RESILIENCY KIT

INVEST EAP’S GUIDE TO HELP YOU BUILD RESILIENCY AND REDUCE STRESS
Introduction:

At Invest EAP, we take our role to help reduce stress and build resiliency skills very seriously and that is why we felt it was necessary to craft this workbook to share with our community.

Whether sampling one page at a time or making use of every page, we hope our members will use this kit and included activities as an onramp to connect with us for additional support.

You and anyone in your household can contact Invest EAP, any time.

If you are not familiar with our services, check us out on the password protected website: www.investeap.org. To gain full access, you will need to create a user account.

Our approach is positive and proactive. EAP is eager to help you with free, confidential counseling and resources—no matter how big or small your challenges might feel.

Resources you have access to:

- EAP short term, solution-focused counseling
- 24 hour access, 365 days a year
- Referrals to resources
- Online wellness portal website
- Financial & Legal tools
- Worksite wellness ideas
- Wellness newsletters—quarterly
- And more

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1-866-660-9533
www.investeap.org
Create a login with your organization’s password.
Check In

The first thing to know right now: it’s completely normal to be experiencing a wide range of emotions.

Accepting your feelings is an important first step to building resilience. The simple act of naming your emotions has been found to benefit overall wellbeing. So, we invite you to take a moment now to tune into your body and notice how you’re feeling.

Circle the emotions below that you identify with. You are welcome to add in other emotions that better represent the way you feel.

Angry  Sad  Anxious  Hurt  Confused  Thankful  Fed Up  Tearful
Content  Upset  Frustrated  Healthy  Vulnerable  Mournful  Betrayed  Inspired
Lonely  Irritated  Cautious  Nervous  Abandoned  Relieved  Trusting  Bewildered
Skeptical  Deprived  Shocked  Pessimistic  Annoyed  Spiteful  Impatient  Worried

Fill in your own:

• How am I feeling right now?
• Is the stress in my life accumulating from a lack of play?
• What is the most loving and supportive thing I can do for myself right now?
• Is there a boundary I need to communicate?
• When I listen to my body, what does it need?
• In what ways am I avoiding my truth?
• Can I do this on my own? If not, where can I turn?
• What can I do to take care of myself today?
• I’m excited to focus on...

• What am I holding onto? And would it be ok to let it go?
• I will create space from...
• What can I forgive myself for?
• Is there someone I can forgive?
• When is the last time I moved my body?
• Have I taken a moment to breathe today?
• What do I like about myself?
• Who am I checking in on myself or connecting with today?
• What can I do to feel powerful?
• How can I express my gratitude today?
• Am I fighting life or inviting life?

You are welcome to contact Invest EAP to talk through your feelings. Call 1-866-660-9533.
Taking Care

When you start to feel stressed, here are things you can do to try to feel better in that moment:

- Place your feet flat. Then flex and release your toes.
- Take a deep belly breath
- Stretch your body, move around
- Go outside, breathe in fresh air
- Love a pet
- Listen to an enlightening podcast
- Follow a guided meditation
- Nourish your body
- Call Invest EAP or go on our website

Fill in your own:

Your Powerful Mind and the Effect of Self-Talk

Bringing awareness to your internal thoughts, feelings, and behaviors can make a big difference.

Positive self-talk: inner dialogue that focuses on the good about yourself and your life. It is optimistic or resilient thought training that encourages you to think about the bright side.

Get curious with yourself and notice how you talk to and about yourself (without judging it). How does this impact my day-to-day life?

Try just one or two of these positive self-affirmations a day!

EAP is always confidential and free.
Call 1-866-660-9533
Stress Plays Out

The stress response is helpful and necessary in times of emergency such as disasters so that we can run fast and defend ourselves. However, if we fail to de-escalate from the stress response, to “rest and digest,” stress stops being helpful and begins to cause major damage to our health, mood, productivity, relationships, and quality of life.

Counteract the stress response with activities found in this Kit or call an EAP counselor to discuss healthy skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Bad</th>
<th>Ugly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharply focused</td>
<td>Tense</td>
<td>Chronic Fatigue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energized</td>
<td>Anxious</td>
<td>Malaise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivated</td>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>Low self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware of options</td>
<td>Withdrawn</td>
<td>Pain (physical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenged</td>
<td>Isolated</td>
<td>Chronic conditions*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frustrated</td>
<td>(*talk to your doctor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tired</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Word About Trauma:

Those with a trauma history may experience a heightened or prolonged stress response.

Please call your doctor or reach out to Invest EAP for support and resources.

STRESS SHOWS UP IN YOUR BODY

When you encounter a perceived threat—for example a snake appears underfoot, a large dog barks, or your boss summons you—your amygdala, the brain area that’s involved in fear and to some extent aggression, sends an alarm to your hypothalamus which then tells the autonomic nervous system to react. Through a combination of nerve and hormonal signals, this system prompts your adrenal glands to release a surge of hormones, including adrenaline and cortisol.

The more you notice and become aware of your body’s signs and signals that this complex natural alarm system has been triggered, the more you can do to re-regulate. You can use activities outlined in this kit to help you or you can call us!

Want to talk through this information? Call 1-866-660-9533.
In what ways can you harness each of your 5 senses to bring yourself a moment of peace and mindfulness? Think of one or two quietly to yourself or jot down an idea next to each circle.
Daily Reminder:

Pause and just breathe
QUICK TIP
Living with purpose can make you happier and more fulfilled. But how do we find that purpose?

