

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF IN STRESSFUL TIMES

It can be hard to prioritize self-care in challenging times, but this is exactly when it's needed most. This checklist can remind you to take time for moves that can help you be more stress-resistant.

Body

- ☐ Fit exercise in. It lowers stress and can help you sleep better. Even a short 15-minute stint can make a difference.
- ☐ Don't let sleep be optional. You should get enough rest each night to awake feeling well-rested and energized.
- ☐ Make time to eat and stay hydrated. Regular meals give you the fuel you need to stay strong and focused.
- ☐ Be aware that stress can push you to reach for carbohydrates because they trigger comforting brain chemicals.
- ☐ Be ready to meet cravings with healthy snacks, such as fruit, veggies, nuts, popcorn, or whole-grain crackers.
- ☐ Avoid turning to alcohol, drugs, or unhealthy behaviors as a way of coping.

Mind

- ☐ Stay informed, but don't overdo news exposure. Notice the impact news stories have and limit accordingly.
- ☐ Take mental "breaks" during the day to focus on something distracting, uplifting, or soothing.
- ☐ If needed, set aside a limited time in the day to review your worries and how to respond. Then let them go for the day.
- ☐ Notice signs that anxiety or stress is building for you. Recognize this as normal, but have strategies ready to reduce it.
- ☐ Use positive self-talk to remind yourself of strengths and abilities: "This is hard, but I'm strong. I can get through it."
- ☐ Be open to turning to others for emotional and practical support. It's a strength, not a weakness, to reach out.
- ☐ Know that mental health professionals can help you problem-solve and identify strategies to manage difficult feelings.

Spirit

- ☐ Think about how you've coped with hard times before. Try to re-deploy the strengths and strategies that helped then.
- ☐ Find one or more enjoyable ways to relax your mind and body. Give yourself permission to recharge in this way.
- ☐ Lean on your support network. Look for listeners, givers of honest feedback, and nurturers to build you up.
- ☐ Get outdoors. The fresh air and sunlight can renew both health and spirit, as well as help regulate sleep cycles.

Together, all the way.®



This material is provided by Cigna for informational/educational purposes only. It is not intended as medical/clinical advice. Only a health care professional can make a diagnosis or recommend a treatment plan. For more information about your behavioral health coverage, you can call the customer service or the behavioral health telephone number listed on your health care identification card.

All Cigna products and services are provided exclusively by or through operating subsidiaries of Cigna Corporation, including Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Cigna Behavioral Health, Inc., and HMO or service company subsidiaries of Cigna Health Corporation. The Cigna name, logo, and other Cigna marks are owned by Cigna Intellectual Property, Inc.

Use and distribution limited solely to authorized personnel. 881304 09/20 © 2020 Cigna