EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

We've all experienced times when we've felt anxious or stressed, especially if we're faced with difficult or challenging circumstances. Stress will always be a part of our lives, but how we respond to it matters to our mental and physical health. As we've learned from living through the pandemic, we can't always control what happens to us, but we can control how we'll react.

Resilience, the ability to be flexible and bounce back from adversity, helps us cope with life's inevitable setbacks. While some people may be naturally more resilient than others, anyone can learn and practice the behaviors and actions that capitalize on their strengths.

Ways to increase resilience and grit include the following:

- **Maintain perspective and avoid blowing things out of proportion.** Events that seem overwhelming today may be nearly forgotten weeks or months later.
- **Let go of negativity and practice gratitude.** Instead of dwelling on people, events, or situations that are unfair and anger-provoking, focus your attention on the positive things in your life.
- **Take decisive action.** You'll develop confidence in your own skills and abilities when you look for solutions to problems and take action.
- **Prioritize self-care.** A hallmark of resilience is good self-care. Make time for daily exercise, eat a healthy diet, get enough rest, and practice techniques to manage stress such as deep breathing, mindfulness, and meditation.

People develop strategies to improve their resilience in different ways. What works for you may not work for someone else. Sometimes people find it helpful to talk with a professional to better understand the source of their stressors and learn more effective ways to cope.

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