

Employee Assistance Program

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Resilience Building Series

Resiliency is our ability to bounce back from adversity. During these uncertain times, it is important to actively work towards being more resilient by learning to thrive within the stress. It is important to be conscious of how you are feeling, to be compassionate with yourself, and to be aware of how you have been impacted by COVID-19. Below are mini-exercises for 6 skills of being happy and building resiliency: mindfulness, human connection, gratitude, positive outlook, purpose, and generosity.

Week 1: Mindfulness

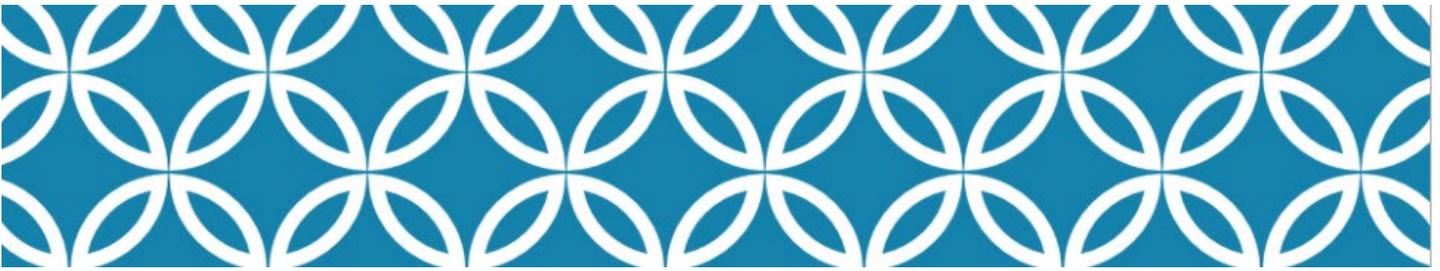
Resources:

- Video: [7 Proven Benefits of Practicing Mindfulness](#)
- Article: [The Surprising Reason Mindfulness Makes You Happier](#)

Exercises:

- Activity:
 - Practice mindfulness, you can use an app like *Calm*, *Headspace* or *MyLife Meditation* (which are free) or a YouTube mindfulness video.
 - Has your awareness of your emotions or current feelings changed? If so, how so?
 - There are different forms of mindfulness such as mindfully eating, body scan, mindfulness to help sleep, etc.
- Questions:
 - How was the experience of practicing mindfulness?
 - What other areas of your life might benefit from practicing mindfulness?
 - How can the act of being present in the moment help with this odd and stressful time?





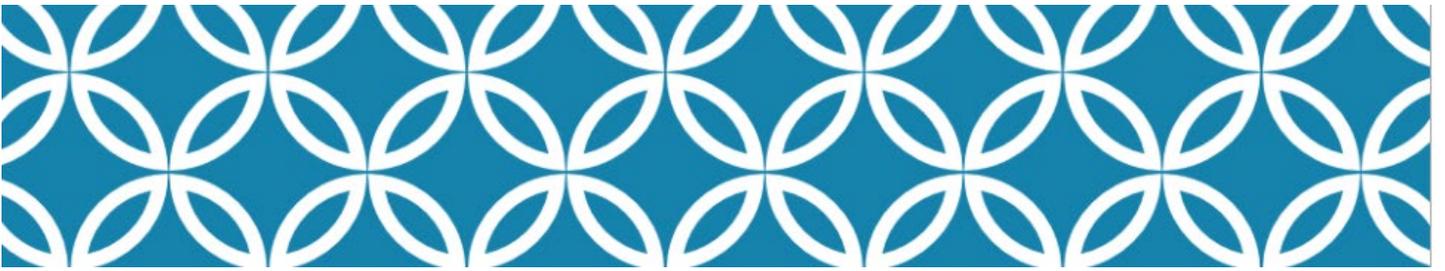
Week 2: Human Connection

Resources:

- Video: [The Power of Connection](#)
- Article: [Social Connection in a Time of Social Distancing](#)

Exercises:

- Activity:
 - Make some time to connect with someone in your life. You can video chat or give them a call.
- Questions:
 - How have you connected with your work team during this time? Is it effective? Do you need to make some changes?
 - How have you connected with others in your life?



