July 2022

Summer is a time for fun and family! Summer also provides the opportunity to get involved in something new that can promote creativity, experience success, and strengthen family ties. Not all summer fun needs to be expensive - here are some free options to consider!

**SUMMER**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create a scavenger hunt</td>
<td>Look at the stars</td>
<td>Go to a park</td>
<td>Visit the Library</td>
<td>Help out a neighbor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Go on a picnic</td>
<td>Build a fort</td>
<td>Family game night</td>
<td>Go on a nature hike</td>
<td>Backyard tenting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Slumber Party</td>
<td>Go to the beach</td>
<td>Fly a kite</td>
<td>Run through a sprinkler</td>
<td>Make a time capsule</td>
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Advocate Aurora Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can also offer help with:

**Summer childcare and summer camp searches.** We can locate options that are customized to meet each family’s need.

**Summer literature packets.** Parents can get tip sheets on topics such as ‘things to do as a family’ and information to plan for the summer.

*These services are offered in partnership with our Work-Life Services vendor, FEI Behavioral Health.*

You can access AAH EAP online family resources by Clicking Here.

If you find yourself in need of additional family supports, please call AAH EAP at 800.236.3231.
August 2022

Post Traumatic Growth: Healing and Hope

Over the past 25+ years psychologists have been studying a phenomenon called Post Traumatic Growth (PTG). They have found that negative experiences can often spur positive change, including a recognition of personal strength, the exploration of new possibilities, improved relationships, a greater appreciation for life, and spiritual growth. We definitely are not implying that traumatic events are good – they are not. But for many of us, life crises are inevitable and knowing PTG can happen offers a sense of hope.

Post Traumatic Growth isn’t something another can prescribe or create for you but there are some things you can do to help increase the likelihood of PTG in your life:

• First, know that PTG exists and that it’s possible for you.
• Engage in positive self-care that facilitates expression of emotions, promotes positive activities, and helps shift to a broader mindset that encourages recovery.
  o Active self-care in which we are actively involved in positive enjoyable activities, even if only for a few minutes at a time.
  o Calming self-care can be through mindfulness, meditation, deep relaxation, prayer, silence, nature, sleep, etc.
  o Mindset self-care occurs when we shift our thinking to identify the learning and the benefit of what’s happening in the moment.
• Experience and express your painful and positive emotions. This is truly permission to be human, to feel the full range of feelings.
• Engage in periods of rest and recovery.
• Experience being truly listened to and heard. When people understand and validate your experience it can become more manageable.
• Please seek out professional help when needed.

It is also important to note you don’t necessarily need to experience trauma to learn from crisis. For many, the pandemic and other current events are shining a light on the things that are most important. Perhaps you are making more time for things you find meaningful, simplifying your lives and making time for creative ways of being connected in your relationships.

AAH EAP is here to support, encourage, and help you recognize your natural capacity for growth.

800-236-3231
aah.org/eap

Authored by: Dawn Zak, MS, LPC, CSAC
Resources:
The Posttraumatic Growth Inventory: A Revision Integrating Existential and Spiritual Change
Adaptation from Kirsten Weir article June 1, 2020 Vol. 51, No. 4
September 2022

September is Suicide Prevention Month

Each year in the month of September, mental health advocates, survivors, allies, and community members unite to promote suicide prevention awareness. While suicide can be a difficult topic to discuss, it is so important to do so in combatting suicide as one of the leading causes of death in the United States.

Be aware of the warning signs of suicide: Eight out of 10 people who consider suicide give some warning sign of their intentions.
- Verbal suicide threats such as, “You’d be better off without me.” or “Maybe I won’t be around”
- Expressions of hopelessness and helplessness
- Previous suicide attempts
- Daring or risk-taking behavior
- Personality changes
- Depression
- Giving away prized possessions
- Lack of interest in future plans

Be aware of your resources: Whether you or a loved one is struggling with thoughts of suicide, know that you are not alone and there are resources available!
- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) views suicide as a serious public health concern due to its lasting negative impact on individuals, families, and communities. They have a wealth of informational resources available at www.cdc.gov/suicide.
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can now be reached by anyone in the United States by calling or texting 988. Anyone who needs support for a suicidal, mental health, and/or substance use crisis can access 988. People can also contact 988 if they are concerned about a loved one in crisis. For more information or resources, visit suicidereventionlifeline.org.
- Your Advocate Aurora EAP has resources available on our website at aah.org/eap (or Click Here.) You can also reference this short video about suicide awareness here.

If you find yourself in need of additional resources or supports, please contact AAH EAP at 800.236.3231. We want to help.

References:
http://www.cdc.gov/suicide
https://mhanational.org/conditions/suicide
https://suicidereventionlifeline.org

Q3 2022 Email Promotional Messages