WorkingSolutions



August 2020

Managing "COVID Fatigue"



After months of social distancing, lockdowns, favorite businesses being shuttered, and a lot fewer places to go for recreation, meals, and

entertainment, are you feeling "COVID fatigue"? The term was first coined in July, but the condition appears to be real. Feeling bottled up, intensely irritable, and frustrated are the symptoms, but it is also compounded by grief for the loss of a way of life you once knew and anxiety associated with not knowing when it will return. COVID fatigue may place you at risk for increased substance use, poor diet, mismanaging a health condition, poor exercise, domestic abuse, relationship disharmony, depression, and generally putting plans for your life on hold. Don't settle for the consequences of COVID fatigue. Take action with help from a professional counselor or other guidance that empowers you to take charge. Source: Winknews.com [Search "COVID fatigue"]

Preparing to Go Back to School



Are you feeling anxious about ensuring a smooth transition for children going back to school? After their lengthy absence, you may need to be more deliberate. Start to introduce daily routines

and earlier bedtimes in preparation for the big day. Start winding down screen use an hour before bedtime, and consider having family evening meals together at a specific time to create a familiar structure going forward. Try a midday quiet-time period for reading/drawing that also can help manage stress and reduce anxiety. See www.sleepeducation.org for recommended child sleep requirements. Source: www.healthychildren.org for COVID-19 prevention measures [Search "sleep, children, behavior"]

Alcoholics Anonymous and COVID-19



AA figured out how to carry its message of hope and recovery to alcoholics worldwide a long time ago, and the online portal it

established could not be timelier in the era of COVID-19 social distancing. Over 1,000 meetings are a click away. To use the nocost service, visit www.aa-intergroup.org/oiaa/meetings. You can search meetings worldwide by language, time, day, special need/disability, gender preferences, type of meeting, phone, video, and many other parameters. Source: www.aa.org [click link: "Updates on Coronavirus (COVID-19)"

Don't Mess with Melanoma



The hottest days of summer are upon us, so here's a quiz: What's the most common cause of cancer death for

women age 25-30? Answer: melanoma. What about the second leading cause of cancer death in women 30-35? Answer: melanoma, again. Surprised? Melanoma does not discriminate by age, race, or gender. And it does not appear only on the skin. It can appear anywhere—even nails, eyes, or the mouth. Ninety percent of melanomas are caused by exposure to ultraviolet light, so protect yourself using SPF 30 (or higher) sun protection. Fact: Use of tanning beds by those under 30 years old will increase the lifetime risk of melanoma by 75%. Source: www.melanoma.org

Taking Charge and Facing the "New Normal"



Everyone knows dramatic changes have occurred in the way we live as a result of COVID-19. No one knows for certain what a "new normal" will look like in the future

when the lockdowns and social isolation are over and the ultimate shifts in the world of work finally arrive. Perhaps normalcy will return, but one thing can be counted on: Coping with change requires actionable steps that work. Those steps can help you adapt to whatever happens next.

Coping with Change: The Steps



1) Accept that change creates stress. Design a personal stress management program that offers resilience and helps you cope with uncertainty, changes in the way you work, changes in the way you think (i.e., fear, worry,

catastrophizing, etc.), and how these things affect your mood and your relationships. Reach out to sources of inspiration and professional counseling to accomplish this. 2) Don't go with the flow. Be proactive, and make choices to help you cope and respond at home and at work to maintain personal and job productivity. The analogy is preparing for a hurricane. Either you can wait by the radio and be told what to do, or you can take action steps to feel empowered and be in control of outcomes while listening to the weather radio at the same time. One approach will empower you, improve resilience, and give you a sense of control and direction in the ultimate outcome. 3) As you experience stressors associated with change, make decisions about how you will cope and maintain control in spite of them—stay on the "nonvictim side of the balance sheet." Avoid being a victim of change, often signaled by looking around at what others are doing in order to decide what to do next. 4) Discuss and process these steps for remaining proactive with family, friends, and loved ones. Better ideas and solutions, a feeling of security, and staying positive generally result from these interactions. 5) Expect and anticipate your positive future despite what is happening. Don't allow the inability to predict or know what the future holds to lead you into catastrophic thinking and its immobilizing effect and undermine your life plans.

