MENTAL HEALTH MINUTE

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How to Replace Doomscrolling With Hopescrolling

In an age where it is easy to instinctively scroll through endless feeds of distressing headlines and negative news, the term "doomscrolling" has emerged to describe this compulsive consumption of pessimistic content online. It's the act of continuously scrolling through bad news, often leading to heightened anxiety, stress and a sense of helplessness.

In contrast, a growing movement is encouraging a shift toward "hopescrolling," which is the intentional act of seeking out uplifting, inspiring, and solution-oriented stories that foster optimism and resilience. By replacing doomscrolling with hopescrolling, digital habits can be reshaped to support mental well-being and cultivate a more hopeful outlook on the world.

Consider the following tips to be more intentional while scrolling:

- **Follow positive accounts.** Curate your social media feeds to include more positive content by following users who share happy news and funny, lighthearted videos.
- **Set a time limit.** To reduce the time you spend scrolling, set a timer or utilize your device's app limits feature.
- **Remove apps.** If you find yourself upset or in a bad mood every time you use a specific app, try deleting it from your device and replacing it with an app that improves your mood instead.
- **Manage notifications.** Change your phone settings to reduce the number of notifications you receive. They can often deliver upsetting and distracting news, and it can be tempting to start scrolling every time you get a new one.

Consuming a constant stream of negative news without pausing can be detrimental to your mental and physical health. It's essential to cut back on doomscrolling to give your mind a break.

If you or a loved one is having difficulty breaking the doomscrolling habit, consider reaching out to a mental health professional who can offer guidance and support.

The Benefits of Breathwork

In the rush of modern life, it's easy to overlook one of the most powerful tools we have for improving our well-being: our breath. Breathwork is a conscious practice of controlling and deepening the breath, and it has gained increasing attention due to its ability to help reduce stress, enhance focus and promote emotional balance. Unlike complex wellness routines, breathwork is simple, accessible and requires no equipment. Whether you're navigating a hectic workday, managing anxiety or seeking a moment of clarity, integrating breathwork into your daily routine can be a transformative step toward greater mental, physical and emotional health.

Breathwork doesn't require hours of practice or specialized training. Just a few minutes a day can make a noticeable difference. The following are some techniques to get started:

- **Box breathing**—Inhale for four seconds, hold for four seconds, exhale for four seconds and hold for four seconds. With each four-count, imagine a square being drawn. This can help calm the nervous system, reduce stress, improve focus and enhance emotional control.
- **4-7-8 breathing**—Inhale through the nose for four seconds, hold for seven seconds and exhale slowly through the mouth for eight seconds. This can promote relaxation, manage anxiety, lower your heart rate and support better sleep.
- **Diaphragmatic breathing**—Sit or lie down comfortably. Place one hand on your chest and one on your belly. Inhale deeply through your nose, allowing your belly to rise. Exhale slowly through your mouth, letting your belly fall. This can help improve oxygen flow, reduce tension and support digestion.

Making breathwork part of a daily routine can help combat stress and reduce anxiety. Contact a health care professional for further guidance.