July 2021

Making the Most of Change

During the current pandemic, it seems the only constant has been change. This time has been filled with a roller coaster of endings, constant transitions and new beginnings! Whether a change to working at home, to homeschooling kids, to evolving health challenges, and even returning to in-person work, we have all been stretched in ways we would not have imagined prior to 2020.

This revolving change can often lead to a negative mindset, where every change is perceived as a threat to stability. To move beyond the threat mindset and make the most of these changes, consider doing the following:

- **Notice signs of stress related to change:** This is the brain/body telling you that this change is important.
- **Embrace the moment as an opportunity:** This is something you care about. It’s important and meaningful so make the most of it!
- **Make a decision, one at a time:** This helps create intentions and set goals, while decreasing anxiety.
- **Lighten things up a bit:** Adopt a “gameful” (challenge) mindset. Use good humor.
- **Celebrate Success:** Feel good about progress and celebrate positive outcomes.
- **Be patient with yourselves and others:**
  - Pace yourself. Start Small.
  - You may experience unrelenting fatigue. Rest and practice good sleep hygiene.
  - Communicate openly with others about your comfort level with social activities.
- **Practice Mindfulness:** When you head out of the house, try mindfulness activities like deep breathing and meditation to help decrease your stress and anxiety.
- **Build Resilience:** Focus on growing capacity in these 5 components: physical, mental, emotional, social, and everyday creativity.

To access other AAH EAP online resources on change management, practicing mindfulness and building resilience, visit [www.aah.org/eap](http://www.aah.org/eap) or [Click Here](http://www.aah.org/eap). If you would like additional support in navigating change please call us at **800.236.3231**.

Advocate Aurora Health EAP offers free, confidential assistance for you and your household family members.
Finding Connection

Be Kind to Humankind Week

After a year of social distancing, we may be challenged with feelings of isolation and are now craving new ways to connect with others. We are slowly resuming our shared activities, play dates and events. However, if you still struggle with feelings of loneliness, you may use this time to establish new connections with those around you. Close friendships don't happen overnight, but there are steps you can take to help connect with others. When looking for places to meet new people, try to be open to new ideas and cultivate an interest in other people, their lives, and their stories.

An opportunity to invest in others is celebrated the last week of August: Be Kind to Humankind Week.

Sacrifice Our Wants for Others’ Needs Sunday: Show others you care. Friends with limited mobility enjoy offers of companionship for a walk in the fresh air. Even an opportunity to see family in a nursing home will help to meet others’ needs.

Motorist Consideration Monday: Drive or travel courteously. Whether traveling by car or motorcycle, bicycle or public transportation, practice consideration and patience.

Touch-A-Heart Tuesday: Spread kindness, one heart at a time. Encourage others in their dreams and goals.

Willing-To-Lend-A-Hand Wednesday: Offer a helping hand. Offering to give a friend a ride to work or help with some tedious chore is a way to lighten their load while connecting.

Thoughtful Thursday: Treat each other well. If you’re out shopping, allow someone with fewer items to cut in front of you at the checkout.

Forgive-Your-Foe Friday: Come together. Contact the person in your life with whom you’ve let a disagreement divide you. Build a bridge of connection by sincerely apologizing.

Speak-Nice-Words Saturday: Say something nice. Hold your tongue when tempted to be harsh. Teach your children to speak kindly towards others.

Share your own experiences with kindness by using #BeKindToHumankind or #BK2HK in social media.

To access AAH EAP online resources on connecting with others, visit www.aah.org/eap or Click Here.

If you would like additional support for connecting in your most important relationships, please call us at 800.236.3231.
September 2021

Financial Freedom

Living Your Best Life

Does the idea of financial freedom sound like an impossibility or pipe dream in your future? Recessions can (and will) happen, along with unusual events like the pandemic of 2020 that wreaked havoc on businesses and jobs. We often are envious of social media posts showing beaming faces with new, lavish trips or purchases. Yes, being able to travel and having a new car is nice. But financial freedom is less about the material things you can buy and more about living your best life.

All of us view financial freedom with a different lens. Here are some questions to help explore what financial freedom and living your best life can mean to you:

What is it that you really want?
What matters most to you in life?
What are you doing when you feel like the best version of yourself?
What do you want to accomplish?

Planning for your future and setting goals is a good thing but do not live in the future. Living your best life is about enjoying your journey, and your journey starts today. We encourage you to take steps towards financial freedom by contacting Advocate Aurora Health EAP for assistance with financial resources. Our work-life benefit offers assistance with:

Money Coaching
Developing a Spending Plan
Rebuilding your Credit
Getting out of Debt
Home Buying Strategies
Pre-Retirement Analysis, and more…

To access AAH EAP online resources on financial freedom, visit www.aah.org/eap or Click Here.

To access additional support, please call us at 800.236.3231.

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