Reduce Screen Time and Be More Productive.



One out of five adults averages over 40 hours a week online. Most average 24 hours. Who wouldn't agree that at this rate, it is easy for life to pass you by? Reduce screen time without losing productivity by

first adding up the hours spent online for a week in order to gain awareness. (This first step alone will reduce time online!) Next, seek to eliminate distractions, including email clicks and hyperlinks to browsers and distracting URLs and social media, etc. Make it more difficult to reach these locations. Experiment with "no-phone" zones in your home—places where you commit to not using a phone. It won't be easy, but that's the point. Key to your success is finding a compelling, enjoyable activity—a useful and exciting one—to substitute for being online. This will create the long-term change you're looking for and will prevent a "cyber relapse." Reference: study by www.commonsensemedia.org [Search "common sense consensus 2019"]

Stress Management Tip: Reframing



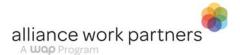
Reframing is a mental strategy to overcome the distress of negative or disappointing events. Reframing starts with a key question: What good thing can come from this undesirable event? The goal is to

change the way you think about and view undesirable situations. For example, if you don't get the job or promotion, what good thing or positive outcome of not being chosen might now exist? Reframing works because it changes images in your mind, and these direct your feelings and sensations. Reframing builds personal resilience to disappointment, and it's a teachable skill. Reframing is used unconsciously by everyone, but purposely employed, it will get you out of pain faster. It is especially useful for children to learn the strategy.

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The Wellness News

Tips and resources for living well

August 2020

Healthy Eating on the Go



While eating healthy on-the-go can be difficult, there are plenty of healthy options that are portable and enjoyable. The key is to make sure your snacks are nutritious, minimally processed, and protein- and fiber-rich. Protein promotes fullness because it signals the release of appetite-suppressing hormones, slows digestion, and stabilizes your blood sugar levels.

While traveling and eating in restaurants, try ordering a dish that consists of fresh or cooked vegetables served with a filling source of protein, such as a garden salad with grilled chicken or a hard-boiled egg. Salad toppings like nuts, seeds, cheese, and avocado offer healthy sources of fats that can help increase feelings of fullness.

Additionally, it's best to forgo calorie- and sugar-loaded beverages, including sweetened coffee drinks, sodas, and energy drinks. Choose water or unsweetened herbal tea to keep your calorie and sugar intake in check.

Listed below are a few healthy on-the-go snack options:

1. Trail mix.

Trail mix is a combination of dried fruit and nuts. You can increase the amount of protein in trail mix by using almonds or pistachios, which are slightly higher in protein than other types of nuts. The dried fruit and nuts in trail mix make it very high in calories, so a handful is a reasonable serving.

2. <u>No-bake energy bites</u>

Energy bites are a great, high-protein snack made by combining a variety of ingredients, such as nut butter, oats, and seeds, and then rolling them into balls. They don't require baking, making it easy to prepare a batch ahead for grab-n-go snacking.

3. Handful of almonds

Eating a handful of almonds or another type of nut for a snack is a simple way to fill up on protein. One ounce of almonds provides 6 grams of protein. Almonds are also high in calories, so it's important to stick with the recommended serving size. A handful is equivalent to around 22 almonds.

4. <u>Hummus and veggies</u>

Hummus is made from cooked and mashed chickpeas that are blended with tahini or olive oil, then used as a dip or spread. A 1/3-cup serving (82 grams) contains 4 grams of protein. Veggies are fantastic, nutrient-dense foods to pair with hummus.

5. Apple with peanut butter

Apples and peanut butter taste great together and make for a nutrient-dense, high-protein snack. A snack of a medium apple with 1 tablespoon of peanut butter provides 4 grams of protein. Despite the positive effects that peanut butter may have on your health, it can be higher in calories, so it's best consumed in moderation.

When choosing healthy snacks or food while out, remember to choose options high in protein as it will keep you full and satisfied.

Healthy Kid Friendly Lunch Ideas

It is important for your children to eat a lunch packed with good nutrition whether they are buying food at school or packing lunches at home. Studies show that a healthy lunch can improve academic performance, mood, and energy levels to get through the rest of the school day. A packed lunch is not necessarily healthier than one you buy at school. If you pack potato chips and cookies, that is not a nutritious meal. Focus on packing their favorite healthy foods with a good variety of fruit, vegetables, protein, and whole grains. If they are buying lunch from school, it is important to know what is for lunch beforehand so that you can help your child navigate the healthier choices on the menu.