Week 3: Gratitude

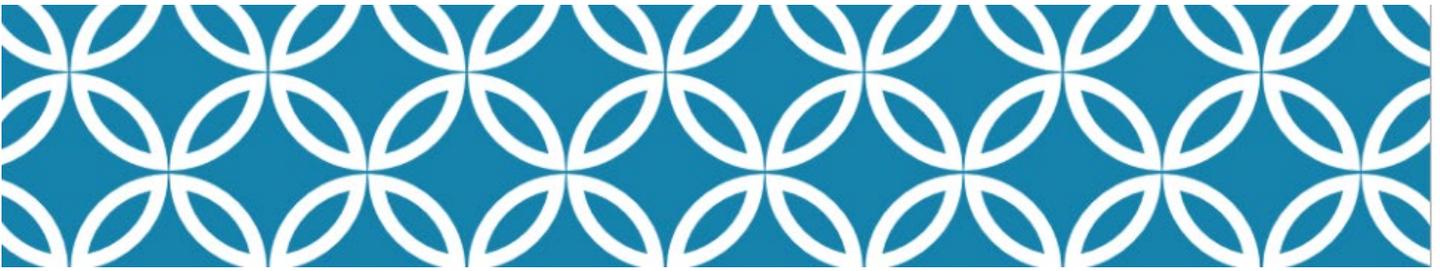
Resources:

- Short Video: [The Gratitude Experiment](#)
- Article: [7 Scientifically Proven Benefits of Gratitude](#)

Exercises:

- Activity
 - Keep a gratitude journal where you write three things you are grateful for every day.
 - Alternatively try an app such as *Gratitude Happiness Journal* or *Grateful: A Gratitude Journal*. These apps are free and guide you by prompting gratitude based questions.
 - If you want to challenge yourself, express your gratitude to an individual (i.e. verbally, through text or email).
 - Have you noticed a change in your happiness after doing this for at least two weeks?
- Questions:
 - Are you grateful for a co-worker helping you with a project? (Tell them or write a thank you email!)
 - Are there things you can be grateful for during this pandemic?





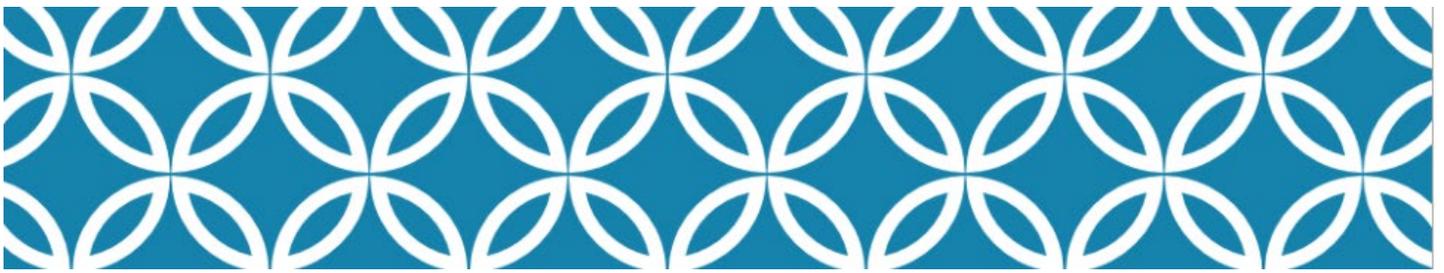
Week 4: Positive Outlook

Resource:

- Video: [The Incredible Power of a Reframe](#)
- Article: [Positive thinking: Stop negative self-talk to reduce stress](#)

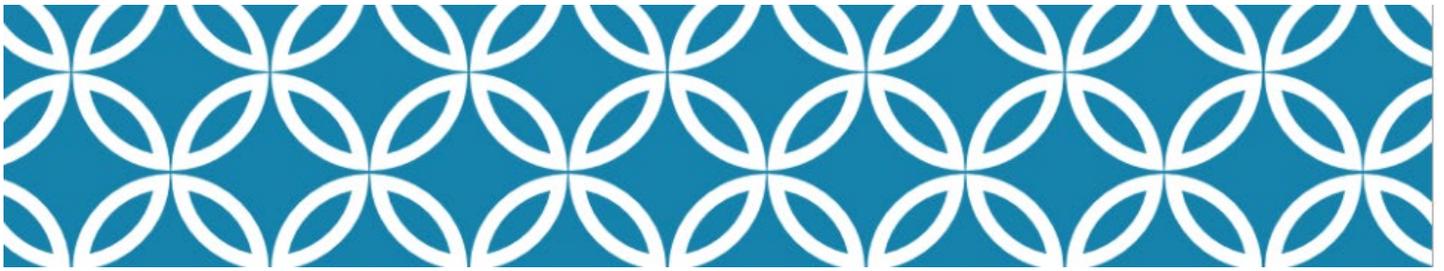
Exercises:

- Activity:
 - Identify the negative things that are currently occurring in your life. Now find ways to positively re-frame those things.
 - Take a look at the following positive reframe document. Can you think of a negative frame you say about yourself that you can positively reframe? Is there a negative frame you believe about someone else, and how might you positively reframe that?
 - How does it feel to positively reframe something you might ordinarily view as a negative?
 - How is positively reframing different than ignoring or covering up a challenge?
- Questions:
 - How have you grown or what have you learned from a negative experience?
 - What positive outlook can you find in this significant change that COVID-19 has caused in your life? How can you improve your current narrative? (e.g., are you able to spend more time with your kids, are you effectively working from home, etc.)



