

SUMMER

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Your EAP news

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Coping with change

Change is a fact of life — and it can be good or bad, depending on the person and the circumstances. Change can challenge or excite you, or make you feel anxious and threatened. Too little change can make life boring or depressing, while too much change can be overwhelming.

Whatever its form, change requires an adjustment of some kind. This takes energy, and when the demands are too great, it can drain you physically and mentally. Change creates stress, so it needs to be managed effectively to prevent the development of stress-related symptoms and illnesses. Unmanaged stress can cause physical and emotional disorders, including headaches, digestive problems, high blood pressure, and insomnia.

The key to coping with change is to recognize it, understand its effects, and bring it — or your responses to it — under control as much as possible. When you can't control the change itself, adjusting your attitude toward it can help lessen stress or tension. Here are ways to cope with change:

Strive for moderate change. If you can, ease into change. Too much stress at once, or even a moderate amount of stress over a long period of time, can be unhealthy.

Try to see the opportunities in change. The Chinese word for “crisis” is made up of two symbols: one for “danger” and one for “opportunity.” Try to think of change as a mixture of danger and opportunity. Ask yourself what lesson you might learn, what skill you might develop, or what aspect of yourself you might strengthen as a result of this change.

Remember that physical health can support mental health. During times of change and high stress, regular exercise, a balanced diet, and the right amount of sleep for you are needed to maintain the ability to cope.

Keep change in check. Evaluate your life to determine how many big changes you are experiencing. If you can, schedule planned changes so that you won't have too many at the same time. For example, if you're marrying, buying a new house, and coping with an ailing parent, it's probably a good idea to hold off on looking for a new job until you've had time to adjust to these other changes.

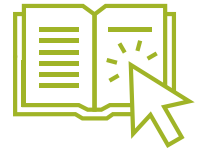
Ask yourself how you're feeling. When you find yourself faced with an unexpected change, take a moment to look at your emotional response. Are you happy, sad, scared, angry, threatened, resentful, excited, indifferent? After you've determined what you're feeling, it can help to ask yourself these questions:

- Does my reaction make sense?
- Am I overreacting?
- Is there another way to look at this?
Is there an opportunity here?
- Can I control some of this change?
- Would more information help me cope better with this change?

Learn to relax. Relaxation is an effective tool to manage stress and the tension that can go along with change. It can keep you functioning better physically and mentally.

Ask for help, if you need it. Don't handle every change alone. Look for support from family or friends, or reach out to a professional for guidance.

Source: Workplace Options. (Reviewed 2019). Coping with change. Raleigh, NC.



Lecturas recomendadas para esta temporada


Tu programa Employee Assistance Program (EAP) también ofrece información útil en español. Para leer los artículos que enviamos este trimestre, visita anthemEAP.com y selecciona español. Encontrarás la lista de temas tratados en esta edición en la sección “Noticias para Usted.”

The 7 rules to find balance in life

Technology has filled our lives with possibilities, but this exciting, limitless life can leave us out of balance. We can feel stressed, uneasy, and worried. The solution is to work toward achieving balance in life. Think of these seven rules of balance as operating rules for your brain — a guide to a healthy pattern of living.

1. Balance time alone and time spent with people.

Much of our contact with other people can be superficial and virtual — through the TV or internet, over cell phones, and in crowded public spaces. Living without the calming structure of a relationship can lead to depression, loneliness, and frustration. Balance the solitude of modern life by having at least five close, supportive relationships.



Restore balance by doing things that matter to you.

2. Balance movement and rest.

Many of us spend our day sitting — in a car, at a desk, in front of a computer, on a couch watching TV, or talking on the phone — but the human body was designed to move. A regular program of movement — walking, working out at a gym, yoga, dancing, tennis, gardening — can help reduce the tension that comes from having too little activity.

3. Balance living in the moment with thinking about who you are.

The time-saving tools available to us, such as cars, mobile phones, and the internet, can draw us into a moment-to-moment, overwhelmed condition. Find balance by staying focused on who you are and why you chose to do what you do. Keep a reminder of your skills by writing down 3 to 5 activities that you're good at, that you rely on, and that help you stay on track. Then, when things start to become fast and furious, review your skills to make sure you're doing what is right for you.