Some things to consider:

- 1. **Choose fruits and vegetables.** Fruits and vegetables are packed with vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Think colors of the rainbow! It's a good idea to eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables every day, so try to fit in one or two at lunch. A serving isn't a lot. A serving of carrots is ½ cup or about 6 baby carrots. A fruit serving could be one medium apple or a banana.
- 2. **<u>Kids need fat.</u>** Kids need some fat in their diets to stay healthy. Fat is found in butter, oils, cheese, nuts, and meats. Some higher-fat lunch foods served at school can include french fries, hot dogs, cheeseburgers, macaroni and cheese, and chicken nuggets. These foods should be eaten in smaller portions and less often. No food is off limits, just limited. Try picking foods that are grilled or baked.
- 3. **Pick whole-grain options.** "Grains" include breads, cereals, pasta and rice. Whole grains are better than refined grains. Brown rice is a whole grain, but white rice is not. Whole wheat bread is a better choice over white bread. Know your options, read food labels, and choose wisely.
- 4. **<u>Drink Up.</u>** What you are drinking at lunch counts too! It's not just about what you eat. Milk has been a favorite lunchtime drink for a long time. If you don't like milk, choose water. Avoid juice drinks and sodas that are higher in calories and sugar.
- 5. **Balance your plate.** Include a mix of the food groups: fruit, vegetables, whole grains, meat or protein foods, and dairy.
- 6. **Snack sensibly.** Schools have many snack options that are not healthy. You can get soda or candy from a vending machine or junk food like cookies, ice cream, and salty snacks from the cafeteria. It is okay to have these occasionally, but they should not be on your lunch menu daily.
- 7. **Think variety.** Try to not eat the same lunch every day. Eating lots of different foods gives your body a variety of vitamin and nutrients.

Back to School Kids Lunch Ideas

Turkey + Cheddar Roll-up Fresh Berries Yogurt Trail Mix

Hummus Pita Bread Grape Tomatoes Cucumbers Sliced Oranges Hard Boiled Eggs Baby Carrots + Ranch Pretzels Peaches or Applesauce

Small Bagel + Cream Cheese Yogurt Tube Baby Carrots Fruit snacks with real fruit Almond Butter + Jelly (or PB +J) on whole grain String Cheese Fruit Cup with 100% juice Baked Chips



Roasted Red Peppers with Basil

Ingredients

- 3 red peppers
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 6 cherry tomatoes halved
- 3 sprigs of Thyme leaves
- 2 Tbs of capers
- 3 Tbs of Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 2 Tbs of Balsalmic Vineger
- Fresh Basil Leaves



Directions

- Heat the oven to 400 degrees. Cut each pepper in half lengthways through the stalk, then scoop out and discard the seeds and membrane. Put the peppers cut-side up in the prepared baking tray and divide the garlic, tomatoes, thyme leaves and capers between them. Drizzle with oil, then season with salt and pepper and roast for 30 minutes.
- Add a drizzle of balsamic vinegar to each pepper and roast for a further 10-15 minutes until
 caramelized and tender. Or serve while still warm, scattered with fresh basil.

Health Tip:

Benefits of Berries

- High in antioxidants: protecting cells from free radical damage.
- Packed with fiber: helping you feel fuller and decrease appetite.
- Rich in vitamins and minerals yet low in calories: great for snacking.

Action: Make a breakfast smoothie with a mix of fresh berries.

National BreastFeeding Month



According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), research shows that breastfeeding offers many health benefits for infants and mothers, as well as potential economic and environmental benefits for communities. To bring additional attention to the benefits of breastfeeding and to support and encourage mothers in achieving their breastfeeding goals, the U.S. Breastfeeding Committee recognizes the month of August as National Breastfeeding Month. The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action celebrates the first week of August as World Breastfeeding Week.

