**A Note from Our Clinical Team: Coping Strategies**

During times like this in which we feel as though so much is out of our control, we need to reflect and recall all that is in our control. The uncertainty of not knowing when we will resume normalcy can increase our stress levels leading to anxiety and depression. It is important to take care of our mental health during these times utilizing coping strategies to help us manage our intense feelings.



**What is Coping?**

Coping means identifying strategies that can both help prevent and help manage your emotions during times when it is more problematic. Good coping strategies are things that help you take care of yourself – especially things that help you escape, rest, and play. Among other things, these might include:

* **Escape** - Getting away from it all, physically or mentally (books or films, playing video games, talking to friends about things other than work)
* **Rest** - Having no goal or time-line, or doing things you find relaxing (lying on the grass watching the clouds, sipping a cup of tea, taking a nap, Practice relaxation techniques such as yoga, mediation
* **Play** - Engaging in activities that make you laugh or lighten your spirits (sharing funny stories with a friend, playing with a child, being creative, being physically active)

**Why is connecting important?**

* Connecting is important because we are social creatures. We need positive connections with other people. Being creative with friends and family members using virtual platforms (facetime, zoom, skype, etc).
* Just talking to someone about how you feel can be helpful. Talking can work by either distracting you from your stressful thoughts or releasing some of the built-up tension by discussing it.
* We encourage you to limit the amount of conversation that is about COVID-19 and draw attention to other topics (sharing memories and stories, pictures saved on your phone/computer, etc).
* Stay positive. Focus on the good things in your life. Forgive yourself for making mistakes and forgive others. Spend time with healthy, positive people.

**When to ask for help?**

* When your emotions begin interfering with daily tasks
* When you can’t sleep
* When your struggling to find a purpose

**Who to call?**

* Your EAP is available 24/7 for in the moment support, telephonic and virtual sessions
* Crisis/Urgent help 9-1-1
* Front Line Services 216.623.6888