



SELF-CARE

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As always, your self care is of utmost importance. Even more so during times of crisis as you provide care and guidance for others. This module is designed to help you care for yourself and maintain your personal well-being so you have the ability and capacity to in turn help the employees at your organization.

Transition Routines: Give yourself pause to move from one set of work to another. For example, from work to home you might change clothes, wash your face and take a few deep breaths. Now, if you're working from home, you no longer have that commute that signals to your brain that it is time to transition. What's more, you have no built-in margin between your work life and home life. As a result, you may need to be more intentional about moving from one set of work to the next.

EXAMPLE TRANSITION ROUTINE: FROM WORK TO DINNER TIME

Let's call the area you have set up as your home office your "work command center". When moving from your work command center in your home to making dinner, you'll want to build in a new kind of margin to allow yourself to transition.

Try: Before going to the kitchen to make dinner, take a pause, walk to a quiet room or space and listen to one of your favorite songs. Alternately, you can take between two and five minutes to pause, look out the window and reflect on what you are most proud of from your day of work or what you are most looking forward to in the evening to come.

Mindfulness: We will all be multi-tasking way more than usual. Many of us will be working from our homes with children nearby and taking on extra duties as we determine how we make everything work. As often as possible, create time to focus on doing just one thing at a time. Mindfulness does not always require carving out time for meditation; you can make just a few simple tweaks in your day to increase mindfulness.

EXAMPLE STRATEGY FOR IMPROVED MINDFULNESS

Working on a project that does not require ongoing or close communication with other team members? Try to close out chat and email notifications while you are head down on the project so that you can mindfully focus on the task at hand. If you are worried about missing an important message, set a timer to remind you to check back in an hour.

Stretching and Movement: Being closed in our houses can make us feel cramped. Stretching can take a few minutes and make our bodies feel more expansive.



EXAMPLE MIDDAY STRETCH

Try this stretch to help you open up your body throughout the work day.

Try: Put your right hand on your left shoulder and put your left arm behind your back. Tip your head to the right, away from the shoulder you are holding. Then, look down at your right shoulder. Finally, tip your head to the right and rotate back; imagine you are trying to take a peak at something over your left shoulder. Hold each position for 3-5 seconds while breathing deeply and then repeat on the other side.

5-4-3-2-1: When your anxiety sends you down a rabbit hole, which can easily happen right now, take a moment to notice five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, one thing you can taste. This practice can bring you back into the present moment and into your body.

Gratitude: Feelings of scarcity are common in crisis. Gratitude is the practice of noticing and becoming mindful of your thankfulness. Gratitude works even if you don't share it with others. Simply pausing to notice your gratitude can have a lot of helpful responses for your well-being.

Nourishing Food: Food is central to our sense of comfort. It is also key to our immune systems. Try to find a balance between comfort and health. Remember, healthy food is full of vitamins and nutrients. The healthiest foods are close to their natural state (like fresh or frozen vegetables or whole grains) and full of color and flavor. Give yourself permission to avoid the mess of low fat, low carb, high protein, low sodium, etc. Instead, when it comes time to pick food, ask yourself, is this nutritious?

EXAMPLE STRATEGY: MAKE HALF YOUR PLATE FRUITS AND VEGGIES

Keep your fats, proteins, and carbohydrates in the right proportions. Every time you eat, try to make half of your meal consist of fruits, vegetables, and/or beans.

Connection: Find a friend. Have one person in mind who isn't a co-worker or immediate family member that you can call when you need some connection. The reason this person should be outside of our immediate circles is that when we need a break, likely the people closest to us do too. In order to support the resiliency of everyone, call someone who is a layer or two outside of your immediate circle.

Navigating issues related to COVID-19 and your business starts with a healthy, strong and thriving you. We hope this module has been of help to you as you strive to maintain balance and wellbeing through self-care.



WANT MORE?

Download this interactive Quick Guide to explore 5 strategies to beat burnout.

<https://www.welcoa.org/resources/quick-guide-beating-burnout/>