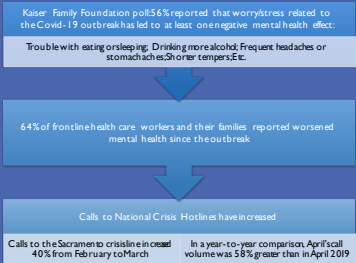


PSYCHOLOGICAL RISKS DURING AND AFTER THE PANDEMIC



COPING DURING A CRISIS: ACCEPT THE THINGS YOU CANNOT CHANGE



- Don't try to control the uncontrollable
- Many things in life are beyond our control
- Focus on the things you can control

COPING DURING A CRISIS: STAYING COOL, CALM, & COLLECTED

01

Check in with your self

02

Prioritize and focus, consider a long-term strategy, but also approach for today's needs

03

Get grounded (relaxation, medication, short breaks)

04

Focus on the positive, point out wins and strengths to yourself and others, use positive self talk

COPING DURING A CRISIS: BE FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE



- Stressful situations often require us to be flexible
- Flexibility and adaptability play important roles in an individual's ability to adapt to continuously changing environments
- People who are flexible cope with stress better and have less negative affect

HOW TO COPE AND BE RESILIENT DURING THE PANDEMIC

- Know: Know your stress indicators – acknowledge when you are stressed so you can make a conscious choice to cope
- Consider: Consider your personal coping strategies
- Tap: Tap into social support
- Promote: Promote healthy thinking and positive attitudes
- Engage in: Engage in healthy behaviors (sleep, eating, exercise)
- Practice: Practice relaxation

TAKING CHARGE OF STRESS: BUILDING RESILIENCY




- Good stress management improves your resilience to hold up under pressure and successfully manage challenges
- Stress Management is not a "one size fits all" process
- Identify what positive coping tools work for you
- PLAN how you will respond to stress during the pandemic and as stressors occur

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is physical, mental, or emotional strain or tension


Indicators of stress:

- **Physical:** muscle tension, fatigue, upset stomach
- **Emotional:** anxious, sad/depressed, worrying, irritable
- **Cognitive:** negative thinking (catastrophizing), difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- **Behavioral:** impulsivity, snapping at others, withdrawal, increased substance use

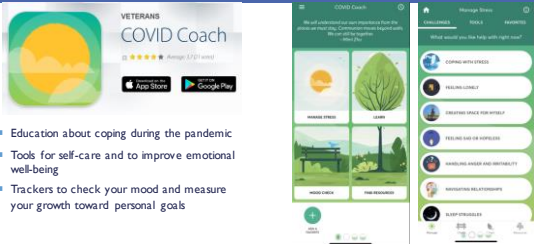


CONSIDER WHAT POSITIVE COPING SKILLS DO YOU ALREADY USE?

- Listening to music
- Taking a walk
- Journaling/writing
- Reading
- Doing a puzzle
- Games on your phone
- Yoga/exercise
- Socializing (from afar)
- Engage in a hobby
- Cooking/baking
- Cleaning/organizing
- Having a cup of tea



COVID COACH APP: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



- Education about coping during the pandemic
- Tools for self-care and to improve emotional well-being
- Trackers to check your mood and measure your growth toward personal goals

SOCIAL SUPPORT: CONNECT WITH OTHERS



- Social support is consistently found in research to buffer the effects of stress, including during "disasters"
- Because of social distancing and quarantine requirements this is more challenging during a pandemic.
- Consider ways to stay connected socially during social distancing:
 - Reach out to a colleague at work
 - Ask a loved one to check in with you
 - Call or email an old friend
 - Go for a walk (at safe distance) with a colleague during breaks
 - Schedule zoom and other app get-togethers
 - Facetime with loved ones
 - Confide in a faith leader

DEVELOP HEALTHY THINKING

Pay attention to what you are thinking

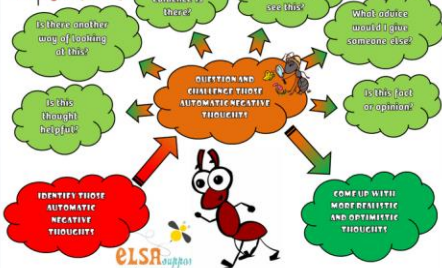
Many thoughts are not accurate, realistic, or helpful

Thoughts are NOT facts

When stressed, individuals may have more Negative Automatic Thoughts:

- Catastrophize
- Overgeneralize
- Have a "Negative Filter"

Automatic Negative Thoughts (ANTs)



POSITIVE "SELF-TALK" (& POSITIVE "MANTRAS")

- "I can cope with my anxiety."
- "I can problem solve and prepare for upcoming events."
- "I know ways to cope with stress and use them effectively."
- At a minimum: Change self-limiting statements to questions
 - I can't do this! → How can I do this?
 - This is impossible! → How is this possible?



POSITIVE EMOTIONS AND THINKING: PRACTICE GRATITUDE

- Gratitude is an awareness of the good things in one's life and being thankful.
- Gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness.
- In research studies, self-guided weekly or daily gratitude exercises were associated with higher levels of positive affect.
- How to practice gratitude:
 - Gratitude journal
 - Daily gratitude mental list
 - Say thank you/write a thank you card



INCREASE HEALTHY HABITS



Eat a healthy diet

Well-nourished bodies are better prepared to cope with stress, so be mindful of what you eat.



