Self-Care with EAP

Presented by:

Cindy Guertin-Anderson, LMFT
Director, Employee Assistance Program

Nancy Board, MSW
Clinical Services Manager, Employee Assistance Program
Taking care of your mental health in times of stress and uncertainty

- Make a list of ways you will seek support when symptoms get worse.
- Remember that you’ve gotten through mental health challenges before.
- Offer yourself some compassion. Say aloud: “I’m doing the best I can.”
- Keep going to therapy.
Challenge yourself to stay in the present.

Trauma and anxiety bring you out of the present and get you stuck in the past or future.

Practice Mindfulness
- Free apps
- Attune to your senses
- Guided Meditation
- Free Trauma-Sensitive Yoga Classes online

Square Breathing
Take Care of your Physical Needs

• Trauma “gets stuck” in our body. Choose to move. Staying active is as good for the brain as it is for the body.
• Eat a brain-healthy diet to improve mood, help with sleep, get energy, and support the immune system.
• Sleep matters more than you think. Practice good sleep hygiene. Avoid screen time 2 hours prior to bed.
Separate what is in your control from what is not.

- Wash your hands.
- Remind others to wash theirs.
- Take your vitamins.
- Set boundaries around when and how often you consume media.
- If teleworking, work some outside. Take walking breaks. Video connect with colleagues more frequently.
- Decide who you want to show up as today.
Do what helps you feel a sense of safety.

• What music helps you feel calm?
• What smells bring you peace?
• What objects bring comfort?
• Public health and government officials are preparing for worst-case scenarios because that’s their job. But as individuals, we don’t need to expect the worst. The majority of people who have covid-19 recover. The smartest scientists are working on a vaccination.
Get outside in nature—even if you are avoiding crowds.

Check out the Japanese practice of shinrin-yoku—“Forest Bathing”
Kindness is contagious

"Here's the deal. The human soul doesn't want to be advised or fixed or saved. It simply wants to be witnessed - to be seen, heard and companioned exactly as it is."

~ Parker Palmer ~
Practice Gratitude

Don’t just think about what you are grateful for...write it down. Tell someone.
Stay connected and reach out if you need more support.

Loneliness is as unhealthy as smoking. Prioritize face-to-face social connection, virtually.
Resilience can be learned

four core components — connection, wellness, healthy thinking, and meaning
BREAKING:

GETTING OUTDOORS NOT CANCELLED
MUSIC NOT CANCELLED
FAMILY NOT CANCELLED
READING NOT CANCELLED
SINGING NOT CANCELLED
LAUGHING NOT CANCELLED
HOPE NOT CANCELLED

LET'S EMBRACE WHAT WE HAVE.
When do I need help?

Trauma (or Secondary Traumatic Stress)
- Re-experiencing (flashbacks, nightmares)
- Avoidance (thoughts, people, situations)
- Negative cognitions and mood (blame, fear)
- Arousal & reactivity (irritable, reckless, concentration, sleep issues)

Anxiety
- Is your worry excessive in intensity, frequency, or amount of distress it causes?
- Do you find it difficult to control the worry (or stop worrying) once it starts?

Depression (is it social distancing, or depression?)
- Little interest or pleasure in doing things
- Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless
EAP is here to support you

- Free for you and your family
- Confidential
- Easy to access
- Expert professionals
- Practical help

- From everyday concerns to serious issues
- Caring and respectful
- Culturally relevant
- Supporting the WHOLE person

eap.wa.gov
877-313-4455
Guided Meditation
RAIN: A Practice of Radical Compassion
Resources

CDC – Emergency Responders: Tips for taking care of yourself
SAMHSA – Tips for social distancing, quarantine, and isolation during an infectious disease outbreak
SAMHSA – Tips for caregivers, parents, and teachers during infectious disease outbreaks
AFSP – Taking Care of Your Mental Health in the Face of Uncertainty
CDC – Manage Anxiety & Stress
WHO – Coping with stress during the 2019-nCoV outbreak
GREATER GOOD BERKELEY – Five science-backed strategies to build resilience
APA – Building your resilience
Tara Brach – RAIN: A practice of radical compassion