



### Walk with NAMI in 2023

The power of our mission is being felt as never before. The achievement of "Mental Health for All" has never felt this critical - yet closer to being realized. It's not how far we walk, but how far we've come to make our milestones count.

With your support and high spirits, we intend to make an unprecedented impact on mental health in our community. On Saturday, April 29, 2023 NAMI Walks San Diego will begin in these two locations: Preble Field in NTC Part @ Liberty Station and Imperial Valley Mall in El Centro.

Fire Captain Ryan J. Mitchell's First Responder's Program is very excited to be tabling at this year's NAMI Walk! We are so excited to kickstart May Is Mental Health Month at Liberty Station on April 29, 2023. We are honored to continue to promote behavioral health, wellness and resiliency here in San Diego County!

NAMI Walks represents a powerful chance to leave a significant mark on the local mental health landscape. Whether you're a previous participant or a new voice waiting to be heard, we're pretty sure you'll find the festivities inspired and inspiring. Well behaved dogs on leashes are welcome. [Register Here](#) ALL TOGETHER - FOR MENTAL HEALTH FOR ALL!

### PTSD, It's Never Too Late to Start Healing



Donald Troutman Jr. is a retired EMS worker. He reached out to his local news station in Toledo, Ohio about the trauma he experienced as a First Responder. He worked for his family's independent ambulance company that operated until he retired in 1977. While he stayed in the medical field training as a nurse, the terrors of the EMS years stuck with him. He rarely spoke about what he saw for more than 40 years, until recently.

Now he's facing the trauma he experienced "head-on." He's currently working to share the family's ambulance legacy as a way to heal from his trauma. Joshua Archer, the employee assistance program coordinator for the mental health of the Toledo Fire and Rescue Department, said there is no time limit on when to heal from trauma. It can take months or it can take decades, but it's important to find a healthy way to heal. He said the quicker a person responds to mental trauma the less stress they will experience long-term. Archer describes PTSD as a full cabinet dumping out the stockpile of horrible horrific events your mind has captured. The filing cabinet represents how trauma manifests itself in a person's mind, and the way to prevent disorganization or spiraling is to learn healthy coping mechanisms. Archer has been with TFRD for 10 years now. He said it's not for the faint of heart, but it's worth it if you know how to handle your stress. "The stereotype is, a hero doesn't reach out for help, they're the ones saving people," Archer said. "If you want to be able to do this position, you want to continue to help people, you've got to take care of yourself." [Read the full article here.](#)

### Turn a Bad Day Around



We all have those days when nothing seems to go right. Obstacle after obstacle... So, how can you get your day back on track after it's gone south? How do you prevent a few early missteps from hijacking your goals? Here is a four-part plan to help shift your day in the right direction.

**Step one: Activate the parasympathetic nervous system**  
The first step in resetting your day is activating your parasympathetic nervous system. This step helps reset your brain-gut connection. This requires body work. Here are a few suggestions. [Breathing Techniques: EFT](#); Nature

**Step two: Flood the body with feel-good hormones**  
Once you've stopped the stress response, the next step is to flood your body with some feel-good hormones to counteract the effects of the adrenaline and cortisol released during the stress response. There are several ways you can increase hormones in your body. Exercise: Hug someone you love; maybe even a little passion!

**Step three: Triage**  
So, we've stopped the stress response and we're feeling a little better now because we've increased our feel-good hormone levels. Now, we need to tackle the source of our stress. We're likely in a better position to manage the source of the stress. Remember what you have control over involves letting go of some things. Feeling supersaturated? What can you let go of? It could be something simple like not returning a book to the library and taking the 35-cent fine. Taking that small step could free up 30 minutes of your day. What else do you have control over? The goal is to get yourself back into the driver's seat of your life, as opposed to letting a stress response run your day.

**Step four: Set yourself up for success the next day**  
The reason you have bad days is that after undergoing a stress response, your amygdala is excited and more actively looking for other potential threats. As you feel your stress lesson, that alertness is still there, and it's likely even more sensitive. Still, the BEST way to truly calm the amygdala is rest. But not just any type of rest says Saundra Dalton-Smith, physician and author of [Sacred Rest: Recover Your Life, Renew Your Energy, Restore Your Sanity](#). She suggests that there are seven types of rest: physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, sensory, social, and creative. "The question to ask yourself at the end of your day is: In which of these areas did I experience a deficit? What are the things that we can do to pour back into the areas where we feel depleted? Tending to your rest allows you to not start the next day in a deficit." [Click here to read the full article](#)

