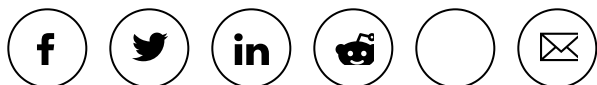


Marketplace

September 17, 2020

Techniques in self-care to beat COVID-19 burnout, exhaustion and stress

Phyllis Ayman

Phyllis Ayman

We all face challenging situations. To think life would be without them would be an erroneous way of thinking. These challenges may be related to work, family and personal relationships and, now, the coronavirus.

As we know, our older loved ones in our nation's nursing homes have been particularly impacted by COVID-19. Nursing home healthcare workers face particular challenges, not the least of which is concern for their own health and well-being, but also the well-being of the residents for whom they care. The situation with lack of sufficient personal protective equipment is well known and has been a source of frustration, stress and anxiety.

The number of coronavirus cases has now surpassed 5,000,000 in the U.S. Coronavirus cases are spiking in states around the country.

Statistics as of Aug. 8, indicate that the total nursing home deaths account for more than 30% of the overall U.S. deaths. Mask wearing has become a political statement.

What does this rise in cases mean for nursing home residents, healthcare workers who serve them, family caregivers and assisted living residents? What effect is this having on almost all of us in every walk of life? Clearly, the stress, anxiety, fatigue and overwhelm compounded by loneliness and

isolation have detrimental effects on our psychological, emotional and physical well-being which cannot be underestimated.

Let's move even closer to home. Are you feeling stressed or burned out? Is your work life, home life or life in general having you feeling stressed, fatigued or overwhelmed?

Easy stress-reducing techniques

If your response to either of these questions is yes, there are easy techniques to help you build your resilience and counteract these feelings. Taking the time to acknowledge and address one's own needs can have tremendous positive effect on one's overall health and well-being. All of these are important ingredients for resilience.

Take a moment from reading this article and try this: Take a deep breath. while inhaling raise your arms above your head. Upon exhaling lower your arms accompanied by a sigh. Repeat three times.

I do this when a feeling of tension starts building up inside me. After this technique, I feel more relaxed.

The dictionary definition of resilience is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties, and the ability to spring back into shape. Think of a rubber band stretched to its maximum limits. When the force stretching it is let go, the band automatically bounces back into shape. This is analogous to what happens when we are stretched and stressed to our limits feeling stressed, burned out and fatigued. Incorporating practices of resilience with self-care, self-kindness and self-compassion can have us returning to a more natural state.

[IMpathy™ is my trademarked word to describe techniques of self-care, self-compassion and self-kindness.](#) It may seem counterintuitive to think of self-care in the midst of difficulties or caring for others, yet this is essential to develop resilience. There is ample research that supports the benefits of engaging in a daily personal resilience practice. It helps you develop healthy coping strategies which influence the ability to tolerate change, stress, uncertainty and other types of adversity.

No equipment needed

There is no special equipment needed to adopt practices of resilience – just a commitment to incorporate techniques into a daily practice for a few minutes per day. In doing so, you most likely will find it goes a long way towards helping you feel less stressed, overwhelmed or burned out.

One simple way to exercise self-care that is rarely considered is laughter. Laughter is actually a physical response that has benefits for your mind, body and heart. Have you ever had a good hearty laugh and afterwards exclaimed, "Wow, that felt great, I really needed that." The reality is you probably did need that good hearty laugh.

Laughter helps release endorphins which can counteract the feelings of pain. It can also increase the release of the hormone cortisol in the brain which can boost mood by counteracting the effects of

anxiety and stress and helps promote feelings of self-esteem and hope.

A study of older woman actually found that a combination of laughter and yoga helped them improve feelings of life satisfaction and decrease feelings of depression similar to the benefits one receives from aerobic exercise.

Go ahead. Laugh. Practice some IMpathy today.

[Phyllis Ayman is a speech/language pathologist, certified dementia practitioner, eldercare advocate, author, speaker and trainer.](#) She hosts the podcast SeniorsSTRAIGHTTalk on the Voice America Empowerment Channel and on favorite podcast platforms. She holds a certificate in the Yale sponsored course: the Science of Well-Being. Her trademarked word, IMpathy™, describes techniques to help us achieve self-care, self-kindness and self-compassion. [Learn more about IMpathy here.](#)

TOPICS:

CORONAVIRUS / COVID-19

[Phyllis Ayman](#)

Phyllis Ayman, MS/SLP, is principal of PMA Speech Solutions LLP in Greenwich, CT.

RESOURCES

[Marketplace](#)

[Reports](#)

[Jobs](#)

USER CENTER

[Subscribe](#)

[About Us](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Advertise](#)

[Comment Policy](#)

[Ad Choices](#)

Copyright © 2020 Haymarket Media, Inc. All Rights Reserved

This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in any form without prior authorization.

Your use of this website constitutes acceptance of Haymarket Media's Privacy Policy and Terms & Conditions.

ALSO ON MCKNIGHT'S LONG-TERM CARE NEWS

<p>Residents in unionized nursing homes less ...</p>	<p>Too good to be true? A kinder, gentler ...</p>	<p>Caution urged for use of azithromycin as ...</p>	<p>Lawmaker answers f</p>
<p>7 days ago • 4 comments</p>	<p>24 days ago • 1 comment</p>	<p>4 days ago • 1 comment</p>	<p>24 days ago</p>
<p>Nursing homes with a unionized workforce were less likely to have ...</p>	<p>California is promoting a kinder and gentler surveying corps, and some people ...</p>	<p>When taken together with commonly prescribed drugs that affect the heart's ...</p>	<p>Two top Der lawmakers : answers fro</p>

McKnight's Long-Term Care News Comment Policy

Please read our [Comment Policy](#) before commenting.



0 Comments

McKnight's Long-Term Care News

Disqus' Privacy Policy

Login ▾

Recommend

Tweet

Share

Sort by Best ▾

Comment input area with a profile picture placeholder on the left.

[Back to Top ↑](#)

McKnight's

McKnight's Long-Term Care News is the pre-eminent national media brand for caregiving professionals in skilled nursing and post-acute care. We help you make a difference!

COVERAGE

Main News

Blogs

Events