



The Lex Line

Your EAP Newsletter provided by The Lexington Group

Master Your **Self-Care Strategy**

Self-care is not just about getting enough sleep, eating well, or taking time off for a massage. Rather, it is a conscious process of being attentive to your physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, but with a goal in mind—to build resilience that allows you to be more capable of bouncing back from adversity and managing stress better. To practice this strategic form of wellness, focus your attention on: 1) physical fitness and emotional wellness (how you manage thoughts, feelings, and beliefs so you engage in positive thinking); 2) being aware of your emotions and the emotions of others with whom you interact, and use this awareness to make better decisions and communicate more effectively; 3) knowing how to create positive emotions. Does walking outside for 15 minutes improve your mood? Does taking five minutes to tidy up your office lift your spirits?

When you arrive home after work, does sitting down to play the piano inspire you? Know your “go to” natural, healthy, and positive mood enhancers and use them routinely; 4) having someone with whom you can confide in and process challenges. Your EAP can be a source for this support; 5) eating right and getting enough sleep; and 6) having constructive ways of dealing with emotional stress—a hobby, spiritual practices, networking, leisure activities. Examining this list, do you see opportunities to improve upon your self-care strategy?

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Reducing Mental Health Problems in College

One in four college students will experience a mental health disorder at some point when faced with the stress of academic and social challenges. The key challenges for college students are health problems, financial stress, relationship issues, and academic pressures. More than 50% of students will struggle with three or more of these stressors at the same time. Talk with your child about mental health and how it is not uncommon to experience emotional stress at school. Communicate regularly—keep an open channel. You will spot issues and problems sooner and be a more effective helper. Show you can listen to your student’s concerns without being judgmental. Be aware of college counseling resources so you can recommend them. Current college students with a history of mental health struggles should avoid drug use and have a personal support plan if the going gets tough.



Buffering Effects of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying has been blamed for depression, anxiety, suicidal thinking, and tragically, suicide itself among youth. The social platform most commonly associated with cyberbullying is Instagram. Research shows that the more socially connected young teens are to their parents and the more they engage in school/community events, the more resilient and resistant to the effects of cyberbullying they are. Social connectedness was shown to provide a “buffering” effect among 200 youth considered at risk for bullying. Young teens least likely to be resistant to the emotional anguish of bullying were those teens whose primary strong connections are only with peers or friends. The recommendations: Place high value on developing close relationships with young teens. Reduce screen time, and keep them engaged in school-based/community activities.

Moving Beyond “Just Coping”

We are all different psychologically, so an event that creates acute stress for one person may not affect another. Don’t be fooled into thinking that your crisis requires toughening up or “pressing on” like you imagine others might. Stigma against asking for help can lead to needless suffering. Fact: Getting help earlier shortens the period of distress and solves problems faster, and most counseling is not long term.