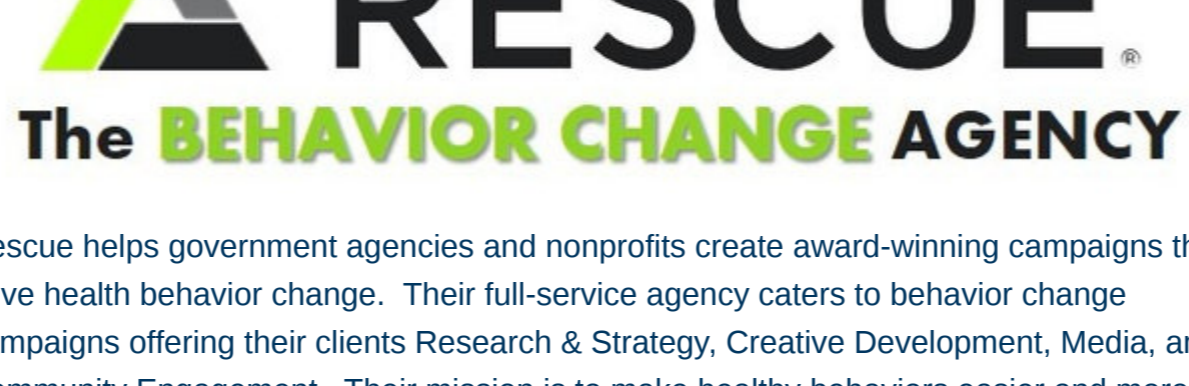
### Sweet Dreams and Sleep Hygiene



First Responder and First Responder Families, please join us for a presentation about Sleep Hygiene! In this training, we discuss and explore sleep, sleep interferences and sleep hygiene tips, tools and habits!

We also provide free in-person and Zoom presentations to educate first responders about stigma, recognize its negative impact, and provide tools on how to reduce stigma within one's department. Our team will also create custom presentations to meet the needs of your department. For more information about this presentation, please visit us at: [www.sdfirstrespondersprogram.org](http://www.sdfirstrespondersprogram.org) 1-833-YU-FIRST (1-833-983-4778)

### Highlighting A Community Partner

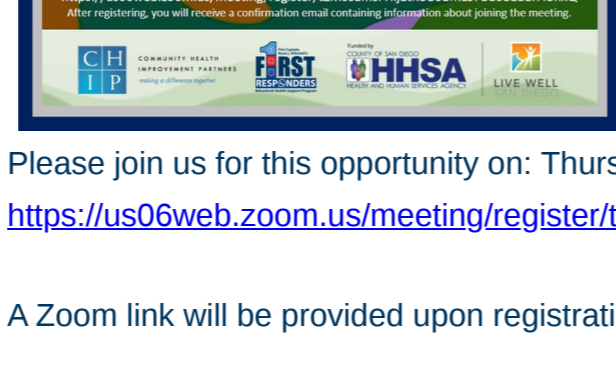


Rescue helps government agencies and nonprofits create award-winning campaigns that drive health behavior change. Their full-service agency caters to behavior change campaigns offering their clients Research & Strategy, Creative Development, Media, and Community Engagement. Their mission is to make healthy behaviors easier and more appealing for everyone, everywhere, through groundbreaking strategies that increase knowledge, change policy, and shift norms. <https://rescueagency.com/>

From the inception of Fire Captain Ryan J. Mitchell's First Responders Program, Rescue has been there and helped us grow our social media which has made a difference to First Responders in San Diego County.

### First Responder Suicide Prevention Training

San Diego County Suicide Prevention Council in collaboration with Fire Captain Ryan J. Mitchell's First Responders Behavioral Health Program is hosting a First Responder Suicide Prevention Training.

