

A Message from Matt

Mental Resilience

Resilience means being able to adapt to life's misfortunes and setbacks. Unexpected events, such as the recent Coronavirus pandemic, can lead to both physical and mental stress.

Connections recently added a webinar titled:

KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON - MAINTAINING YOUR COMPOSURE AMIDST THE PANDEMIC PANIC. This

webinar aims to build mental resilience and focuses on:

- Strategies to tackle feelings of anxiety and stress
- Practical techniques for working from home
- Ways to address signs of panic in the workplace
- When to reach out for further help and support

This webinar is available online at www.connectionseap.com and logging in. It can be found by hovering over "Training" "Online Training" and clicking on "Webinars".



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"One person saying to me, 'You've made my day!' makes my day."

-Andy Rooney



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Financial Stress and its Impact on the Workplace

It seems difficult at times to separate the word "financial" from the word "stress", at least for 72% of Americans who identified themselves as being stressed about their finances. The stress was considered extreme for 22% of those people. What happens when those individuals who are stressed about their finances are employees of your company?

Productivity decreases, presenteeism and absenteeism increase. Employees who are financially stressed are absent more often and use more sick leave. When they are at work, they are not fully present. According to the Integrated Benefits Institute, "presenteeism can account for three times more lost work than absenteeism." Almost half (44%) of employees worry about their personal finances while they are at work and nearly one-third (29%) will spend time at work dealing with those problems. On average, 13 hours per month are spent worrying about finances at work.

Their physical and emotional health is impacted, which in turn impacts their work performance. Employees who stress about their debt have been shown to have two times the rate of heart attacks, are three times more likely to develop ulcers and other issues in the digestive tract, and are 44% more likely to suffer from migraines. For 52% of Americans, distress over finances is contributing to sleeplessness, fatigue, anger, and irritability. A staggering statistic: Employees stressing about their financial debt experience a **500% increase** in anxiety and depression.

Encourage and promote the use of Connections EAP. Along with counseling services and independent financial counselors who can work on a budget plan with individual employees, we offer self-paced web education found at www.connectionseap.com such as "Financial Fitness: Living Within A Realistic Budget" and "Financial Basic Handbook", along with many more resources to help lower financial stress.



Sheriff, C. (2020). Financial Stress: The Workplace Epidemic of the 21st Century. *Journal of Employee Assistance*, 50(1), 18–21.

Connections Inc. Employee Assistance Program's mission is to provide holistic assistance products and services that support optimum productivity, team work and healthy community in the workplace.

Connections Inc. Employee Assistance Program mission statement since 1988

NOTEWORTHY:

THE DISRUPTION OF A PANDEMIC

"I don't know why," she said to me. "I just feel like crying all the time." ...When much of what we know and depend on goes out the window, it's unnerving. Why?

Social distancing is unnatural for many. In times of uncertainty and perceived danger, we naturally flock together... There is strength and comfort in numbers. We naturally feel better when we can talk with friends and family, hold hands or touch someone on the arm... It's calming and soothing. Now what we do by instinct is irresponsible, potentially dangerous and all very unnatural!

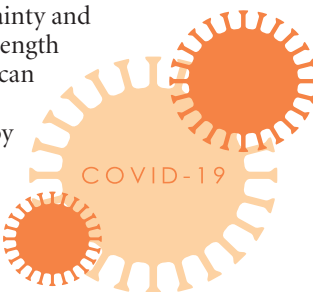
Routine is reassuring. Vacations are pleasurable experiences, however most people also enjoy a return to routine. Our bodies function best when we retire at a regular hour and wake-up on a similar schedule. When these are disrupted for an undetermined length of time, we struggle to handle it well.

We prefer to have an end date or goal in mind. Most people will tell you they can handle just about anything if they know when it will end. ...The problem with the COVID-19 pandemic is that we don't know how long it will last. We wonder if we have what it takes to stay the course.

It's hard to grieve ambiguous loss. There are a lot of losses associated with hunkering down for two weeks or more. Regular contact with family and friends is disrupted. End-of-the-year school field trips, prom, and athletic competitions are questionable. It will be the "lost year" for many children and their parents.

FOCUS ON WHAT YOU HAVE! A lot has changed in a very short period and we struggle to accept the new reality. A good start for accepting the new reality is to focus on what you have over what you don't have. Challenge yourself and the members of your family to make a list everyday of at least five things you have and for which you are grateful. One day's list might include the following: 1) Roof over my head. 2) Time to read a new book. 3) Opportunity to try something new in the kitchen. 4) A good night's rest. 5) Spring weather.

If you are experiencing some sadness, some gloomy thoughts, a general feeling of uneasiness, you are not alone. You're human. These are uncertain times. It's normal. It's also possible to take charge of some parts of our life in a way that will help us to feel less sad, less anxious and more content. Try the exercise above and challenge those in your immediate 'space' to do the same.



This information adapted from:
<https://www.gooddads.com/insights/5-ways-to-keep-your-cool-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

Maynard's Corner

Have you ever called a plumber, electrician, veterinarian, or a doctor? Most of us have. When issues arise, we need to call for specific help.

No, we will not address your plumbing problem. However, Connections Inc. EAP can offer specific help with marital, family, financial, legal, grief, stress and other issues.



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Please visit our website: www.connectionseap.com and check out the orange "EAP VIDEO" tab on the homepage. This five-minute video will explain our comprehensive list of benefits. Then call us to learn how we can help you and your team.

NEXT ISSUE: Healthy Responses to Traumatic Events

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