There are a number of health benefits associated with breastfeeding for both mother and baby. In addition to the

balanced nutrition that it provides, additional benefits for the baby include:

- Protection against some childhood infections
- Ensuring a better survival rate during the child's first year
- Lowering the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Physical and emotional benefits from skin-to-skin contact

According to the NIH, other studies suggest that breastfeeding may reduce the risk for certain allergic diseases, asthma, obesity, and type 2 diabetes. It also may help improve an infant's cognitive development. However, more research is needed to confirm these findings.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office on Women's Health (OWH), breastfeeding helps a mother's health and healing following childbirth. Breastfeeding leads to a lower risk of:

- Type 2 diabetes
- Certain types of breast cancer
- Ovarian cancer

It is also thought that breastfeeding may help you lose weight. Many women who breastfed their babies said it helped them get back to their pre-pregnancy weight more quickly, but experts are still looking at the effects of breastfeeding on weight loss.

According to the DHHS, OWH, society also benefits overall when mothers breastfeed:

- **Breastfeeding saves lives.** Research shows that if 90% of families breastfed exclusively for six months, nearly 1,000 deaths among infants could be prevented each year.
- **Breastfeeding saves money.** Medical costs may be lower for fully breastfed infants than never-breastfed infants. Breastfed infants usually need fewer sick care visits, prescriptions, and hospitalizations.
- Breastfeeding helps make a more productive workforce. Mothers who breastfeed may miss less work
 to care for sick infants than mothers who feed their infants formula. Employer medical costs may also be
 lower.
- Breastfeeding is better for the environment. Formula cans and bottle supplies create more trash and plastic waste. Your milk is a renewable resource that comes packaged and warmed.

For more information about the benefits of breastfeeding, call the OWH Helpline at 1-800-994-9662.

We know it is not always easy to juggle everything & realize simple tips can help provide a different approach. Your EAP is here to help with family, work, health, well-being & legal issues.

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August 2020

PUSHING PAST YOUR PLATEAU

We promise ourselves we'll change our lifestyles for better health. We start diets, launch exercise programs or try to quit smoking. And then we stall. We hit a plateau, putting us at risk of losing precious gains or quitting altogether.

A healthy lifestyle change is just that -- change. "A lot of people believe that change is easy, but we are fundamentally conservative creatures, and we don't change until we have to," says Michael J. Mahoney, Ph.D., an American Psychological Association spokesman and professor at the University of North Texas. "It doesn't take much to throw us off course because we are such creatures of routine."



So sticking with a new routine is tough. Dr. Mahoney suggests you focus on being consistent, especially in the first six weeks of a change. That way, you build new patterns of behavior. Once that happens, odds are you'll "begin to speak to yourself about the change in a more positive tone, instead of a negative one."

Make a pledge

Pledging to reward yourself if you meet your goals can be a great tool for getting past plateaus. The reward that awaits you can serve as a symbol of what you're trying to do and give you something to look forward to. "The symbol could be anything," notes Dr. Mahoney. It could be a piece of jewelry or a new golf club, for instance. Once you earn it, you can set your sights on a new reward for the next step.

When you're trying to get past a plateau, he recommends you focus each day on your behavior, your effort, rather than on your goal -- the amount of weight you'd like to lose, for instance.

One crucial skill you'll need is patience. This, more than anything, will help get you past plateaus.

"Most people don't see a traffic jam as an opportunity to practice patience," Dr. Mahoney says. But the skills that help you put up with a stalled interstate "will help you realize and understand that plateaus are a natural part of life and they're going to occur, so if you learn patience you'll get over plateaus."

"Progress," he notes, "is not always linear. If we understand this going in, it helps us be more patient with the plateaus, so that we can get past them and keep going."