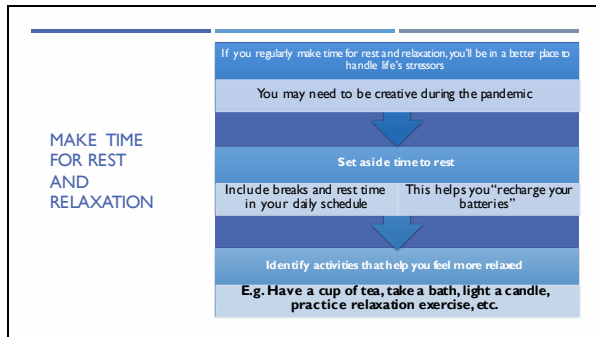
Exercise

Consider even brief opportunities for physical activity, such as brief walks, stretches, etc.



Get enough sleep

Adequate sleep improves mood and stress management. Feeling tired limits your stress management capabilities and may reduce your thinking skills and emotional regulation.





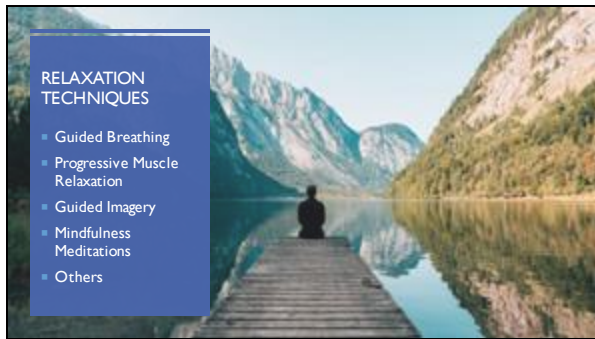
WHY PRACTICE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES?

- Reduce anxiety, anger/irritability, negative affect
- Prevents stress from building up
- Decrease muscle tension
- Helps reduce headaches or other physical complaints
- Improves concentration and memory
- Helps sleep


Feelings Thermometer

The Feelings Thermometer is a scale from 1 to 10, with corresponding feelings listed next to each number. The scale is a vertical thermometer with a red liquid level at the top.

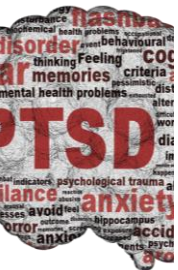
Number	Feeling
1	Not ready to relax
2	Am feeling
3	Am feeling up
4	Am getting uncomfortable
5	Not relaxed (I am in control)
6	Am relaxed
7	Feeling more relaxed
8	Am relaxed
9	Am relaxed and happy
10	The feeling good!



WHEN SHOULD SOMEONE SEEK HELP?



- Symptoms of stress are not getting better
- Current coping skills are not enough
- ***When functioning is impaired (at work, at home, in relationships)



SIGNS OF TRAUMA AND STRESSOR-RELATED DISORDERS

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) – symptoms lasting over 1 month

- Intrusive thoughts/memories – reliving traumatic event, flashbacks
- Avoidance behaviors – avoiding thinking/talking about event, avoiding places
- Negative thinking – hopelessness, feeling detached, apathy
- Hypervigilance – easily startled, insomnia, irritability

ACUTE STRESS DISORDER

- Same symptoms as PTSD except duration is 2 days to 1 month only

ADJUSTMENT DISORDER

- Fewer symptoms required and occur within 3 months of stressor
- Once stressor has terminated, symptoms do not last more than 6 months

SIGNS OF ANXIETY

- Persistent worry or feeling overwhelmed by emotions
- Excessive worry about a number of concerns and/or a general sense that something bad is going to happen.
- Restlessness
- Irritability, feeling on edge
- Difficulty concentrating
- Sleep problems



SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

- A lack of interest and pleasure in daily activities
- Change in appetite; significant weight loss or gain
- Difficulty sleeping or excessive sleeping
- Lack of energy; chronic fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating and/or making decisions
- Feelings of worthlessness, hopelessness, and/or helplessness
- Excessive guilt
- Thoughts of death or suicide



WHERE DO I GET HELP?

You are not alone!

- Professional therapy – seek out a psychologist, counselor, other mental health therapist
 - Psychology Today – Find a Therapist; Find a Psychiatrist
 - American Psychological Association – Provider Locator
 - Behavioral Health Providers listing in your health insurance: "Find a Provider"
- Ask your Primary Care Physician for a referral
- Ask your faith leader for a referral
- CHE Behavioral Health Services – Outpatient Telehealth Psychotherapy – with licensed psychologists



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For convenient access to high-quality healthcare, people across the country have connected with CHE Behavioral Health. Members can resolve healthcare needs through scheduled visits with licensed behavioral health specialists using our HIPAA SECURE solution. Around the world, people need greater access to high-quality mental healthcare. Our mental health services range from ongoing visits with a mental healthcare specialist to expert medical opinions for complex cases.

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National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
(800) 273-8255

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
(Spanish)
(888) 628-9454

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
(Options for Deaf and Hard of Hearing)
(800) 799-4889

Crisis Text Line
Text HELLO to 741741

CRISIS LINES

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THANK YOU!

Torna Li, PsyD
CHE Behavioral Health Service
tornali@cheservices.com
www.cheservices.com