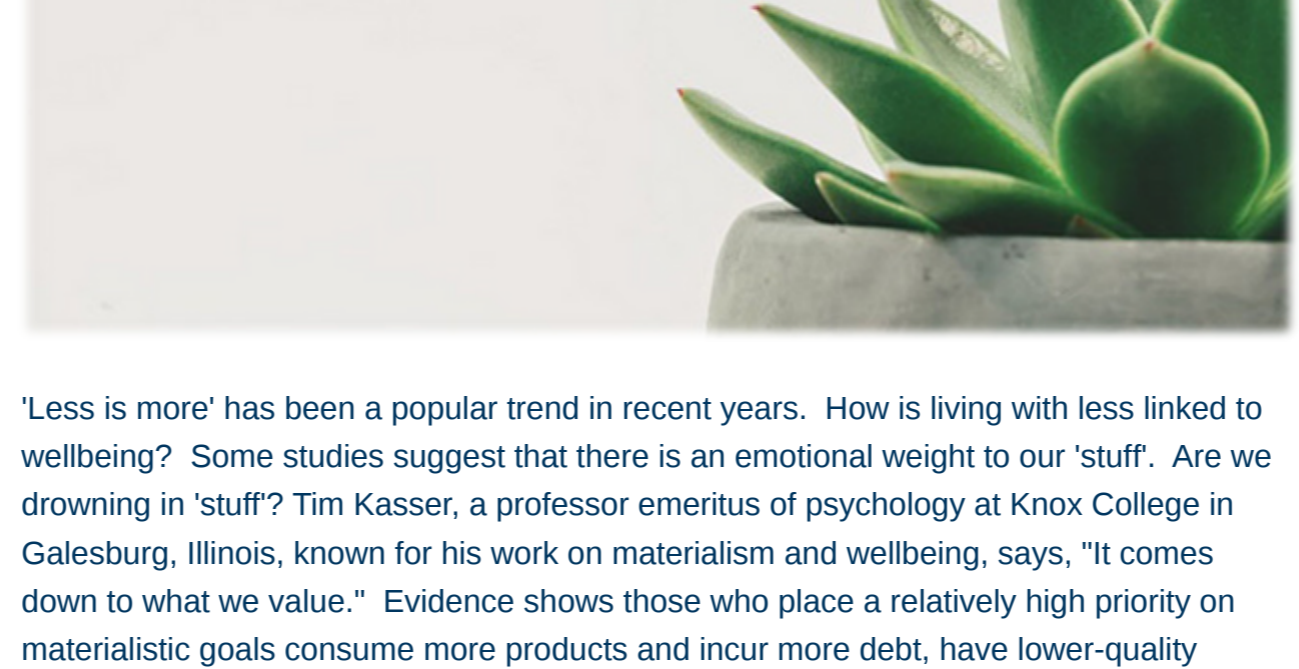


This free, 1-hour training helps prepare First Responders to prevent suicide by raising awareness about factors of suicide, learning conversation tools for suicide prevention, discussing resources, understanding factors of suicide, and identifying how to appropriately respond.

Who should attend? Those who represent the First Responder population including Law Enforcement, Fire Departments, EMS, Dispatch, Lifeguard, CERT, or other emergency response communities.

Please join us for this training on: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMscumsrTkjEtKCG0Bml9Fbd08EddR45nxQ>

A Zoom link will be provided upon registration.



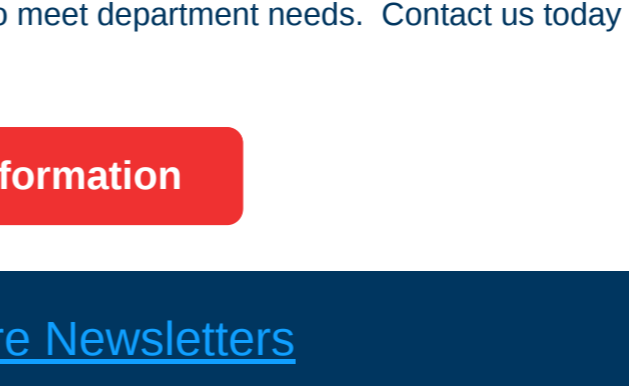
'Less is more' has been a popular trend in recent years. How is living with less linked to wellbeing? Some studies suggest that there is an emotional weight to our 'stuff'. Are we drowning in 'stuff'? Tim Kasser, a professor emeritus of psychology at Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, known for his work on materialism and wellbeing, says, "It comes down to what we value." Evidence shows those who place a relatively high priority on materialistic goals consume more products and incur more debt, have lower-quality interpersonal relationships, act in more ecologically destructive ways and report lower personal and physical wellbeing. Professor Kasser says, "What our work shows, is that when people focus their lives around intrinsic values for personal growth and community, and when organizations support the pursuit of those values, people are happier, people behave in more prosocial and pro-ecological ways. He adds that there's growing research literature that pro-ecological behaviors, such as recycling, repairing, sharing and re-using products, as well as reducing your overall consumption is linked with personal wellbeing.

Given our strong consumer culture, professor Kasser encourages people to reflect on their values and goals, and what do they look like.  
 -- Is my life set up in a way that actually reflects what I believe is most important?  
 -- How do I live, purchase, and make choices in an intentional way that reflects my values?  
 -- So, if I say my community is important to me, how much time do I volunteer or spend doing that?  
 -- If I say something is most important, do I actually act that out?

[Get the full article here](#)

### Group Presentation: Reducing Stigma

Resiliency is a top priority in the First Responder community. First Responders are at a greater risk for experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety due to repeated exposure to trauma. Many First Responders are hesitant to seek help because of the stigma surrounding mental health. Our staff provides county-funded in-person & Zoom presentations to educate First Responders about stigma, resiliency & wellness, recognize its impact, and provide tools to reduce stigma and promote wellness within the First Responder community. Our team is working to promote prevention and support First Responders – in-person or Zoom presentations to meet department needs. Contact us today to request an in-person or Zoom presentation.



[Request Information](#)

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