



Honoring Our Mental Health This

# Black History Month



As we know, each February is Black History Month. It's an opportunity to reflect on our immense contributions as Black people individually and as Black communities. It's a time to amplify why we love us.

We're honoring our ancestors alongside current and future generations. We're honoring contributions spanning all areas of life — from achievements in the arts and sciences to our lasting mark on the culture to everyday acts of care and advocacy. Despite centuries of oppression, Black folks have continually found ways to thrive, creating spaces for joy, innovation, creativity, humor, and healing.

That said, as you reflect on your own — and our communities' — perseverance and accomplishments, we also need to acknowledge the emotional toll that ongoing adversity has taken on our mental health and well-being.

Ongoing systemic injustices — like discrimination at work, inequalities in education, police violence, and racial microaggressions in day-to-day life — can significantly harm your mental and physical health. This ongoing exposure to racial discrimination also compounds existing mental health challenges, creating a disproportionate risk of mental health struggles in Black communities. And, while help for mental health can be hard to find for many, for us it can be even harder to find culturally affirming mental health providers and therapists.

**These barriers are real.** But the good news is, there are robust networks of Black therapists and other resources created for and by us. Find them listed in the “Taking Care of Yourself This Month & Beyond” section later in this resource.

# Reimagining Your Mental Health

Black history is often portrayed as part of a narrative of “overcoming” or “persevering.” But we know our history and lived experiences are much richer than that — plus those “survival” narratives can really take a toll on us. You shouldn’t be expected to always be “strong” or simply endure. Your well-being and health are about more than just survival — they’re about thriving. Acts of love, self-care, and healing are also deeply important and deserve celebration, especially given the full spectrum of experiences we face on a daily basis.

Reimagine your mental health by prioritizing what makes you feel whole. Give yourself permission to rest, ask for help, and embrace vulnerability. Remember, self-care isn’t selfish! It’s essential. It helps you reset, soothe yourself, and show up for folks you care about.

**You are the most powerful advocate for your own well-being. And you deserve to be well.**



# Taking Care of Yourself

## This Month & Beyond

Your mental health matters every day, not just during Black History Month. If you're feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or in need of support, there are resources led by Black mental health care professionals that can help. Here are a few places to start:

- **[Therapy for Black Girls](#)**: A community and directory of Black therapists serving Black women and girls.
- **[Black Men Heal](#)**: A space offering free therapy sessions for Black men.
- **[Black Mental Health Alliance](#)**: Programs and educational resources to support your mental health.
- **[California Black Health Network](#)**: Health resources for our community.
- **[NAMI California](#)**: Find your local county NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) affiliate for free resources and ways to get support. You can also call (916) 567-0163 to get connected.
- **[CalHOPE](#)**: A free statewide California program offering confidential, culturally competent mental health support and resources, including referrals and peer support and coaching. You can chat with them online or call or text the CalHOPE warmline at (833) 317-HOPE (4673).
- **[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#)**: And remember, if you or someone you know is ever in crisis or distress — or if you just need someone to talk to — you can always call or text the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline for free, confidential, 24/7 support.

Reimagining your mental health starts with finding what works best for you — whether it's resting, connecting with loved ones, or exploring new ways to recharge. For more ideas, explore the [Take Action Juneteenth](#) resource, which highlights ways to celebrate and nurture your mental health and reclaim joy.

# How to Be an Ally

## for Black Mental Health

Being a mental health ally this Black History Month means acknowledging and supporting the unique mental health experiences of Black communities this month and year-round. It's about taking meaningful actions — whether by using your voice, resources or influence — to advocate for mental well-being, support systemic changes, and ensure that Black voices and experiences are amplified. That's how allies can truly honor Black history and support Black futures. Let these resources serve as a starting point for deeper learning and action:

Smithsonian [Learning Lab](#), National Museum of African American History and Culture. "[Black History Month and mental health — resistance and resolve](#)," Nature Mental Health. "[The historical roots of racial disparities in the mental health system](#)," American Counseling Association. "[Black Mental Health History](#)," Mental Health America. "[What Black History Month Means to Me](#)," National Alliance on Mental Health. "[Black Mental Health Matters: A Resource Guide](#)," Mental Health First Aid, from National Council for Mental Wellbeing.

Find additional mental health support and resources at [TakeAction4MH.com](https://www.TakeAction4MH.com).



☼ **TAKE ACTION**

FOR MENTAL HEALTH

**CaIMHSA**

California Mental Health Services Authority