

City of Milwaukee Employee Assistance Program

Social Media and Mental Health

Social media has become embedded in most all aspects of our modern lives. It impacts how we behave and interact with others. Most people are within three feet of their smartphones. Four out of ten people report checking their social media account(s) before getting dressed or eating breakfast.

Social Media & Addiction

Social media uses algorithms to filter content and connections based on our previous “likes” and user history. When social media gives us what we “like”, our brain’s reward center is activated, much like in other addictions.

- *Have you ever deleted a post because it didn't get many likes?*
- *Do you plan your day according to how much battery life you have?*
- *Do you feel lost and incomplete if your smart phone is not around?*
- *Do you have a problem sleeping or waking up because of “midnight” social media checks?*
- *When you arrive early or find yourself alone in public, is your first instinct to pull out your smart phone?*

Social Media & Anxiety

Fifty-six percent of social media users report chronically checking their social media out of fear that they may be missing a potential connection, event or opportunity. This phe-

nomena is known as **F.O.M.O.** (*fear of missing out*) and is a form of social anxiety, a diagnosable disorder.

Life isn’t always in perfect focus, brilliantly colored and framed just right. Comparing our day-to-day life with everyone else’s “*highlight reel*” may lead to insecurity, poor self worth, envy and jealousy.

Social Media & Harassment Bullying

Twenty-five percent of American adults have been bullied, harassed or threatened online or know someone who has. Younger people (under 35) and females are at greater risk of being targeted.

Social media bullying and harassment is often more pervasive and difficult to stop because the bullying isn’t limited to when the perpetrator is physically near the target. In addition, perpetrators often attack from multiple fake accounts and once posts are made public, they are stored forever.

Unplug To Improve Mental Health

Balance out social media by engaging in activities that demand sustained attention (meditation, painting, building, practicing a hobby). Develop and maintain real, meaningful and personal relationships.

Employee Assistance Program



City of Milwaukee EAP

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Social Media and Mental Health
- Constructive Disagreement
- Quiet Your Mind
- Wellness Resources

EAP Contact Information

200 E. Wells St. #706

Ph. 414-286-3145

Email:

czamora@milwaukee.gov



Constructive Disagreement: Agree to Disagree

There is an art to agreeing to disagree. The tips below can help.

Ask yourself “why” before you speak. What is the point of engaging in this conversation? If the point is to “win” or “score points”, chances are both parties will become defensive and further entrenched in their own belief, a phenomena called the *backfire effect*. Constructive disagreement happens when you enter a conversation with the goal of learning another point of view vs. winning an argument.

The right time and place. Before jumping into a verbal conflict, ask yourself:

- Am I in a public place?
- Do I have the time for this?

- Does the other person seem agitated, upset or overly defensive?
- Am I in the mood for this?

They go first. Allow the other person to share their opinion first. This sends the message that you are interested in their thoughts. Let them speak without interruption. Remember, you can understand a differing opinion without having to accept it or adopt it.

Sandwich the disagreement between two positives. Start your conversation with things you both agree on. End on a positive note with a statement like, “*I see your point(s), but we ultimately differ in opinion.*” This keeps the lines of communication respectful and open to future conversation.

Quiet Your Mind

While there are times we may be physically still, our mind can race with thoughts, plans, and to-do lists. Giving our mind a time-out to relax and recharge is just as important as resting our bodies.

- **Breath.** Use your breathing to find stillness by paying attention to the rhythm in your breathing. Practice slower, deeper breaths. Put your hand on your belly; you should feel it rise and expand as you draw air in and fall as you let it out.
- **Watch aquarium fish swim or a candle flame burn.** Gazing upon rhythmic motions allows our brain to fall into a meditative state and unwind.
- **Pet your pet.** We release stress reducing hormones when we joyfully interact with our animal companions.
- **Go green.** Spending time in nature lowers blood pressure and heart rate.
- **Listen to calming music.** Listening to peaceful music calms the part of our brain called the amygdala, which is the area of our brain that responds to fear.

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

- **Not feeling well?** Visit the [Workplace Clinic](#) (Zeidler Municipal Building) 841 N. Broadway, Milwaukee, WI 53202 for **FREE** onsite health care services. Call [414-777-3413](tel:414-777-3413) or go to www.milwaukee.gov/der/wywm for further information.
- **Free screening, consultation, and education services to prevent and treat potential musculoskeletal injuries.** Schedule an appointment with a physical therapist at the [Injury Prevention Clinic](#). Call [414-777-3413](tel:414-777-3413) or go to www.milwaukee.gov/der/wywm for further information.
- **UnitedHealthCare App** is a UnitedHealthcare (UHC) mobile app that provides instant access to your family’s critical health information, anytime/anywhere. Find a physician, check the status of a claim or speak directly with a healthcare professional. Search for UnitedHealthCare in your app store.