



2024: Time to focus on you more

BY BRIANNA REINHOLD, LPC



THIS YEAR HAS TRULY FLOWN BY!

It seems I say that every year, but every year feels even faster than the one that came before it. The start of 2023 felt like rush hour traffic. It was at a dead stop and things weren't moving along. However, as the year progressed, it felt like the world just hit the fast forward button.

We've already passed two of the three major holidays, Halloween and Thanksgiving. The most festive season of the year is quickly upon us, which also means the New Year is only a few short weeks away.

Clients often discuss their New Year's resolutions with me. Whether that means shedding some pounds, quitting a bad habit or trying to become financially sound, there is an energy around starting over every year. Unfortunately, for most people, those resolutions are quickly thrown out the window within the first month. Others simply opt out of setting those goals as they've recognized they aren't great at holding themselves accountable.

Whichever side of the fence you fall on, one thing is certain: A new year will be here soon, and we can use this as an opportunity to make some lifestyle changes. The clinicians at

Northern Lights Therapy think the universal resolution for 2024 should be "time to focus on you more." This can come in many forms, but simply being more present in the moment and enjoying all the wonderful things life can offer.

Instead of getting caught up in the hustle and bustle of the rat wheel we find ourselves in, we want to bring back to simple aspects of life. Spending quality time with family. Getting outdoors more and being surrounded by nature. Stop spending money on things that only fill a temporary void but instead, try to help others struggling around us. Simply finding the joy in the little things that we used to love as a kid.

Let's start 2024 going down the same path of living in the moment and focusing on the good that surrounds us. 🗨



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Below are just some of the amazing clinicians at NLT and their advice as we enter 2024:

"Take time to get out and make friends. Companionship is the greatest deterrent for depression and something many in Maricopa are struggling to find. If you don't see an activity that interests you, then create it. Advertise it on Facebook or other social media. If you build it, they will come. Others are lonely, too, and looking for friends as much as you are. It takes a community to be healthy. Let's be that community for each other here in Maricopa." – Julie Skelton, LCSW

"My mantra would be 'consider choosing happiness.' I see a high rate of people just accepting circumstances that are negative rather than making a new choice for themselves." – Dana McGee, LPC

"The power of developing a social support system is much greater than one may imagine. It's okay to be vulnerable, it's okay to admit we are wrong, and it's okay to not be your best self 100% of the time. At the end of the day, we are all human. Allow yourself grace while providing it for others; you never know how much someone may need it."

– Lindsey LeCates, intern

"Seasonal depression is starting to show up for some. It is important to utilize your coping skills during this time, take some Vitamin D and do not force yourself to do things that you are uncomfortable with. Remind yourself that you are loved, you are worthy and you are stronger than you know. A great book for this is *A Gentle Reminder* by Bianca Sparacino. This book helps with simple reminders that you are able to be happy and sad, but to take it easy on yourself. Holidays can be difficult for people, but you are allowed to be happy and sad during these times. Be gentle with yourself. Please remember that it's okay to not be okay."

– Katlyn Lawson, LPC

"Morgan Harper Nichols' book *You are Only Just Beginning* includes short one- and two-page messages and some of her artwork. It covers topics that provide encouragement to be kind to yourself and yet also to be authentic. It is big on perseverance and to find beauty and hope in the midst of the various ups and downs of life." – Brianna Murphy, LAC

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