

A few minutes to reset: how a Missouri disability-services provider is putting self-regulation in its community's hands

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities now have a new, self-directed way to pause, reset and regain a sense of calm in a difficult moment

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EINPresswire.com/ -- People with intellectual and developmental

disabilities in mid-Missouri now have a new, self-directed way to pause, reset and regain a sense of calm in a difficult

moment — without having to wait for a staff member to step in. [Woodhaven](#), a Columbia-based organization that supports more than 200 individuals with developmental disabilities, autism and other neurodevelopmental needs, has made [Healium](#) — a [biofeedback and neurofeedback tool delivered through virtual reality](#) — available across its programs as an everyday resource.



The significance is less about the technology than about what it hands to the user: another choice. For a population whose days are often shaped by other people's decisions, a tool that lets a person recognize they're becoming overwhelmed and independently do something about it is a step toward the self-determination Woodhaven builds its work around. At the organization's Community Connections day program, Healium goggles sit at an open station individuals can visit throughout the day — used not because someone was told to, but because someone chose to.

"When someone recognizes that they're becoming overwhelmed and chooses a tool that helps them regulate, we're supporting far more than wellness — we're supporting self-awareness, independence and self-determination," said Dr. Joy Sweeney, CEO of Woodhaven. "That's the moment this stopped being technology and became something a person could use to have more control over their own well-being."

Woodhaven's turning point came watching an individual who was becoming overwhelmed step

away to a Healium session, self-regulate, and return ready to re-engage — a sequence the team had most often seen only after staff intervention. The organization has since made the same tool available to its nearly 350 staff members, who work in emotionally and physically demanding direct-care roles and can use a few minutes with Healium to reset between challenging moments rather than carrying stress from one situation into the next.

Sessions run in as little as four minutes. For Woodhaven, the measure of success was never the number of sessions completed; it was voluntary use — the moment an individual or a team member independently reaches for the tool, a sign it has become part of their own way of managing stress.

"For decades, we've asked people how they feel and hoped the tools we handed them would help," said Sarah Hill, CEO and co-founder of Healium. "What Woodhaven understood is that the goal was never to calm someone down — it was to give them something they could pick up themselves, on the hardest day, and know it's theirs. That's not our story. It's theirs, and it's the reason we build."

Woodhaven's deployment reflects a broader shift underway across mental health care: a growing recognition that people do better when they're given tools they can use themselves — not in place of professional care, but alongside it.

ABOUT HEALIUM

Healium is a digital health and mental wellness solution that combines virtual reality with biofeedback and neurofeedback to help patients self-manage stress, anxiety, PTSD, insomnia, and pain as part of a healthy lifestyle. Evaluated in multiple peer-reviewed journals ([tryhealium.com/science](https://www.tryhealium.com/science)) and used by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), federal agencies, behavioral health clinics, and pain clinics nationwide, Healium offers clinicians a non-pharmacological, measurable approach to help patients self-regulate their nervous system in as little as four minutes. Learn more at www.tryhealium.com.

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