

# Employee Assistance Program

## Emotional Wellness: Building Better Mental Health

Developing healthy responses to overcome challenges in our lives is really the essence of mental health wellness. You may have heard the term *resilience*, which is the ability to handle life's setbacks. There are strategies you can put in place to deal with adversity in a productive way that can help you maintain wellbeing.

- **Avoidance and denial are not necessarily negative coping strategies.** There is a reason these responses exist and it's okay to put one foot in front of the other and take time to process what has happened gradually. This can help people experiencing particularly painful events to function in the moment.
- **Accept that there are things you just cannot control.** Unexpected and unpredictable things happen that we cannot anticipate or prepare for, no matter how much we plan.
- **Let go of guilt.** You may be holding onto *should haves* or *could haves*, but more than likely you did what you could do to prevent a situation or make it better. Carrying this extra burden can wear you down and prevent you from moving beyond the event.
- **Take time to be still and reflect.** Once a crisis or the initial impact of an event has passed, it's important to take time to talk about it and assess how you're doing and what your needs are for restoring yourself. Sometimes you'll just need more time to pass to allow for healing, other times you may need the help of a professional who can help guide you.
- **Try to keep a positive attitude.** Know that you will get through this time and that it is temporary, as difficult as it may feel in the moment. Look toward the future with a sense of hope and that things will get better. Even if left alone, most things just naturally improve in time. Be kind to yourself – remember your good deeds, learn from your mistakes and forgive yourself.
- **Take care of yourself.** Being tired and worn down is not going to serve you during a trying time. As much as you can, fuel yourself with healthy foods and get the rest that you need. Exercise can help release endorphins to improve your mood too. Getting outside into nature can help expand your perspective.
- **Prioritize social connections.** Seek out the company of people who are positive, healthy and fill your energy meter.
- **Reduce stress.** If you're running at an unsustainable level, it's time to simplify your life. Say no to new tasks or delegate existing ones. Take stock of what is important and put the rest to the side.
- **Seek help.** Talk to a mental health professional if you're finding things are unmanageable. Contact the EAP today for free, confidential help.

### References:

Smith, M., Segal, R. & Segal, J. (June 2019). Building Better Mental Health. Retrieved from [www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/building-better-mental-health.htm#](http://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/building-better-mental-health.htm#)

National Institutes of Health (December 2018). Emotional Wellness Toolkit. Retrieved from [www.nih.gov/health-information/emotional-wellness-toolkit](http://www.nih.gov/health-information/emotional-wellness-toolkit)

For more information on this topic or further assistance, please contact your Employee Assistance Program.



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