

Feature Article

Six Ways to Maintain Your Well-Being During a Pandemic

COVID-19 has dramatically changed our lives in the past few weeks, creating a new way of working and living. During these times of sudden change and uncertainty, the best way to navigate the new changes is by focusing on self-care and helping those around you while following proper health precautions. It's also an important time to bring your health and well-being to the forefront.

Self-care in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak includes focusing on things you can control (like having good hygiene) instead of those you cannot (stopping the virus). Below are some simple steps to help focus on well-being while you adjust to a new normal, and changes to your daily routine:

Go for a walk in your neighborhood

Participating in outdoor activities is perfectly acceptable if you maintain a distance from others of at least 6 feet. Going for a walk or even playing in the yard with your children are great ways to incorporate physical activity into your new routine. Taking a break to exercise can also help reduce stress.

Take an online fitness class

Many fitness companies, personal trainers, and health organizations are making on-demand fitness classes available for free. If you've been curious about trying a Zumba class or want to get back into yoga, now is a great time to do so. There are numerous exercise routines that require no equipment other than internet access.

Have a virtual book club with friends

While gathering a group of friends may not be possible right now, you can still connect with a virtual meet-up. If you have a weekly gathering or book club meeting, use FaceTime or another video streaming service to connect with your group. Maintaining these events, especially during uncertain times, will help keep a sense of normalcy.

Talk to a counselor or therapist

If you are feeling overwhelmed or concerned about how to handle social isolation, it's okay to reach out for help. Many employees have EAP plans that include free or discounted counseling sessions that can be conducted virtually or over the phone. It may even help to talk with a close friend about your concerns

and how you are feeling. We're all in this together.

Try new healthy recipes

With extra time being spent inside, now is a great time to focus on healthy eating. Use this time to invest in trying new healthy dishes and become more mindful of how you nurture your body. During quarantine it can be natural to stress eat or crave comfort foods, but being aware of how you're eating can help maintain focus on well-being.

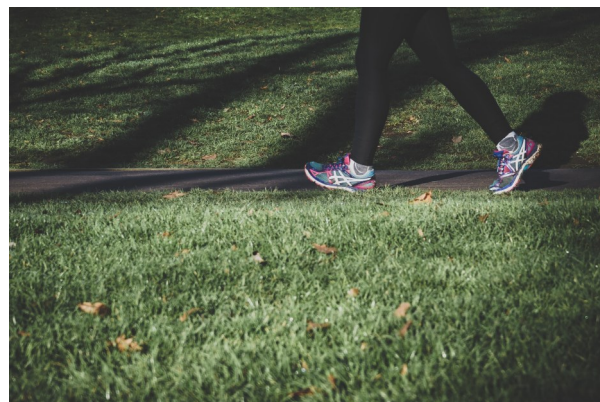
Reduce stress

The current information being shared from authorities and news media can be scary and overwhelming. It's important to take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, especially on social media. Take time to meditate, read a book, or watch a movie—anything to help you unwind and separate your mind from stressors.

Keep up your daily routine and normal activities as much as possible. Consider creating a schedule that prioritizes your well-being and positive mental health. Even simple activities like exercising or completing a puzzle can help you to relax and positively impact your thoughts and feelings.

Life may feel very hard and stressful over the next several weeks. There are very real burdens, and we won't always like it. But the pandemic will end eventually. We just need to take precautions to protect our health and well-being in the meantime.

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This Month's Webinar: Mental Health & COVID-19: Strategies to Manage Anxiety, Fear and Stress

Stress management training can provide the necessary skills and knowledge for you to offset the potentially negative effects of a stressful environment. You can actively take steps to increase your self-awareness and integrate a variety of proven stress management responses into your daily living during this pandemic.

Watch this webinar any time throughout the month of May when you log in to IMPACT on the Web at www.MyImpactSolution.com.

Monthly Highlights



National Awareness Topic: Mental Health Month

Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental illness. During May, IMPACT joins the national movement to raise awareness about mental health. Your IMPACT website has numerous resources for addressing mental health including the Stress Less Center.



Tess: A Mental Health Chatbot

NEW 24/7 mental health chatbot that coaches people through tough times to build resilience, by having text message conversations – similar to texting with a friend or coach. Research findings show that Tess is proven to reduce depression by 28% and anxiety by 18%.

Visit www.MyImpactSolution.com
Forgot your login information?
Give us a call at 800-227-6007.

