



My 20-Minute Nature Practice That Changed My Mental Health



I'm so glad the weather is warming up—it means I can return to a simple daily routine that supports my mental health more than anything else I do. This routine is called "sit spot." See? Quite simple.

Before I even had a name for it, I was doing something very similar. When I began training to become a certified forest therapy guide, one of the primary practices we were asked to do daily was, you guessed it—sit spot.

The idea is exactly what it sounds like: find a place in nature to sit every day for 20 minutes. During that time, you do nothing but simply be with nature. The goal is to step out of your thoughts and fully engage your senses—listening, smelling, seeing, and feeling the world around you.

This isn't meditation. It's more of an immersion—a quiet invitation into peace, solitude, and the gentle calming of your mind. The 20-minute duration is intentional; that's about how long it takes to truly disconnect from the noise of daily life and start noticing the small wonders all around.

In the winter, I still do sit spot—usually indoors, gazing out a window. But in spring, I return to my favorite outdoor chair tucked under a tree in my backyard. With coffee in hand, I begin the day by simply noticing. And it's a joy.

In our busy, worry-filled world, giving yourself just 20 minutes to reconnect with calm and presence can be transformative. Sit spot is free, simple, and available anywhere. I set a 20-minute timer on my phone, then put the phone away—and just sit.

I encourage you to give it a try. Maybe today, tomorrow, or even next week. You might even need to add it to your calendar. However, you make it happen, just make it happen. You deserve this time for yourself.

If you try it, I'd love to hear how it goes—and what you notice. If you try a sit spot this week, let me know how it goes! What are you noticing?

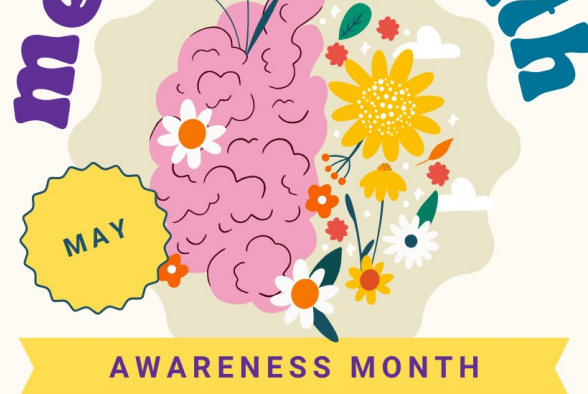
In Peace,

Jennifer Gabrenya



mental health





Are you a domestic violence survivor, interested in free counseling?

Reach out to our counseling office at 708-798-7737.

New at Anew



Juan Valerio,
New Board Member

I am truly honored and blessed to be able to be a part of the Anew family as a newly elected board member. I am a born and raised first generation Chicagoan from the South Side of Chicago.

For many years I worked as an Accounting Consultant serving several nonprofits. In my time working with these organizations, I came to appreciate the importance of the work and witnessed the impact on the individuals that would walk through the doors in dire need of assistance. Those experiences left a very impactful impression on me which is why I have such a soft spot for nonprofits.

In my position as the CEO of Mi Costenita, I am afforded the opportunity to reengage in the community I have dearly missed. I currently am the board chair for Beyond the Ball, a nonprofit organization in Little Village that does great work through sport and play all across the city of Chicago and nation. I have four children ranging from 11 to 4 years old and a wonderful wife that I have been married to for 15 years. In my spare time I love to watch movies, play basketball, and travel.

I'm excited to join the Anew board and looking forward to making contributions that can continue to advance and honor the amazing work that others have done before me.



Chante Adams is long time staff member of Anew, and has served as the Court Manager for over a decade. Recently, she accepted the newly created position of *Director of Community Services* where she oversees the Court Advocacy Program, Community Education Program, and Partner Abuse Intervention Program. In this role, she is committed to providing equitable and trauma-informed services to survivors, families, and communities affected by domestic violence.

Chante understands the multi-layered nature of domestic violence and values being a resource to survivors, families, communities, law enforcement, and fellow professionals seeking to deepen their understanding of advocacy and trauma-informed care. She believes that collaboration and compassionate leadership are key to breaking generational cycles of abuse and building pathways to healing and safety.

Community Education

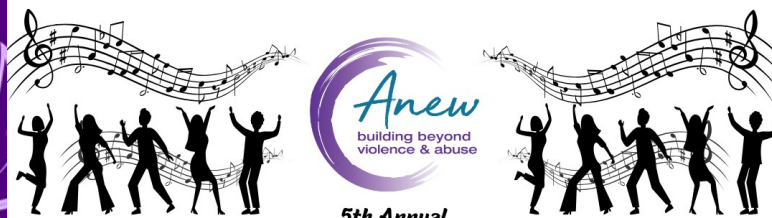
On March 29, 2025, Anew was honored to speak at the Xi Mu Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.'s 3rd Annual Domestic Violence Symposium at Governors State University! Pictured is Community Educator Bo discussing the dynamics of domestic violence.



Interested in having a speaker at your group or event?

[Request A Speaker](#)

Dancing Away Domestic Violence 2025



Dancing Away Domestic Violence

Line Dancing, Cardio Drumming and Zumba for the whole family!

When?

Saturday, June 21, 2025
3pm-6pm

Prices:

Adult Tickets: \$20

Kids 12 and Under: \$10

Kids 5 and Under: FREE

DADV T-Shirt: \$10

Where?

Our Lady of the Heights
Gymnasium, St. Kieran Parish
724 195th Street
Chicago Heights, IL 60411
Parking - East Lot

Door prizes, swag bags, drinks, snacks, and resources
will be available to all participants.

Additional raffle tickets will be available to purchase in person during the event.

All proceeds benefit Anew and their mission
to end domestic violence in our shared communities.

T-SHIRT DEADLINE: MAY 21, 2025

2025 Event T-Shirt Design





Design reads in large letters "Dancing Away Domestic Violence" with cowboy boots and music notes. Bottom reads "Boots on the Ground for Awareness & Action".

[Purchase Tickets & T-Shirts Now!](#)

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Job Postings at Anew

Compensation and Benefits are listed clearly at the bottom of each job description. Take the guess out of applying-- Our salaries, wages, and benefits are transparent and up front! Please share with you network.

Positions Updated 5/14/2025

★ **Bilingual Crisis Intervention Advocate**

★ **Bilingual Partner Abuse Intervention Group Co-Facilitator - Part Time**

Anew offers full time benefits including 14 paid holidays; 20 days of Paid Time Off (PTO) annually; medical, dental, vision and life insurance; short-term and long-term disability; and the ability to contribute to our 403(b) plan with 3% company matching. This position is also eligible for Aflac benefits.

If you are interested in applying for any of these positions, please email your cover letter and resume to careers@anewdv.org.

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