



FAMILY SERVICES
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
Your **Partner** in **Workplace Health**™



Focus on the Fundamentals: Tips for Coping

In these times of financial uncertainty, it might be difficult to find someone who *isn't* stressed. Stress is a normal reaction to current events and a certain amount of it can motivate us to take action. But when stress becomes too great, it's possible to become impaired instead of prepared. The good news is that stress can be managed. This is a time to think clearly and not overreact, and there are some healthy strategies you can use to manage stress.

- **Beware of negativity**—it can be contagious! Instead of assuming a worst-case scenario, it's just as easy to assume that although these are tough times, they will pass. If you are having difficulty reshaping your thinking, take a break from reading and listening to news that promotes fear. Pay attention to what's going on—but don't react to everything you hear.
- **Don't make rash decisions.** Now more than ever think about the consequences of your actions—whether they concern your finances or your personal relationships. Anxiety contributes to poor decision making. Take time and think through what you do.
- **Take care of yourself.** It's important to get enough sleep, eat a healthy diet, and get exercise. You want to avoid illness that could be provoked by stress. In addition, exercise and relaxation techniques like deep breathing and meditation will help you reduce stress and anxiety.
- **Use your social support network.** Spend time with people you care about and who care about you. Choose people you trust and share your feelings with them. Brainstorm and share information with others about effective ways to cope.
- **Focus on the present.** Of course we all think about what the future will bring, but preoccupation with the future right now is not constructive. Put your energy into those things that are under your control.
- **Be honest with people in your life about your emotional needs.** Good communication will keep your personal and work relationships healthy.
- **Protect your children from feeling your anxiety.** Young children in particular will have no understanding of the financial situation and may become unnecessarily fearful. Reassure when appropriate, discuss news calmly and critically with older children, and avoid keeping the news on during family time.