COPING IN TIMES OF STRESS AND CHANGE

Kelcey Stratton, Ph.D.
Michigan Medicine Office of Counseling and Workplace Resilience
MENTAL HEALTH IN 2020

What is the “stress signature” of the past six months?

- Uncertainty
- Change
- Information overload
- Resources/scarcity
- Isolation and loneliness
- Contamination
- Ongoing, uncertain risk
- Redeployment/workplace changes
- Grief and loss
- Inequity and discrimination
- Economic concerns

What emotions have you experienced during this time?
FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE

PARASYMPATHETIC NERVES

- Constrict pupils
- Stimulate Saliva
- Slow heartbeat
- Constrict airways
- Stimulate activity of Stomach
- Stimulate gallbladder
- Stimulate activity of Intestines
- Contract bladder

SYMPATHETIC NERVES

- Dilate pupils
- Inhibit Salivation
- Increase heartbeat
- Relax airways
- Inhibit activity of Stomach
- Inhibit gallbladder
- Inhibit activity of Intestines
- Secrete epinephrine & norepinephrine
- Relax Bladder
PREDICTABILITY

Create schedules & routines
• Including routines of sleep, diet, activity

What do you look forward to?
• Create a calendar of connections and activities
• Calendar of things to look forward to
• Help your families, colleagues, teams maintain structure and routine

What is under your control/influence?
MOBILITY & ACTION

Use energy from stress hormones (flight/flight/freeze response) in productive ways

- We have stress hormones to move, protect, and take care of ourselves

Exercise

Physical activities & hobbies
CONNECTION

Be engaged with people

Utilize the power of voices and faces

- Sounds, facial movements, and the synchrony and rhythms between faces and voices keep us feeling connected.

Family meals, games, play, story-telling, music-making, virtual contacts

With colleagues, create intentional opportunities for connection, check-ins
SAFETY

Attend to physical and emotional safety
- Identify what makes you feel safe
- Identify what makes you feel calm

Privacy—everybody needs a place to which they can withdraw

Clear expectations, open communication, transparency can help create a sense of safety
PURPOSE

What is the meaning of this experience?
What purpose do you have today?
Reconnect to personal values, team values
Help others
Recognize identity/role shifts
  - Reconnect to parts of your identity you are missing
  - Connect to new identities/roles
SIX DAILY QUESTIONS

1. What am I grateful for today?
2. Who am I checking in on or connecting with today?
3. What expectations of “normal” am I letting go of today?
4. How am I getting outside today?
5. How am I moving my body today?
6. What beauty am I either creating, cultivating, or inviting in today?

Source: Brooke Anderson, Greater Good Science Center
“The broaden-and-build theory posits that momentary experiences of mild, everyday positive emotions broaden people’s awareness in ways that, over time and with frequent recurrence, build consequential personal resources that contribute to their overall emotional and physical well-being.”

Fredrickson & Joiner, 2018
POSITIVITY REFLECTIONS

joyful, glad, happy

awe, wonder, amazement

serene, content, peaceful

inspired, uplifted, elevated
COUNSELING RESOURCES

Faculty and Staff Counseling and Consultation Office
fascco.umich.edu
734-936-8660 or fascco@umich.edu

Michigan Medicine Office of Counseling and Workplace Resilience
counseling.med.umich.edu
734-763-5409 or counseling@med.umich.edu

All services are confidential and offered at no cost
• Mental health counseling
• Trauma, grief, loss counseling
• Critical incident support
• Supervisory consultations
  • Support groups
• Educational presentations & programs
GET IMMEDIATE HELP

Local
- 911
- U-M Psychiatric Emergency Services: (734) 936-5900 (available 24/7)

National
- Call the toll-free National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Text UMICH to 741741 to connect with a confidential counselor at the Crisis Text Line
- Visit CrisisChat.org
- Call the Veteran’s Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255, press 1, or text 838255
- Call the Trevor Lifeline at 1-866-488-7386, or text TREVOR to 1-202-304-1200
May a window of light always surprise you.

–John O'Donohue, To Bless the Space Between Us