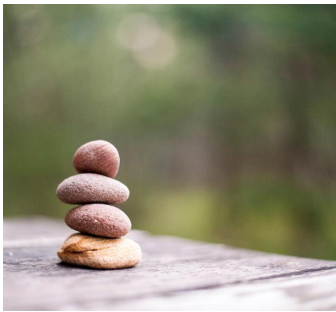


SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER DURING COVID-19



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ASSISTING EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH

America's mental health crisis has been on the rise in previous years, and coronavirus has made it even harder to improve mental wellness. Approximately half of American adults said they were experiencing negative mental health because of the pandemic. This includes feelings of stress, fear, depression, and anxiety, as well as loneliness and isolation from social distancing. Ultimately, these feelings are reflected in an employee's job performance and work environment.

Employers now have the opportunity to reach out to their employees and support each other, building a relationship based on trust during the pandemic. For ideas on how to comfort employees and create a more supportive work environment during COVID-19, follow these useful tips.²



1 Make mental health resources, tips, and support hotlines readily accessible to employees, such as the COVID-19 Emotional Support Resources Poster found below.

3 Connect with employees by asking about their well being and discussing useful coping mechanisms. If employees are working from home, schedule daily virtual check-ins to catch up. Opening up builds trust and mutual support.

5 Show employees they are appreciated with thank you emails or weekly shout outs during staff meetings. Positive reinforcement boosts confidence, provides a sense of purpose, and builds community.

2 Flexible work hours encourages employees to exercise, sleep properly, eat healthier, and connect with their loved ones. Motivate employees to take breaks during work hours to prevent fatigue and increase productivity.

4 If an employee is depressed or showing emotional instability, assess the risk of suicide or harm, listen without judgement, provide reassurance and information, and encourage professional or self-help.

“Being positive during this time may be difficult, but there is comfort in knowing that there is unity in shared experiences and emotions. Supporting each other’s mental health and wellness not only brings peace to struggling individuals, but also builds community and trust in the workplace.”

KEEPING THE TEAM TOGETHER

Employers from various industries have implemented work from home initiatives to protect their employees from COVID-19. Although it has become routine to log in to virtual meetings, there is still the obstacle of maintaining team spirit and collaboration. Fortunately, there are many ways to reconnect your team and make employees feel motivated at work again.⁴



Switch-Up Virtual Meetings

Include interactive activities that encourage participation, like an open brainstorming session, to allow employees to converse, give ideas, and become a team again.



Have Weekly Recaps

Talk with the team about the week's accomplishments, possible improvements, and future goals, giving employees the opportunity to reflect and strategize together.⁵



Weekly Team Building Days

Dedicate a day of the week to play games like Office Trivia, where trivia questions on various topics are asked and answered by email.



After-Hour Virtual Hangouts

Schedule a monthly video call with employees for cocktail hour, game night, or a birthday party to create community. No work talk allowed!



Keep Your Heart Pumping

Relieve stress while bonding as a team with virtual activities, like yoga or meditation periods with a coach or free online videos.



Get To Know Each Other

Begin virtual meetings with a quick icebreaker by asking your team questions about anything, like their favorite food, or movie villain.



Quick Chat Breaks

Dedicate some time before work for a virtual coffee hangout or have lunch together during a break to promote social interaction.

“These are only some of many ways employers can rekindle team spirit between them and employees when working from home. Find activities that work best for your team or create your own! These initiatives will leave a lasting bond among employees, even after coronavirus.”

1 Matthew Gavidia, “How Has COVID-19 Affected Mental Health, Severity of Stress Among Employees?” American Journal of Managed Care, April 20, 2020.

2 “Stress, Anxiety, and Isolation — How to Support Employee Mental Health During the Coronavirus Pandemic.” Kaiser Permanente, July 8, 2020.

3 Rubina Kapil, “How to Help Someone with Anxiety or Depression During COVID-19.” Mental Health First Aid, March 20, 2020.

4 Olaf Acker, “Keeping Your Virtual Team Together Over the Long Term.” Strategy&, PWC, March 30, 2020.

5 Lindsay McGregor, “How to Keep Your Team Motivated, Remotely.” Harvard Business Review, April 9, 2020.

**HOW TO HELP
SOMEONE WITH
ANXIETY OR DEPRESSION**

Identify risk of
suicide or physical harm.



Listen without
judgement.



Provide reassurance
and information.



Encourage appropriate
professional help.



Encourage self-help &
other support services.

**METHODS FOR COPING
WITH STRESS AND ANXIETY**

Clear your head by
meditating, practicing
yoga, or listening to
music.



Try to identify reasons
for stress or anxiety
by self-reflecting at
the end of the day.



Do not skip meals and
maintain a healthy,
well-balanced diet.



Lower anxiety by
drinking less
caffeine or alcohol.



Open up to friends,
family, or a therapist.
It's okay to ask for help!



Have a sleeping
schedule helps
reduce anxiety.

"Tips to Manage Anxiety and Stress." Anxiety and Depression Association of America.

SUPPORT HOTLINES

Emergency Medical Services - 911
Call for life-threatening situations.
Available 24 hrs a day.

National Suicide Prevention Line - 1-800-273-8255
For someone who is suicidal or under emotional distress.
Available 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week.