Positive Reframe

Negative Frame	Positive Frame
Bossy	Good Director, Natural Leader
Clingy	Affectionate
Compulsive	Efficient, Attention to Detail
Conceited	Confident, Values Self
Crabby	Communicates Needs
Dawdles	Easy Going, Mindful
Defiant	Strong Beliefs, Courageous
Demanding	Assertive
Dependent	Connected
Doodles	Creative
Dramatic	Emotionally Aware, Expressive
Fearful	Thoughtful, Careful
Finicky Eater	Future Gourmet, Discriminating Tastes
Foolish	Fun Loving
Fussy About Foods/Clothes	Specific Tastes, Strong Sense of Self
Goofy	Joyful, Entertaining
Impulsive	Spontaneous
Loud	Exuberant, Confident
Manipulative	Gets Own Needs Met
Mean	Power-Seeking
Messy	Practicing Skills, Learning
Mouthy	Expressive
Naughty	Independent, Exploring Boundaries
Nosey	Curious, Inquisitive
Not Focusing	Processing Various Information
Quiet	Thoughtful, Reflective
Rigid	High Sense of Order
Shy	Inner Directed, Values Trust
Silly	Good Sense of Humor
Sneaky	Inventive, Creative
Spoiled	Needs Clear Boundaries, Loved
Stubborn	Determined, Persistent
Talkative	Good Communicator
Talks-Back	Courageous, Honest
Tattletale	Seeks Justice
Timid	Careful
Wants Attention	Speaks Out Needs



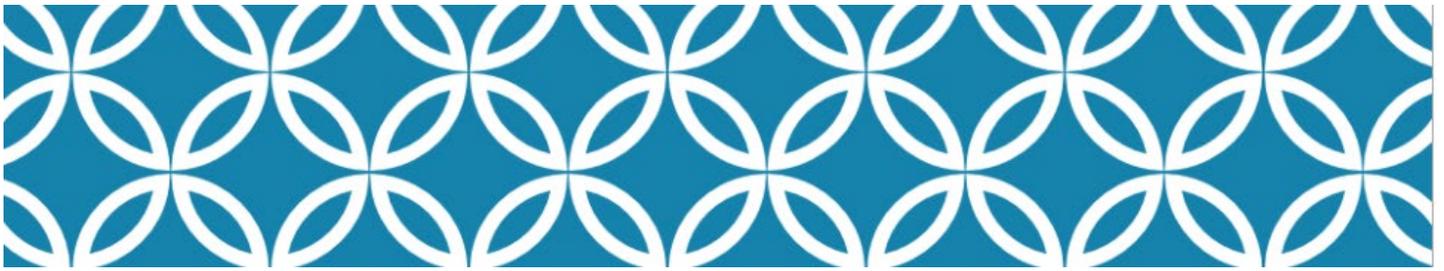
Week 5: Purpose

Resources:

- Video: [There's more to life than being happy](#)
- Article: [Why Is Life Purpose Important?](#)

Exercises:

- Activity:
 - Journal about your purpose. Without setting limitations, what do you hope for your future? What would you do even if you didn't get paid to do it?
- Questions:
 - What are you good at doing or enjoy doing in your life? How about in your current work role?
 - What are the highest priorities for your life and how does your work fit into them?
 - How is your work today getting you closer to what you want for yourself? If you do not find purpose in your work, how do you connect to that purpose outside of work?
 - When you have experienced difficulty in the past, have you ever come to find that it served or influenced your purpose later down the road?



Week 6: Generosity

Resources:

- Video: [Generosity and Giving: The Secret Ingredient to Happiness and Longevity](#)
- Article: [5 Ways Giving Is Good for You](#)

Exercises:

- Activity:
 - Consider someone in your life today who would benefit from your generosity. How can you demonstrate generosity to that person today or this week?
 - There are many creative ways to give back to our community or your loved ones (e.g., help an elderly person get groceries, mow a lawn, etc.)
 - How did that make you feel?
- Questions:
 - What are non-monetary ways someone can be generous?
 - How would you like to grow in being generous to others?
 - What ways can someone be generous during this pandemic? What impact can generosity have during this pandemic?

If you have any questions, concerns, or want to further explore a topic, feel free to reach out to the City of Madison EAP at 266-6561.