

MENTAL HEALTH Wellness Champion



Zoe Adams

.....

IT ANSR

of her body.

When the pandemic turned life upside down two years ago, other life changes that coincided with the pandemic stress kept building to a point when Zoe could no longer bare the weight of her stress alone. She admits that finding the courage to ask for help was a challenge. Her husband was a key support at this point. He recognized that Zoe was struggling but he could not help her on his own.

She is so thankful for his kind encouragement to reach out to someone, and his help in matching her with a great therapist.

As Zoe started attending therapy, one particularly valuable concept she learned is that all of her emotions are

are valid. Every emotion she feels is necessary, and allowing herself to express these emotions is healthy and actually helps her feel better. Prior to accepting this concept, Zoe had spent many years suppressing how she felt, and not allowing others to see when she was upset or angry. She has since learned that, generally, people want to help and are willing to listen or serve you in a time of need.

Zoe is continually working on ways to cope when she experiences a bad day. First and foremost, she gives herself grace. She knows that it is perfectly okay to occasionally have a day in your pajamas when you don't do much. On those bad days, Zoe likes to focus on the good in her life and just relax. Letting yourself recharge is healthy and necessary!

One of Zoe's key strategies for managing stress is to plan time for the

things that need to get done, so that she is then able to make time for the activities she enjoys. For example, Zoe loves to crochet, but she is also a student and stays busy with school-work. While she wishes she had all the time in the world to crochet, Zoe set up a system to finish one class module every day. It isn't a large amount of work, but it helps to keep her on track daily to complete assignments on time. She can then reward herself daily with time spent crocheting or doing another activity she loves. Sometimes, life happens and this plan doesn't always work, causing Zoe to feel overwhelmed and want to shut down. She has had to learn that these particular moments are when it is most crucial that she get something small done, to keep her moving forward. Support from family and friends is also crucial in those moments.

To keep herself mentally well, Zoe keeps a gratitude journal, focuses on loving herself and others through services, and attends therapy regularly. She remembers the saying, "you would never treat others the way you treat yourself", to remind her to be kind not only to others but especially to herself.



Thank you for sharing, Zoe!



This month, the Wellness Center is thrilled to spotlight Zoe Adams as a Mental Health Wellness Champion!

Over the last couple of years, Zoe has taken action in a variety of ways to better her mental health, from changing her perspective on her own emotions, to learning more stress management techniques, and many things in between. She has learned for herself that mental health is a foundational piece of balanced, everyday existence. Zoe now wants to care for her mind just as carefully and kindly as she cares for the rest