Gratitude and Thankfulness

Thanksgiving is a holiday dedicated to the focus of being thankful. The Oxford Dictionary defines the word thankful as “pleased and relieved.” Both of those are great feelings. But that’s just it; they’re just feelings, and feelings fade. The Oxford Dictionary defines the word grateful as “showing an appreciation of kindness.” This is where the difference lies; being thankful is a feeling, and being grateful is an action.

It’s easy for us to look around the Thanksgiving dinner table and say that we are thankful. We may feel thankful for our family and friends and their presence in our lives, however, gratitude goes much deeper than this. It is a state of being, where you feel a sense of appreciation that comes from deep within. You are at peace with the world, and appreciate that state of affairs deep within.

Gratitude is more than just the feeling of thankfulness. Being

Did you know
gratitude...

- Shields you from negativity
- Makes you at least 25% happier
- Rewires your brain
- Eliminates stress
- Heals
- Improves sleep
- Boosts self-esteem and performance
- Enhances the law of attraction
- Improves relationships

thankful is the first step, and we have to have that initial feeling to build upon. We build upon it by redirecting our focus into making gratefulness an intrinsic part of our lives all year. Gratitude requires us to stay alert of the role of others in our lives. This is different from the fleeting nature of the act of a mere ‘thank you’ or feeling thankful one day of the year. Through gratitude, we get to make a sense of our lives and learn to credit our loved ones with the appreciation they deserve.

The key is keeping gratitude at the forefront of our lives. It’s not just thinking about how thankful we are to have all that we have. It’s about living out that gratitude through the simple things we do every day. Gratitude is the manifestation of love, devotion and commitment towards those who mean the most to you. It encompasses shared experiences, shared love and an understanding that the universe has conspired to keep us happy, and help us understand how connected we are to others.

As we head into that special time in November, find a Gratitude Journal, and open your mind up to just how helpful this simple practice may be on the path toward embracing your thankfulness. A Gratitude Journal is the practice of jotting down, each day, things that we are grateful for and allow us to become more present and aware.

(Adapted from: <https://www.psychmc.com/articles/difference-between-gratitude-and-thankfulness>)

7 TIPS TO MANAGE STRESS & MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE HOLIDAYS

- PLAN AHEAD** (Calendar icon): Have a plan in place for all your holiday tasks and activities.
- BE REALISTIC** (Speech bubble icon): Don't stress yourself out by trying to create the perfect holiday.
- STAY ACTIVE** (Person running icon): Exercise is a great way to deal with holiday stress, and anxiety.
- DON'T WORRY** (Smiley face icon): Don't feel obligated to complete every small thing on your list.
- JUST SAY NO** (No sign icon): If you have too much on your plate, let your friends and family know.
- SET ASIDE DIFFERENCES** (Two people icon): Enjoy other's company and talk about topics that bring happiness.
- ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR FEELINGS** (Heart icon): Have a plan in place for all your holiday tasks and activities.

If you or a loved one is in crisis, seek emergency help immediately by calling **911** or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**.

Text **GOT5** to **741741** for the Crisis Text Line
NYS Emotional Support Help Line: **1-844-863-9314**
Suicide Prevention Lifeline: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Download the FREE **HOPE - Broome County Mental Health App** for more information and resources.

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Hope