

Wellbeing Tips

Working from Home

During These Uncertain Times



As the COVID-19 (coronavirus) spreads across the globe, there are important actions you can take to maintain your wellbeing, especially when working from home. There are numerous tactics, tools and resources available to support you and your family to be physically, emotionally, socially and financially well. Here are some wellbeing tips to help you navigate your way through these difficult times over the coming weeks and months.

PHYSICAL

- Maintain good **protective habits** at home – wash your hands, avoid touching your face, cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, keep surfaces clean
- **Monitor your health status** and follow your local health authority guidelines for getting tested if you have symptoms – there may be options for consulting with health care practitioners or getting tested through virtual modalities
- **Get outside** every day for fresh air and sunlight
- Maintain healthy **sleep habits**
- **Eat healthy**, whole foods and keep healthy fresh fruits and vegetables available; as always, limit your consumption of unhealthy foods (sugary snacks, processed foods) and alcoholic beverages
- **Drink lots of water** to keep hydrated
- **Stand up and move** during the day – set an alarm to remind yourself. Take calls standing or walking around house, incorporate some ergonomic exercises like shoulder rolls, wrist rolls, hand stretches, neck stretches, hip stretches, hand grips (squeezing a stress ball or hand grip)
- Maintain your exercise routines -look for **free exercise apps** on line or through your cable/satellite provider
- **Create a challenge** for yourself and/or with your colleagues, friends or family members
- Use available wellness or **benefit accounts** to access funds for nutrition or exercise resources

SOCIAL

- Use multiple channels and **communicate regularly and frequently with your manager and colleagues** using virtual/video, IM/texting and talking on the phone.
- **Maintain your connections with friends and family** using virtual tools. Contact with others helps decrease feelings of distress and isolation.
- Get creative with **social media** in a positive way, sharing via video and voice apps
- Find ways to **help out others** – at work or in your community
- If possible, create a dedicated space for working from home and set it up to maximize your productivity; **communicate to your family to respect your work area** as your place of business
- As much as possible, **keep a regular work schedule and work habits** as if you were going into the office

FINANCIAL

- **Don't panic over the current market downturn.** Retirement savings plans are long term investments
- Take some time to **review your financial situation** and look for ways to reduce non-essential living costs
- If needed, you can **access salary protection programs** from your employer or government agency, such as sick leave and short or long term disability programs
- Your employer or government may have or be developing **other financial management strategies** for you such as access to emergency funds, debt management support, financial counseling and loan or credit options

EMOTIONAL

- Try not to have **your work station** in the room where you sleep, in order to create a psychological limit between work and personal life.
- Take mental breaks throughout the day to disengage from work, the news and social media – **practice relaxation, breathing or meditation**
- Practice your **mindfulness** (being in the moment) or take up journaling
- Look for **free or employer-provided resources and apps** for these mental health activities
- You may also have options for consulting with other **virtual mental health support** options through free, employer or government provided telemedicine providers
- If you or members of your family are experiencing stress, depression, or anxiety, **contact your EAP or community-based mental health resources.** There is often 24/7 access to mental health support.
- You may have access to **emergency or back-up child-care support** to help manage your caregiving burden with the closure of daycares and schools
- Without external childcare support, **communicate with your spouse or partner** to determine if you can share caregiving responsibilities and explore flexible working times with you employer
- Take advantage of the small perks that self-distancing might offer. Do a puzzle. Read a book. Listen to music. Take a virtual tour of a museum. Watch a Netflix series. **Relax.**
- **Avoid over-information.** It is important to stay informed, but try not to over inform yourself about the current world situation, it could increase your feelings of anxiety or anguish.



Following as many of these simple suggestions as you can will keep your mind and body strong to weather this storm.

Who Knows - maybe you'll start some positive habits that you will continue once we get back to normal!