Eldercare Spotlight

Taking Care of Yourself as a Caregiver During the COVID-19 Pandemic

As a caregiver during this stressful time, it's likely you're making the care of an older loved one your highest priority. However, it's also important to take care of your own physical, mental and emotional needs during this time. Remember to:

- **Take care of your emotional health.** It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, and worry. Self-care will help you think clearly and recover more quickly. Take time to unwind, and find ways to enjoy simple pleasures. Practice mindfulness using meditation apps; many offer free trials or discounts to start.
- **Reach out to those you love** by calling or texting. Ask for and offer reassurance as best you can.
- **Take care of your body.** Use this time to eat healthy meals, exercise and catch up on sleep.
- **Add color to your day.** Spend time on your favorite thing. Explore a new hobby. Find time each day to go outside.
- **Be informed** – but try not to overconsume information on the pandemic.
- **Pay attention to your need for social connection.** It is even more important that we maintain our support network. Consider video chatting with friends. Have a virtual lunch or coffee date. Stay connected on social media.
- **Look to the future with hope** by holding on to the things that bring you joy.

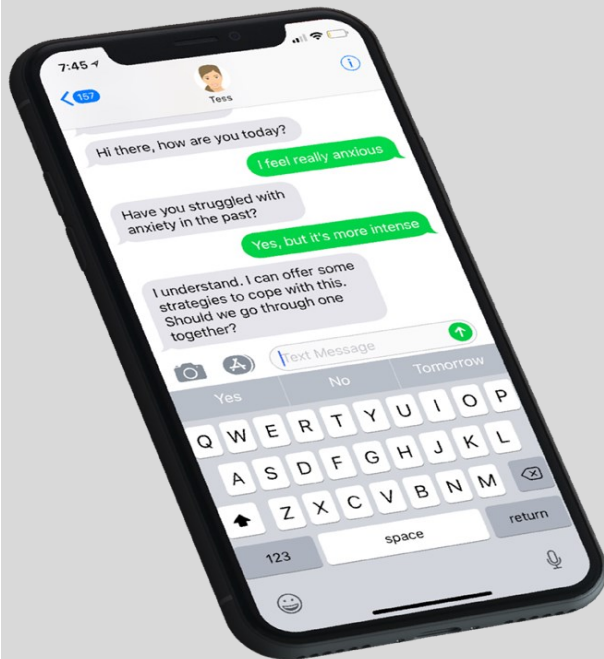
Contributed By: Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging

Information in IMPACT on Wellness is for general information purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health professional.

You can contact IMPACT Solutions for professional counseling and guidance 24 hours a day at 800-227-6007.

IMPACT EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Tess - IMPACT's Mental Health Chatbot



Tess—Mental Health Support Using Artificial Intelligence

1. SAY Hi

Start chatting with Tess by texting “Hi” to +1 (415) 360-0023
Start Code: *your IMPACT Username*

2. Tess ASKS

Like a coach, Tess works to understand your needs by asking “How are you?”

3. Tess HELPS

Tess delivers coping strategies based on the emotions you express

Did You Know... IMPACT offers Tess, a NEW 24/7 mental health chatbot that coaches people through tough times to build resilience, by having text message conversations – similar to texting with a friend or coach.

Tess simulates how a human would behave as a conversational partner while providing clinically proven coping skills and strategies based on expressed emotion, similar to a self-help book. Research findings show that Tess is proven to reduce depression by 28% and anxiety by 18%. If at any time during a chat session with Tess you wish to speak to, or schedule an appointment with a counselor, Tess will provide the IMPACT phone number and/or emergency response services depending on your need.

- **Tess is completely confidential.** You can stop a conversation whenever you are ready by simply texting “stop” and/or ask Tess to delete your conversation at any time - It's that easy!
- **Tess is a great resource for teens, college students and adults** who prefer technology as a communication tool or method for learning.
- **Tess is a great way to supplement counseling** and gain access to strategies and techniques that can help you manage stress in the moment.

Watch an informative video testimonial to learn more about Tess by logging on to your IMPACT website at www.MyImpactSolution.com and click on the Tess Tile.

Questions? Forgot your username? Give us a call at 800-227-6007.

IMPACT SOLUTIONS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE & WORK/LIFE PROGRAM

Stress Less Center



RESOURCES:

- **Resiliency Skills Training Series** consisting of 14 brief training modules designed to improve your resiliency and build up your resistance to stress
- **Relaxation Tools** including guided imagery, progressive muscle relaxation and more
- **Assessment Tools** including depression, anxiety and mental health risk assessments

Did you know... IMPACT Solutions offers a **Stress Less Center** on your EAP website where you can find new tools and strategies for managing stress in one convenient location?

Searching for stress free living? That is a myth. However, we are offering you a chance to understand your personal relationship with stress and increase your control over unexpected stressful events. Doing so will improve your overall life at home with family and friends, at work with coworkers and customers and with people in your community that you deal with on a daily basis.

In addition to the numerous resources on the website, you can call IMPACT Solutions 24/7 at 800-227-6007. A mental health professional is available at all times to provide you with confidential in the moment support and guidance to address your immediate need. Counseling referrals and other EAP services are coordinated by our triage counselors during normal business hours, Monday through Friday.

Visit our **Stress Less Center** on the IMPACT Website at **www.MyImpactSolution.com**

Remember to enter your organization's Member Login.

Forgot your Member Login? Give us a call at 800-227-6007