



Employee Assistance Program

Self-Care during Self-isolation

Social distancing and self-isolation coupled with good hand hygiene and sanitizing practices are key to minimizing the spread of disease like COVID-19 during a public emergency. For many of us, social distancing means the closures of schools, workplaces, and other cherished social gatherings requiring us to quickly adjust to virtual workspaces, long distance relationships and communication with our friends and peers, and being in close quarters for prolonged periods of time with our immediate family. Our “new normal” challenges us to find creative ways to remain resilient, stay socially connected, and maintain our emotional wellbeing and physical health. Below are a few reminders to consider as we all make efforts to remain resilient.

Establish a New Routine – Routine can help us deal with change, form or build upon healthy habits, and reduce stress. The certainty of a daily routine can help us to cope with the uncertainty this pandemic evokes. Furthermore, building a routine, or creating structure around our day, allows us to form productive habits over time that align us with our goals and objectives. Check out the online article, [How to Establish a Daily Routine to Become Your Best Self](#) for more information on how to get started developing your new normal.

Maintain a Healthy Diet – It is important to make efforts to maintain a healthy diet including eating fruits and vegetables and drinking plenty of water. You may find a number of wellness articles geared towards healthy eating on [EAP Help Link](#) along with a great online seminar entitled [Eating Your Way to Wellness](#) available on [EAP Help Link](#).

Get Sufficient Sleep – Make adequate sleep hygiene a part of your daily routine. The National Institutes of Health recommends that school-aged children and teens get at least 9 hours of sleep a day while adults and seniors get 7 to 8 hours of sleep to feel well rested and maintain optimal performance. To get adequate sleep, practice healthy sleep hygiene including a sleep schedule, practicing a relaxing bedtime routine excluding screen time at least 30 minutes prior, avoiding caffeine and alcohol, and getting adequate exercise each day.

Engage in Daily Physical Activity – Daily physical activity is key to maintaining wellness, but maintaining your fitness routine may become a challenge with the closure of your gym, cancellation of your group exercise classes, or not being able to gather with your usual fitness friends for support and motivation. To maintain your health during your new normal, finding alternative physical activities and routines is key. Try taking a daily family walk or engage your family in indoor games that require physical activity in limited space. Also, remember, household chores such as dusting, vacuuming, and unloading the dishwasher all offer some level of physical activity. Make sure to check out [EAP Help Link](#) where you can find a number of fitness videos, articles, and other resources, or you can check out other online resources such as YouTube for fitness tutorials.

Carve out a Few Moments of “You Time” – With a full house it may be more difficult to find time and space for yourself. Consider getting up a little earlier or taking a few moments before bedtime to meditate. You may also take a few extra moments in the bathroom to engage in a few deep cleansing breaths or a stretch. It is not only okay, but it’s key to your own mental health to carve out at least a few moments for yourself.



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Stay Connected – You may not be able to meet up with your friends as you normally do, but that does not mean you cannot join the virtual social scene. Engage group video calls, try hosting a virtual book club or dinner party, or participate in online gaming. Make a point to call or text your family and friends to check in on them and stay connected!

Do Something Kind for Others – While committing to social distancing, we still have a responsibility to our community and those most in need. Stimulate your local economy by purchasing gift cards or ordering carry out, if possible. Offer to grocery shop for a neighbor or senior. Write Thank You letters to those in mission critical jobs like your local first responders, grocers, food service staff, and restaurateurs. Get creative to think of ways you can give back.

Limit Your News Media Consumption – Ensure you are receiving news or information from a credible source. The most reputable and credible sources during the COVID-19 pandemic are the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO) and your local and state governments, all of whom have websites with updates and resources.

For more information or to access other resources available you may contact your Employee Assistance Program. Your EAP is available 24/7/365 by calling your designated toll free number or by logging onto [EAP Help Link](#) and entering your company code.

References:

“NIH Offers New Comprehensive Guide to Healthy Sleep”. National Institutes of Health. 23 March 2006. <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/nih-offers-new-comprehensive-guide-healthy-sleep>. Accessed 23 March 2020.

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Saunders, Steven. “How to Establish a Daily Routine to Become Your Best Self”. Goalcast. 26 Nov 2018. <https://www.goalcast.com/2018/11/26/establish-daily-routine-become-best-self/>. Accessed 23 March 2020.



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