Fall
2012

Frontline Employee

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AllOne Health Employee Assistance Program

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800.451.1834

Cultivate Relationships to Fight Stress

Although relationships can at times be demanding, they are one of the most important and effective ways of coping with stress. This is because only another person can offer empathy - the essential combination of understanding, sympathy, and compassion necessary to our emotional well-being. When experiencing a stressful work environment or dealing with a frightening economy and an uncertain future, it may be easier to cope by withdrawing from others, but you should avoid this self-absorption. Instead, connect with others during times of stress, and increase work-life balance by finding what you have in common with coworkers. Build bridges with your interests to cultivate relationships. Knowing you can count on your coworkers will reduce stress and increase resiliency.

Build Family Resilience

Personal resilience refers to one's ability to bounce back from adversity—tough times and tough events. Families can be resilient too. Build resilience within your family, and you will better weather tough times and improve your chances of thriving despite of them. Ask yourself the following: (1) Do individual family members feel confident in their ability to cope with change? (2) Do family members not shy away from hard work? (3) Do family members demonstrate the ability to cooperate with one another, despite the minor squabbles most families experience? (4) When wronged, do family members forgive each other? (5) When stressful events occur, does your family adapt? (6) Do family members nurture one another? (7) Do family members stick up for one another? (8) Are family members open and honest with one another? (9) Does the family interact and build relationships within the community? If you answered no to these nine questions, talk to your family and consider how you can build up these traits.

What Is Emotional Wellness?

Emotional wellness is just as important as physical health; in fact, it's difficult to achieve one without the other. Emotional wellness does not, however, mean perpetual happiness. Rather, it is the ability to be aware of, express, and deal with emotions that we experience—anger, fear, disappointment, and many more. The goal of emotional wellness is to face these difficult and unpleasant experiences with a proactive attitude, rather than impulse-driven reactions that may create larger problems. To improve emotional wellness—like physical wellness—identify areas where you need improvement and target them to be worked on.

ALLONE HEALTH RESOURCES

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October Is National Depression Awareness Month

Depression is more than just feeling sad for a few days as a response to known events. It is a serious illness that affects one's mood, thoughts, body, function, and relationships. It can last weeks, months, or even years. It is not a sign of personal weakness or a condition that can be willed or wished away. With appropriate treatment, however, most depression can be alleviated. The following is a list of depressive symptoms. Not everyone who is depressed experiences every symptom; some experience a few, others may experience many. Additionally, having any one symptom does not mean you are depressed.

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities that were once enjoyed, including sex
- Decreased energy, fatigue, being "slowed down"
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Insomnia, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
- Appetite and/or weight loss or overeating and weight gain
- Thoughts of death and suicide, suicide attempts (please call your EAP or other mental health professional immediately for assistance)
- Restlessness, irritability
- Persistent physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders, and chronic pain

The above list may have you wondering about yourself or someone close to you. There is no need to suffer when help is only a phone call away. Please contact your Employee Assistance Program at **800-451-1834** for information about assistance with depression.

Keys to Helping a Friend

Are you seeing signs of denial in a friend with a personal problem requiring urgent action to resolve it? Personal problems with tough choices usually include denial. Others use minimization (your friend knows there's a problem but denies it's serious) or projection (they admit it's serious, but say it's not their responsibility to deal with it). Absent a crisis, your friend simply isn't motivated to get help yet. Denial-laden personal problems include compulsive shopping, refusal to see a doctor, ignoring creditors, struggling with alcohol dependence, staying in an abusive relationship, and many more. Start by talking with your friend. Mention your concerns, but don't threaten or be aggressive. State your observations and their impact on you, loved ones, and your friend's life. Ask to help. Mention your obligation to support him or her as a friend. If you sense anger or defensiveness, remain calm and understanding. Rarely do friends part ways over honesty, at least not permanently. If needed, talk to an expert about the problem to get more pointers. This could be a counselor, an attorney, or even the police. Stay healthy, detached, and objective. Remember, your goal is to encourage the first action step toward help, not to "own" the problem of a friend who won't seek it.

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