Six steps to progress

Are you stuck on a plateau? Here are six tips for pushing onward from Michael Mercer, Ph.D., coauthor of the book Spontaneous Optimism: Proven Strategies for Health, Prosperity and Happiness:

- 1. Define your aim clearly. "It's impossible to hit your target if you don't know exactly what you're aiming at," says Dr. Mercer, who gives about 50 speeches a year to executives and other audiences.
- 2. Don't let laziness creep in. "Sure, it's easier not to do something," he says. Instead, stay focused on your path. If you promised yourself you'd exercise at 6 a.m., don't hit the snooze button when the alarm goes off. Remind yourself firmly about your goals and get moving.
- 3. When you don't want to exercise or you want to quit your diet, take three seconds to picture how you want to look or feel at the end of your program. A lot of people begin such programs because they want to look attractive to others, while others are interested in improving their health.
- 4. Use a time-limit approach to your program. "Give yourself, say, 12 weeks to accomplish a goal within your program," he says. When you reach that goal, set a new one and give yourself another 12 weeks. "This enables you to track your progress and helps you to define your target. Use the scale, measuring tape or other device to measure your progress in the time period and to help you set new goals. The best cure for putting things off is a deadline."
- 5. Give yourself rewards for reaching your daily, weekly and monthly goals. "For instance, tell yourself you'll go to a movie you've been wanting to see if you get your exercise in that day," he says.
- 6. Think about committing to a self-punishment if you fail. "I worked with a group that had to write a check to charity and put it in my hands. If they didn't reach the goal, which was well within their limits, I was to mail the check by a particular date," Dr. Mercer says. "Every one of them reached the goal."

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NEW SCHOOL YEAR READINESS



Whether you're just starting your higher education experience, continuing your studies after a successful year, or returning to campus after a long, being prepared for the challenges ahead follows the same basic guidelines. A new school year is a new opportunity to develop the personal management skills that will shape your success inside and outside of the classroom for years to come.

If you struggle with being organized or feel anxious about starting a new school year, remember that you are not alone. Students across the country face the same challenges you do, and just like they have, you will find a way to succeed. To help you on your path, here are some helpful recommendations that you can use to ready yourself for a new school year:

- Familiarize yourself with your campus, so you know where the offices, departments, and classrooms are that you will need to routinely visit.
- Determine how you will arrive to campus every day and what additional needs that will create, such as needing to secure a parking pass or access to public transportation.
- Create a designated backpack or bag that is only used for your studies and is stocked with the tools you'll need to be ready for class every day, including extra pencils, pens, and notepads.
- If you plan to take a laptop or tablet to class, it might be a good idea to have an extra power cord just for your school bag, so you'll be able to charge up anywhere you go.
- Create a schedule for your week that includes every routine activity that is a priority and must be completed. This should include your class time, work time, study hours, gym time, when you wake up, and when you plan to go to bed. Use this schedule to determine when you're free for social activities or other events, so you don't overburden or overcommit your free time.
- Take care of yourself by exercising, eating healthy, getting as much sleep as you can, and spending time with good friends to build up your resistance to any stress you may experience.
- Be friendly, open-minded, and supportive of your classmates. You may need to work together to complete assignments, and being a good team member will help support a positive outcome.
- Expect to be challenged. Some classes are going to be harder than others and require more of your time and energy to complete, especially as you close in on the final year of your program. Put all of your skills to work for you to meet those challenges head on.

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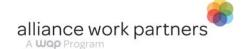
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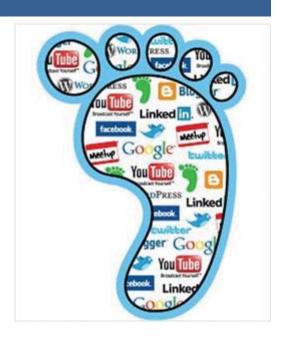


Balanced Living August 2020

YOUR DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

Your digital footprint is the record or trail of everything you do online. Your social media accounts and activity, personal blogs or websites, your browsing history, your online subscriptions, forum comments, any photos and videos you've uploaded: anything and everything on the Internet with your name on it. Luckily, most of the places that store your personal information (like Facebook) can be tweaked, so we share only certain things with the general public. Let's explore that and other tips to help you manage your digital footprint.

1. <u>Privacy Settings</u>: You should always read the "Privacy" page for the devices, accounts, and services you use to see how your information is being viewed, collected, stored, and shared. Every site allows you to choose your privacy settings and most smartphone apps can be denied access to all or portions of your stored data. Decide how visible you want to be and take the time to tweak your settings accordingly.



