



STRENGTH • BALANCE • HARMONY



SIX MENTAL HEALTH TIPS FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

Health care providers face unique circumstances that can come with many dimensions of stress. Caring for those who are suffering, being a calm presence for families and exposure to illness combined with long, unpredictable workdays can take a mental toll on those who provide care for others. Here are six ways health care providers can think Chickasaw and protect their mental wellness.

1. ENGAGE IN RESTORATIVE ACTIVITIES SUCH AS REGULAR EXERCISE.

Health care providers already know this, but it is still good advice. Physical activity has proven to improve emotional health and well-being. Find time to exercise regularly. Make it a priority. If you have stairs in your facility, take them. Park farther away in the parking lot. Find someone to take a few extra steps with. You will be glad you did and feel better at the same time.

GOOD IDEAS: Name three different things you can do to increase physical activity in your life.

2. SPEND TIME WITH FAMILY, FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES.

People who are burned out start to spend more and more time alone. If you notice this in yourself, apply an intervention and talk to someone you trust. Go out to eat with friends or co-workers. Be sure you do not neglect connecting with people.

THINK IT OVER: Pick one new activity that will help you spend more time with those you care for.

3. MAKE A LIST OF WHAT YOU CAN AND CANNOT CONTROL AT WORK.

With a list created for things you can and cannot control, try to spend less time focusing on what you cannot control. Focusing on what you cannot control leads to stress and hopelessness. Focusing on positive things leads to an improved outcome and well-being.

TALK ABOUT IT: Start with a list of three. If you cannot think of three things, think of two.

4. PROTECT YOUR BOUNDARIES.

Your time off work is your time. Learn to set boundaries and stop writing emails and completing paperwork during YOUR time.

FIND YOUR BALANCE: Think of the things you do at home that are work related and STOP. This is part of your self-protection.

5. PARTICIPATE IN SELF-CARE ACTIVITIES.

Work with others as much as possible and limit the time you work alone. Practice breathing and relaxation techniques such as yoga. Write in a journal. Avoid excessive amounts of caffeine. Allow others to help when possible. Remember, it is OK to take breaks.

CREATE HARMONY: From the ideas above, pick two or three things you can do and be intentional about starting those activities.

6. DEVELOP A BUDDY SYSTEM.

Find a co-worker who can work with you to monitor each other's stress, workload and safety. Health care can be a stressful industry, but you are not in this alone.

WELLNESS STRENGTH: Think of ways you can develop a buddy system.

RESOURCES:

- Tips for Taking Care of Yourself
- Six Tips for Health Care Workers Facing Burnout