

Personal Tool – Reinvesting in your self-care

After another long and busy day of keeping the stress at bay, answering the endless questions and speaking with others to keep them afloat – we can feel drained. This drain can be quick, or it can be a slow, slow, drop. Either way, the feelings often end up being overwhelmed disengaged and/or distressed by the enormity of it all.

Norcross & Guy (2007) approach to self-care model tells us that we need to:

Recognise the hazards. Meaning that there are going to be stressful times working through a pandemic. It is ok to be angry/worried/sad, and accepting these emotions is helpful. This is not an easy time and learning from others or talking about it with others can be a step in recognising and accepting this strange situation.

Set some boundaries – say no. If you can't say no then figure out a way to say let me think about it... then come back with a decision. Move on from that guilt and push your energy into the next step in the process can be liberating.

Look at your schedule and put some time in there for yourself. If you diarise a walk/run/cycle, then no one can book you for a meeting, and you are also more likely to go. Similarly, if you put an appointment at the end of the day in your diary, you are likely to be more motivated throughout the day to get finished. Scheduling time for yourself is a radical act of self-care.

Create an environment that makes you feel good. Whether you are at home or in the office get some things that help you feel comfortable, settled and less distracted.

Focus on the rewards. Why are you turning up to work every day? Get some clarity on this and get some reminders on your fridge, phone and computer screen. Remember the dreams that you had a few months ago. Dust them off and see what you can make with them. Taking a positive mindset that you will get there and yes there are setbacks, but with a bit of time, we will get there.

Seek personal assistance – like accessing an EAP counsellor here at AccessEAP. If you want to be able to support those around you and encourage them to seek help, please think about doing this yourself.

Take some time to reflect on your thinking patterns, the way you talk to yourself and your expectations of yourself at this very strange time. Are you expecting yourself to be better than what you are? Is that even possible? No one can stop this pandemic (I really think they have tried) and this includes you. Reflect on those whom you think are doing this time well and see if you can copy their approach to work and life.



Look after your body! Maintaining your diet - eat enough and focus on eating well. Do something physical every day and make sure that this goes in the diary first and allow your day to follow on after that.

Find comfort in the people that you interact with regularly. This is of course, your partner, family, friends and workmates. If you are struggling, please let them know. It doesn't matter that they may not have noticed but telling them can be a relief. Talk to people in your street, at the café and where you buy your fruit. Reaching out and saying hello to others can help you realise that people are feeling similar things to you. EAP counsellors can also support you and give you another regular interaction.

But whatever your processes make sure it is working for you. You do not need to be everything to everybody and if this feels like your current situation – call us here at AccessEAP. We can support you and give you some strategies to move forward. Take care out there - it is a pandemic, and without a blueprint, all we have is each other.

Remember, as your EAP, we are here to support you whatever the nature of your concerns. For a confidential conversation with one of our experienced clinical professionals, please contact **AccessEAP** on **1800 818 728**.

