Suggestions for Sustaining Resilience during the COVID-19 Response

Emergency service and healthcare professionals bring high levels of commitment and dedication to their work. The COVID-19 pandemic is placing extraordinary demands to adapt, rapidly shift standard operating procedure and remain psychologically resilient. The following suggestions are offered to cope with the stressors of the Pandemic response.

Resilience building tips:

- Know your personal signs of stress and monitor yourself. now when you need to take action to reduce stress!
- Be careful of your own expectations of yourself…remember that you are human
- Pace yourself… take breaks to be able to function at your best
- Focus on the people you are helping rather that what is not being done. Remind yourself and your team that you are making a significant contribution to the community
- Use humor to reduce the stress when it is appropriate to do so.
- Get physical exercise as you can. It helps mood and can promote sleep
- Practice mindfulness to be focused in the present
- Practice stress reduction techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, yoga, etc. every day.
- Eat and drink nutritiously and avoid excessive junk food, caffeine, alcohol, or tobacco.
- Get adequate sleep and rest.
- Limit exposure to media coverage when off shift…try to have a mental break when not working.
- Maintain Contact with your family/ friends on a regular basis.
- Use time off duty to recharge and connect with people who support you. Do things that you enjoy when you can to have more balance
- Have a buddy system with a peer as a source of support…talk it out at the end of each shift
- Write it out…keep a journal to express your reactions experience at the end of each shift.
- Be aware and avoid unhealthy coping strategies such as excessive alcohol or other substance use, complete withdrawal, or excessive risk taking
- Use peer support teams…they are there for you!
- Use professional support as needed. It is a strength to get help when you need it!

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