Contemplate what a fulfilled life means to you, and scribble these into a list. Circle the ones that belong only to you and revisit them during a time when you can allow to yourself for much deeper and longer contemplation. Write down what brings you joy and fulfillment.

Spotlight on Fulfillment & Purpose

Use this graphic to reflect on the different areas of your life. To rank your level of contentment, draw a dot or line in the slice.

- White outer area for "Very content"
- Light blue middle for "Somewhat content"
- Dark blue for "Growth area"

Members reach out to Invest EAP for a wide variety of reasons.
The purpose of this exercise is to provide you with the opportunity to reflect on different aspects of life and evaluate level of contentment or satisfaction in each realm.

You can use this inventory to engage an EAP counselor. We’re here to help and will adapt to your comfort level.

Call 1-866-660-9533 to connect with an EAP counselor.
When our mind fixates on threat, uncertainty and negativity—this is known as “unhelpful thinking patterns.”

Our minds are always interpreting the world around us, trying to make sense of events. Sometimes we see the world accurately—as it really is—but often our minds take ‘short cuts’ and our thinking can become biased. These biases or ‘cognitive distortions’ can have powerful effects upon how we feel.

Sometimes the thoughts we have don’t paint a fair picture of what has happened to us. You may want to circle the pattern(s) that you notice yourself falling into at times.

It is helpful to be aware of common unhelpful thinking patterns so you can notice when they begin to happen, and practice relaxation habits or reach out to Invest EAP for support.

Call 1-866-660-9533 to connect with an EAP counselor
Spheres of Influence

When situations feel out of control, focus your time and energy on things that are within your power.

Sound like you?

If you’re prone to “hypothetical worry” (i.e., the ‘What if?’ thoughts), you may find it helpful to practice noticing these thoughts and then redirecting your attention to things within your control.

Research shows that when we shift our focus to what we can control, we see meaningful and lasting differences in our health and wellbeing.

Use this handout to write down what you have control over inside the circle to the right. Then, note the things you cannot control outside of the circle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Within My Control</th>
<th>Outside of My Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taking a deep breath</td>
<td>The weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on what is important to me</td>
<td>Job cuts, layoffs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating well</td>
<td>The economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercising</td>
<td>Aging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking and offering support</td>
<td>Flights and holidays being canceled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My routine</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where I get my information</td>
<td>Schools opening and closing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivating connection to others</td>
<td>The healthcare system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting and being involved</td>
<td>The government’s actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling EAP for support</td>
<td>The news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other people’s health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other people’s decisions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember: You may not be able to stop hypothetical worries from occurring, but you can control your response to them.

A book related to this topic: *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Steven Covey
Gratitude

Allow yourself the good feelings that come when you think about what you have to be grateful for.

Getting Started:

• Challenge yourself to think of a different thing to be grateful for, for every day.
• Consider frequency: do you want to integrate this practice daily, weekly, monthly? Five minutes a day for thirty days is a popular frequency. You can use this handout, scrap paper, your smart phone, or buy/make an actual journal.
• If you use a smart phone, consider adding a reminder/alert to prompt you to focus on gratitude.
• Get creative: add images, quotes, and affirmations.

Prompts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOR MY FAMILY BECAUSE.......</th>
<th>FOR ACCESS TO.......</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOR MY FRIENDS BECAUSE.......</td>
<td>FOR THE LOVE OF.......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO.......</td>
<td>BECAUSE THIS THING THAT HAPPENED TODAY.......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOR MY JOB BECAUSE..........</td>
<td>FOR THIS BIT OF INFORMATION.......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOR MY PAST EXPERIENCES BECAUSE...</td>
<td>BECAUSE I TREASURE THIS.......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOR MY ABILITIES TO........</td>
<td>FOR MY GREATEST GIFT IN LIFE.......</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABOUT INVEST EAP & THE CENTERS FOR WELLBEING

With its central offices located in Vermont, Invest EAP is a public and private non-profit collaborative that has offered comprehensive Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services since 1986.

EAPs promote the health of employees and their household members by offering access to free, confidential counseling for a wide range of life issues.

When employees are struggling, it can lead to poor morale, adverse health outcomes and reduced productivity. Robust EAPs provide a solution.

Invest EAP’s comprehensive confidential services include counseling, resource and referral information to address issues involving:

- Relationships and Family
- Drug and Alcohol
- Mental Health
- Grief and Loss
- Medical
- Disability
- Eldercare
- Childcare
- Parenting Techniques
- Workplace Conflict
- Legal Issues
- Financial Problems
- Much, much more!

If you are a member and would like learn more about your benefit, schedule an appointment or to ask a question please call 1-866-660-9533.

If you are not a member but would like to learn more about our programs and services please call our Community Outreach Department at 1-888-681-8112.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

- Invest EAP website: www.investap.org (password protected).
- Coronavirus Anxiety Workbook by The Wellness Society; www.thewellnesssociety.org
- The 7 Habits of High Effective People by Steven Covey
- Psychology Tools www.psychologytools.org
- The Relaxation Response by Herbert Benson, M.D.
- Insight Timer: https://insighttimer.com