- Keep A Running List Of Your Accounts: Make a list of every online account you have and keep
 it current. Delete any accounts you no longer use. Remember your old MySpace or LiveJournal
 account? Delete it.
- 3. <u>Don't Over-share</u>: Don't post anything that would help others steal your identity no usernames, physical addresses, etc. Also avoid posting any major purchases you've made, when you might be traveling for an extended period of time, or other details that criminals might use.
- 4. <u>Use A Password Keeper</u>: It's hard to remember 10 different passwords, let alone more for all of your social sites, storefronts, and online services, and every site has their own unique rules, so a password keeper can be valuable.
- 5. **Google Yourself**: There may be information about you on the Internet that you aren't aware of. Some sites can alert you to whether or not your information has been hacked and is available for others to access, which can help you keep track of old accounts that need to be deleted.
- 6. <u>Use A Secondary Email</u>: When you are communicating with someone new, or signing up for a new social media platform, it can be useful to have a secondary email address. Avoid using your primary email account for anything other than the most critical communications to avoid receiving spam mail and other announcements that can fill up your inbox.
- 7. <u>Posting is Forever</u>: Every time you send a message, post, or picture, you're publishing it the same way a major news outlet does. The Internet never forgets. And just because you take a post down doesn't mean it's gone forever. Someone may save your image or screen grab your post to share without your knowledge.
- 8. <u>Understand That Searches Are Social</u>: Facebook records your search data and Google does the same search and browsing information. You may want to investigate private browsing windows or search engines with stricter privacy policies if you do not want your searches shared.

In the end, just make sure you consider that what you post, tweet, comment, search, or like is probably being recorded somewhere, and possibly forever.

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Self-Care Strategies

You can't always control the circumstances that life throws your way, but you can control how well you take care of yourself. When you're taking good care of your body and mind, you can be more resilient toward whatever comes, use the resources you have in your life to their fullest, and become less reactive toward the stress you face.

Get Enough Sleep

There are many things you can do to support your sleep habits, from using time management strategies to carve out more time, to finding relaxation techniques to help you fall asleep and get quality sleep all

night. And if you really aren't able to get enough sleep at night, don't underestimate the value of a power nap!

Maintain Proper Nutrition

Healthy eating at home can help you stave off extra pounds

when stressed, as meals you make are usually much better for you. (They're healthier than fast food, and usually the portions are smaller and lower in fat than what you find in a restaurant.) Cooking at home can save you money, too.

3. Exercise Regularly

Exercise can be great for you physically and mentally. It provides a stress release and keeps your body healthy. It also helps your body release endorphins, which increase your feelings of overall well-being.

4. Maintain Social Support

Social support can keep you healthier and happier, creating a buffer against stress, and it's an easy stress reliever to utilize. Friends can pick you up when you're sad, provide insights when you're confused, and help you have fun when you need to blow off steam.



Find Hobbies

Having some "down time" is important, and hobbies can provide a nice distraction from stress and help you stay 'in the moment,' which is also a great way to relieve tension. Artistic expression has been found to be a great stress reliever, even for those who don't see themselves as particularly creative.



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6. Pamper Yourself

Don't overlook the importance of pampering yourself on a regular basis. This can come in the form of a massage day, a movie date, or a simple cup of coffee, depending on what you find to be relaxing. It can help you feel great about yourself and feel ready to take on the world.

7. Keep Your Mind Sharp

By keeping your mind sharp, you are more equipped to solve the problems and take on the "challenges" that life presents. You may want to dive into learning more about a subject that fascinates you. Games like crossword puzzles, Sudoku, and trivia challenges can be fun to play and a way to relax.

8. Have the Right Attitude

Much of what you experience in life can feel more stressful or less so depending on your point of view. Looking at things from an optimistic frame of mind can not only decrease your stress level but also bring you more success in life and more. You can even change ingrained negative thought patterns to more positive ones by using positive affirmations.



9. Process Your Emotions

Keeping your emotions bottled up may lead to an emotional explosion later on. It's generally healthier to listen to your feelings, process them, and try to understand them. Consider them 'messengers' that tell you when something is not right with your world. A great way to process emotions is the act of journaling.

10. Maintain a Spiritual Practice

Research shows that a lifestyle including religion, spirituality or meditation is generally a healthier lifestyle. Many people use these practices as a major stress reliever and strategy for emotional health. Spiritual practice is deeply personal, and whatever your practice, it should nurture your soul.

source: VeryWellMind.com

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