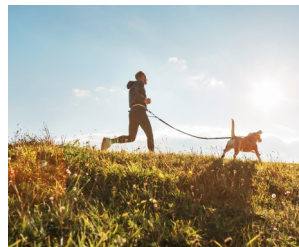




BHS A.S.S.I.S.T. Spotlight

January 2025

Your EAP is a free and confidential service, which provides assessment and short-term counseling for a variety of mental health, substance abuse and work/life related issues. To learn more about your available benefits, contact your BHS Care Coordinator at 800.245.1150.



Caring for Your Mental Health

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Caring for Your Mental Health

Mental health includes emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. It affects how people think, feel, act, make choices and relate to others. Mental health is more than the absence of a mental illness—it's essential to your overall health and quality of life.

Self-care can play a role in maintaining your mental health and help support your treatment and recovery if you have a mental illness. Here are some tips to help you get started with self-care:

Get regular exercise. Small amounts of exercise add up, so don't be discouraged if you can't do 30 minutes at one time.

Make sleep a priority. Stick to a schedule, and make sure you're getting enough sleep.

Try a relaxing activity. Explore relaxation or wellness programs or apps, which may incorporate meditation, muscle relaxation or breathing exercises.

Practice gratitude. Remind yourself daily of things you are grateful for. Be specific. Write them down at night, or replay them in your mind.

Self-care looks different for everyone, and it is important to find what you need and enjoy. It may take trial and error to find what works for you. Seek professional help if you are experiencing severe or distressing symptoms that have lasted two weeks or more, such as:

- Difficulty sleeping
- Appetite changes resulting in unwanted weight changes
- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of interest in things you usually find enjoyable
- Inability to perform usual daily functions and responsibilities

Don't wait until your symptoms are overwhelming. Talk about your concerns with your primary care provider, who can refer you to a mental health specialist if needed.

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides free and confidential assessment and counseling services. BHS is available by calling or visiting www.behavioralhealthsystems.com or calling 800-245-1150.



Embrace Diversity at Work

Most of the guidance on building diversity in the workplace is aimed at organizational leaders and managers, but employees can play an important role too. You may not control the hiring process, but your words and behavior contribute to your organization's culture. Every individual helps to make an organization more welcoming to people with different backgrounds and perspectives.

Seek out new perspectives and ideas. When you're facing a tough problem or a new challenge, expand the group you work with to include people with different perspectives. It's a given that you'd include people with different areas of professional expertise on a complex project. However, you'll get better results if you take it further to include people with different personal perspectives and life experiences—because of their race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation and other characteristics.

Expand your network. Take a look at your professional network: the people you connect with for ideas, advice, skill development and help with career planning. Make an effort to expand your network to be more diverse. The more you reach out to and connect with people of different backgrounds and perspectives, the stronger your network will be.

Recognize the varied strengths in others. It's natural to judge others by the metrics you use on yourself, but consider the value of linking with people who have different skills and talents. Look for the strengths in others, especially people you might be inclined to dismiss because of their appearance, communication style or other differences.

Treat others as they wish to be treated. You're familiar with the golden rule: Treat others as you'd want them to treat you. That's a good rule to live by, but in a diverse work environment, you'll want to be even more thoughtful and treat others as they want to be treated. A statement or action you're comfortable with might be offensive to someone else.

Show your support. Notice and praise the accomplishments of people at work who aren't getting the recognition they deserve, perhaps because of unacknowledged biases. Be the person who engages with, welcomes and includes people of different backgrounds and perspectives.

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is here to help. Access your benefits by calling 800-245-1150 or by visiting www.behavioralhealthsystems.com.



Importance of Being Socially Healthy

Good and positive social skills are a learned behavior with practice. Before you can start improving your social wellness, you need to look after yourself. Eating a healthy diet, exercising, sleeping and removing negative behaviors are all ways to nurture your wellbeing; then you can look toward building social interactions. Note that even the most confident people can feel scared, nervous and intimidated when in new social situations and making new friends. Engage with small talk, using easy topics, carefully listening to their responses to identify any areas of common interest.

Additionally, not everyone desires close friendships; some people prefer to have a wide social network of low-key friendships throughout their lives. This can be achieved by joining a community group or an exercise group, where these interactions can also improve your social health.

Once you've built relationships, you need to make an effort to nurture and maintain them. People do lose relationships and friendships when they don't keep in contact. Over time, some may fade out if neither party works at them or commits to them. Hence, make a commitment to them and keep it. Your friend won't feel valued if you keep canceling and making up an excuse for not going.

Criticism and blame can be another factor that causes a friendship breakup. If you have a disagreement or conflict, talk out the issue without blame, anger or criticism. Similarly, listening is an area that needs to be focused on, as everyone wants to feel they are being heard. Sometimes, relationship fatigue can occur, resulting in yourself tuning out the other person. Be mindful of this: Try to actively listen, respond appropriately, and avoid interrupting others while they are speaking.

RECIPE: Orange & Blueberry Bircher • 5 minutes plus overnight chilling

Ingredients • 2.5 oz porridge oats • 2 tbsp golden linseeds • zest of ½ an orange • ¾ of a 6 oz tub yogurt • 2 peeled and chopped oranges • 4 handfuls blueberries

Instructions • Mix 2.5 oz oats and 2 tbsp golden linseeds with the zest of 1 /2 an orange. • Pour over 10 oz boiling water and leave overnight. • The next day, stir in three-quarters of a 6 oz tub of yogurt, spoon into glasses or bowls, top with 2 peeled and chopped oranges, the remaining yogurt and 4 handfuls blueberries from a 6 oz pack.

