



NH Employee Assistance Program

Healthy people ask for help.

603.271.4336

Tips for Sustainability and Resilience through a Pandemic

Identify and implement a routine. Your routine might look different and may feel different than just a few weeks ago, yet living with a sense of structure or predictability may help reduce the stress experienced from change or uncertainty. Go to sleep and wake up at a reasonable time, take breaks at the same time each day, or eat meals at similar times. Create a schedule that includes time for self-care as well as work.

“If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed (Adm. William McRaven, Retired).” Continue to get showered and dressed, brush your teeth, and prepare yourself for the day as much as possible. In his now famous address, Adm. McRaven encourages everyone to begin each day by accomplishing a task. Accomplishing even one task provides a sense of purpose and hope, which can be powerful motivators. It is amazing how just getting dressed can impact our mood.

Narrow or expand your frame of reference. Often, when surrounded by uncertainty or overwhelmed with tasks, thoughts race around and around about all that needs to get done or all that must be planned for. It may be helpful to narrow your frame of reference – what do I need to focus on in the next hour? Purposefully focusing your attention to specific amounts of time may significantly help to reduce stress.

Limit the amount of time you spend with the news and social media. Find a few trusted sources of information that you can check very briefly throughout the day or set a time limit for yourself for how much news or social media you consume each day. Notice when your children are present when watching the news and check in with them about their understanding or if they have questions. Exposure to media may create or intensify stress, so limiting exposure media is an opportunity to purposefully practice self-care!

Give everyone the benefit of the doubt. A lot of time cooped up or trying to manage change can affect mood, information processing, behavior (even in adults!), and temperament. It may be helpful to stop, take a breath, and say (out loud or to yourself), “Everyone is doing the best they can to make it through this.”

Find a space for retreat. Space is at a premium these days with remote working, homeschooling, or practicing social distancing. It is important to think through separate spaces for work, school, relaxation, or when feeling stressed.