Children's National

COPING WITH COVID-19 AS A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

Healthcare professionals are facing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic head-on. Juggling the competing demands of caring for your patients and your own family/loved ones can be especially challenging for providers and hospital staff during this uncertain time. Below are some strategies you can try to alleviate some of this stress we are all experiencing during this time.

Think about how you can use the **5 SENSES FOR SELF-CARE:**

VISION Look at pictures of a beach/sunset, friends and family, or cute animals on your phone/computer.

HEARING Listen to music or relaxing sounds (e.g. rainfall), play a musical instrument, sing, or listen to a podcast.

SMELL Smell fresh brewed coffee, put on your favorite lotion, or light a goodsmelling candle (not while you're at work!).

TASTE Drink your favorite beverage, practice mindful eating, or drink something hot or cold.

TOUCH Splash cold water on your face, touch something soft, squeeze a stress ball, relax with a heating pad, or cuddle with a pet.

TIPS FOR GOING ABOUT YOUR DAY AT WORK OR AT HOME:

Pace Yourself

Be mindful of signs of fatigue, irritability, or poor focus and recognize when you need to take a break to cope with these emotions.

Take Breaks at Home and at Work

Get up and stretch, exercise, try to go outdoors whenever possible, go to the Healing Garden.

Breathe

Take a minute to focus on deep breathing before getting out of the car, entering your work area or a patient room, or starting a procedure. This can help set the tone for what you're about to do

Distraction

Think about ways to elicit different emotions; watch a funny TV show, listen to upbeat music, use a fidget spinner.

Maintain Structure

Create a space for you, your children, and/or your significant other to work from home, make a realistic schedule, and plan breaks throughout your day.

Promote Teamwork

Set realistic expectations with coworkers about workload and with members of your household about child care and chores.

Additional Tips from the CDC:

AVOID EXCESSIVE EXPOSURE TO MEDIA COVERAGE.

Designate a specific time of day and amount of time to check the news. Use a reliable, diverse selection of sources. Feeling overwhelmed? Turn the TV off or put the phone away.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY.

Plan out your meals and keep them healthy and well-balanced. Set a few, achievable exercise goals per week. Maintain a healthy sleep routine.

UNWIND!

Remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Engage in activities you enjoy! (color, read a book, take a walk, shop online, call a friend, journal, cook a meal, plan a movie night, make a pile of clothes to donate later).

CONNECT WITH OTHERS.

Express your concerns and feelings with a trusted friend or family member. Send supportive and positive messages to coworkers or friends. Be spontaneous! It feels great to get a message you're not expecting, and it feels even better to send one. Do something nice for someone else.

MAINTAIN A SENSE OF HOPE AND POSITIVE THINKING.

Practice gratitude; focus on your values. Write down what you are thankful for. Share your lists with coworkers, or save them for yourself to read before going to bed.

Children's National

If you are an emergency responder, check out the CDC's additional tips for taking care of yourself:
www.emergency.cdc.gov/coping/responders.asp