

City of Milwaukee Employee Assistance Program

Mental Health During The Summer

- **Get outdoors.** Grab the sun screen, insect repellent, lawn chair and find green space. Being in nature, or even viewing scenes of nature, reduces anger, fear, and stress, and increases pleasant feelings.

Exposure to nature not only makes you feel better emotionally, it contributes to your physical wellbeing by reducing blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension, and the production of stress hormones.

- **Explore local farmer's markets.** A visit to a local farmer's market provides an opportunity to incorporate healthy produce into your diet and get to know your neighbors. Find your local market here: <https://www.discovermilwaukee.com/new-2-mke/2022-milwaukee-area-farmers-markets>
- **Summer music play list.** Music is an easy way to reset your attitude, motivate and boost your mood.
- **Start a garden.** Whether carving out a vegetable plot outside your home or starting a couple of herb containers, watching a garden grow can give you a sense of satisfaction. Not everyone has a green thumb. Keeping a few low maintenance indoor plants (e.g. snake plant, spider plant, Pathos plant) help supply indoor spaces with purified air.
- **Spring/summer cleaning.** The physical space around you does influence mood. Start small with perhaps one

closet, room or desk drawer for decluttering and re-organization. Doing so may increase your sense of calmness and decrease anxiety.

- **Incorporate a new form of exercise.** Try a new exercise. Getting those endorphins flowing can help calm your mind and improve your mood.
- **Plan a getaway, vacation or staycation.** Schedule time to enjoy yourself. Activities can include reading a book at home or traveling to a new place for the day. Your vacation time should be spent unwinding and away from your to-do-lists.
- **Structure for children.** Most kids look forward to their summer breaks. However, some children struggle with the change in routine and structure school days provide.

Create structure through schedules. Work to maintain consistency and balance with wake/bed times, play/fun time, age appropriate chores, and family activities.

- **Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)** is usually associated with winter months. Though less common, it may also occur during the summer. It is believed that the changes in exposure to sunlight may be the cause. The COVID-19 pandemic may have raised the risk of developing SAD due to increased time spent indoors and out of direct sunlight.

Employee Assistance Program



City of Milwaukee EAP

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Work Communication

- **Think before you speak.** We can all think of a situation when a “do-over” would have helped. It is important to respond vs. react when the stakes are high.
- **Know your audience.** To effectively communicate messages, you need to understand your audience and put yourself in their position.

Furthermore, you would not talk to your close friend the same way as you may talk to a customer, manager, or vendor.
- **Active listening.** Avoid assuming and stereotyping others. Keep focus by avoiding thinking about what you are going to say next while the other person is still speaking.
- Ask clarifying questions and summarize to minimize miscommunication. Be sure not to over talk or interrupt before the other person is finished talking.

Be mindful of your non-verbal communication. Understand that your emotions may leak through. Watch for the other person’s non-verbal communication (e.g. gestures and body language).
- **Be concise.** Being succinct when communicating (verbally and written) not only make your message easier to understand but also gets your main points across sooner. Ask yourself how you can present the information as clearly and in as few words as possible.

EAP Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to assist employees who develop behavioral/emotional problems that may directly affect their work performance, and to provide Key Personnel with policy and procedural guidelines for the management of these problems.

City of Milwaukee Wellness Resources

- For information about current Wellness programs and services, visit: www.milwaukee.gov/WYCM
- The City’s Workplace Clinic provides free, convenient, onsite and virtual health care services for employees and spouses regardless of enrollment in the City’s health insurance and dependents (18 mos and older) on the City’s health insurance. Call 414-777-3413 to schedule an in-person or virtual visit.
- The City of Milwaukee Employee Assistance Program web page houses topical information and resources on a wide range of work-life issues. Visit: <https://city.milwaukee.gov/DER/EAP>
- The City of Milwaukee offers a free Care.com membership through Care@Work to employees. A Care.com membership provides unlimited access to a platform employees can use to find and manage care for children, seniors, pets and their home. Visit www.milwaukee.gov/careatwork to learn more.

Tips For Couples

Regularly express appreciation. It’s easy for the little, day to day things to go unnoticed. People feel more valued and willing to contribute when their efforts are recognized.

Ask for it. Don’t wait for your partner to read your mind or guess your needs. A good partner will try to meet your needs when asked.

Self time-outs. Be aware of your emotions and when taking a break from the conversation/situation is needed.

Feedback. Be willing to hear out and receive feedback. Remember, there are three sides to any issue in a relationship: your perspective, your partner’s perspective, and the truth.

Listen and be present. Slow down your need to solve or give advice. Instead, first help your partner feel listened to and understood.

Speak for yourself. Take accountability for your own behaviors and feelings with “I” statements. (e.g. “I feel upset when...”).

Extend an olive branch. Be first to point out your part in a problem or what you will do better/differently moving forward. Often doing so will lower defensiveness and your partner will likely reciprocate by owning up to their part in the problem.

Coping skills. Practice your healthy stress reducing strategies. Avoid taking out your frustrations and stress on your partner.