4. Balance your “appetites.”

The natural human reaction to abundance is to consume. For prehistoric people, this was the case, since times of abundance were rare. Now, many people live in a world of abundance. You can maintain balance by using your mind to think, plan, and take action instead of simply consuming. The next time you're hungry, give it a try. Go outside and weed your garden instead of eating, or simply take a walk around your neighborhood. Plan an activity and substitute it for eating or drinking when you know that your appetite is greater than your body's need.

5. Balance thinking and feeling.

The brain works best through a dynamic balance of thinking and feeling. Feeling, or emotion, is the energy of the mind. It powers action, memory, and thought. When thinking is powered by feeling, your life has balance. It is more meaningful and motivating. Restore balance by doing things that calm you and by remembering what matters to you.

6. Balance sleep and waking hours.

You need the right amount of sleep to refresh the energy and vitality of your body and mind. Balance sleep and wakefulness by finding out just how much sleep you need. Keep a chart to discover what amount of sleep feels best, then work toward that goal. Train your sleep cycle by sticking to a regular time for waking, exposing yourself to bright sunlight in the morning, and planning your activities so that you're most stimulated early in the day and gradually calming yourself in the hours before sleep.

7. Balance belief and doubt.

Researchers have shown that belief in a positive outcome can help rid you of social anxiety, depression, and panic attacks. Studies show that those who have firm beliefs generally have healthier, happier, and more successful lives. Several practices can strengthen your ability to believe. Learn to talk positively to yourself and reflect on images of success. Pray if you want. Accept guidance. Follow the wisdom of leaders. You can also follow a comforting ritual, whether it's going to a place of worship or reading stories to your children at bedtime.



Building connections that promote well-being

Strong, healthy relationships are important in life. Social ties with family members, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and others can affect your mental, emotional, and even physical well-being. Studies have found that having a variety of social relationships may help reduce stress and heart-related risks. Strong social ties are even linked to a longer life. On the other hand, loneliness and social isolation are linked to poorer health, depression, and increased risk of early death.¹ You can learn ways to improve your relationships at any age.

What is a healthy relationship?

Every relationship exists on a spectrum from healthy to unhealthy to abusive. One sign of a healthy relationship is feeling good about yourself around your partner, family member, or friend. In a healthy relationship, you can disagree without hurting each other and make decisions together.

If you grew up in a family with abuse, it may be hard as an adult to know what healthy is. Abuse may feel normal to you. There are several kinds of abuse, including physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional. Hurting with words, neglect, and withholding affection are examples of verbal or emotional abuse.

Abuse in an intimate relationship is called domestic or intimate partner violence. This type of violence involves a pattern of behaviors used by one person to maintain power and control over someone they are married to, living with, or dating now or in the past. A pattern means it happens over and over. For example, in an unhealthy or abusive relationship, you may not be allowed to spend time with family, friends, and others in your social network.

Everyone can help victims of unhealthy relationships

Healthy friendships and activities outside of the home or classroom can play important roles during childhood. In fact, everyone in a community can help support the development of healthy connections. Adults can serve as good role models for children — whether the children are their own or those they choose to help — and can help other adults cope with their situation. To help someone in an unhealthy relationship:

- Let them know that you are worried about them.
- Listen without judging or blaming.
- Tell them it is not their fault.
- Offer to go with them to talk to someone who can help.

Visit [thehotline.org](https://www.thehotline.org) or call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at **800-799-SAFE** for more tips on how to help. If you know a child who may need help, find resources at the Child Welfare Information Gateway at [childwelfare.gov](https://www.childwelfare.gov).

Source: Wein, H. (Ed.). (2018, April). Building social bonds. NIH News in Health. U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH). Retrieved February 24, 2021, from newsinhealth.nih.gov



Schedule a checkup with your doctor to talk about any signs of depression.

Important: This document is intended for general information only. It does not provide the reader with specific direction, advice, or recommendations. You may wish to contact an appropriate professional for questions concerning your particular situation.

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