

**Navigating the  
New Normal:**

**Promoting  
Positive Mental  
Health &  
Resilience  
During  
Challenging  
Times**



**Joyce Marter**



# Handouts



# Stressors of the Pandemic

- Concerns for health & safety of self & loved ones
- Adjustments to working remotely and differently for essential workers
- Sheltering in place with loved ones
- Loneliness and isolation
- Dependent care—new demands such as homeschooling



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# Stressors of COVID-19

- Less social support
- Financial fears & stress—unemployment
- Racial injustice issues coming to the forefront
- Political divide and unrest
- Challenges managing uncertainty and change
- Reentry



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# Reintegration Challenges

- Change, transition & uncertainty are stressful
- Health anxiety
- Social anxiety
- Dependent care coverage
- Financial stress (helping loved ones)
- Workload
- Workplace safety protocols





# Poll #1: Challenges

Which are your biggest challenges about navigating the new normal? (multiple choice)

- 1) Health concerns
- 2) Logistical/lifestyle adjustments, work-life balance
- 3) Difficulty managing uncertainty, transition and change
- 4) Dependent care
- 5) Financial stress



# Mental Health Implications

- Feelings of grief and loss
- Increase in stress, anxiety and depression
- Increase in substance abuse
- Relationship conflict, abuse, violence
- PTSD/Trauma
- Increase in suicide



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# Early Detection of Mental Illness

- Excessive worrying or fear
- Feeling excessively sad or low
- Confused thinking or problems concentrating/learning
- Extreme mood changes, including uncontrollable “highs” or feelings of euphoria
- Prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger
- Avoiding friends and social activities
- Difficulties understanding/relating to other people
- Changes in sleeping habits or feeling tired

# Early Detection of Mental Illness

- Changes in eating habits
- Difficulty perceiving reality
- Inability to perceive changes in one's own feelings, behavior or personality (lack of insight)
- Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes (such as headaches, stomach aches, vague and ongoing "aches and pains")
- Inability to carry out daily activities or handle daily problems and stress
- An intense fear of weight gain or concern with appearance



# Signs & Symptoms of Stress

- Physical
- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Relational





# Internal Sources of Stress

- Unrealistic expectations
- Negative attitudes and feelings
- Self-sabotaging behaviors
- Poor self-care habits

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# What is Stress? What is Burnout?

- Stress is the body's physical and psychological response to anything perceived as overwhelming
- Burnout is a state of emotional and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress



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# Symptoms of Burnout

## Feelings of:

- Powerlessness
- Hopelessness
- Detachment
- Isolation
- Irritability
- Frustration
- Failure

## Decrease in:

- Despair
- Cynicism
- Apathy
- Emotional exhaustion

- Self-esteem
- Concentration
- Memory

## Increase in:

- Errors
- Absenteeism
- Hypochondria
- Sleep disruption



# Mental Health Continuum

**In Crisis**

Very anxious  
Very low mod  
Absenteeism  
Exhausted  
Very poor sleep  
Weight loss

**Struggling**

Anxious  
Depressed  
Tired  
Poor  
performance  
Poor sleep  
Poor appetite

**Surviving**

Worried  
Nervous  
Irritable  
Sad  
Trouble Sleeping  
Distracted  
Withdrawn

**Thriving**

Positive  
Clam  
Performing  
Sleeping Well  
Eating normally  
Normal social  
activity

**Excelling**

Cheerful  
Joyful  
Energetic  
High  
performance  
Flow  
Fully realizing  
potential

# Acceptance

**If you don't like  
something,  
change it.  
If you can't  
change it, change  
your attitude.**

MAYA ANGELOU



# Control what you can, let go of the rest

## What you can control:

- Your own thoughts
- Your own emotions
- Your own behaviors
- Your own choices

## What you can't control:

- Other people's thoughts
- Other people's emotions
- Other people's behaviors
- Other people's choices
- Outcome
- COVID-19
- What else?



# Mental Health Tips

- Prioritize your mental health & wellbeing
- Create structure to your day
- Take a break from the news
- Take time for mindfulness practices



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# Overview of Mindfulness

- Maintain a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment
- Pay attention to our thoughts and feelings without judging them
- Sense in the present moment
- Can be practiced anywhere, anytime



Source: <http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/mindfulness/definition>



# Mindfulness in the Workplace

- GOOGLE
- NIKE
- ACCENTURE
- SONY
- LOREAL
- BRITISH AIRWAYS
- NOKIA
- MICROSOFT
- AMERICAN EXPRESS
- JOHNSON & JOHNSON

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# Benefits of Mindfulness

- Enhances relationships
- Improves job performance
- Reduces chronic pain
- Increases focus and attention, and improves decision-making skills
- Improves creativity, memory, and cognitive flexibility
- Improves mood, empathy, and overall quality of life
- Boosts immune system

Source: Glomb, T. M, Duffy, M. K, Bono, J. E., & Yang, T. (2012). Mindfulness at work. Research in Personnel and Human Resource Management, 30, 115-157.

Int J Yoga. 2015 Jul-Dec; 8(2): 128-133. Effectiveness of mindfulness meditation on pain and quality of life of patients with chronic low back pain

# Benefits of Mindfulness

Cont.

- Decreases anxiety, stress, depression, tiredness, and irritability
- Increases emotional intelligence
- Encourages healthier eating habits
- Improves heart and circulatory health
- Aids in recovery from substance use
- Improves sleep
- Increases financial well-being

Source: <http://www.mindwork.co/what-is-workplace-mindfulness/the-research-on-mindfulness>, <https://www.helpguide.org/harvard/benefits-of-mindfulness.htm>, [http://www.mindfulnet.org/Building-the-Case-for-mindfulness-in-the-workplace\\_v1.1\\_Oct16\\_Full\\_doc.pdf](http://www.mindfulnet.org/Building-the-Case-for-mindfulness-in-the-workplace_v1.1_Oct16_Full_doc.pdf)

# Strategies for Increasing Mindfulness

- Progressive muscle relaxation
  - Body scan
- Unplugging from technology
  - Positive mantra
- Listening & using your senses
  - Connection to nature
- Mindful eating & spending
  - Meditation
- Yoga
  - Morning routine
- Breathing



# Poll #2: Mindfulness

How often do you meditate or practice mindfulness?  
(single choice)

- 1) Almost never
- 2) Occasionally
- 3) Regularly
- 4) Daily





# The disease of being busy & multi-tasking

- Hampers Creativity
- Decreases Quality
- Drains Energy
- Shrinks Brain
- Reduces Wellbeing
- Reduces Efficiency
- Kills Prioritization

Taken from Stanford University “Cognitive Control in Media Multi-Taskers” Study



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# Mindful Workplace Exercises

- Start your day with a mindful moment and plan for mindful breaks
- Slow down to increase your productivity
- Switch off distractions
- Be a single-tasker
- Pay attention to your coworkers

Source: <https://hbr.org/2016/03/how-to-practice-mindfulness-throughout-your-work-day>, <http://www.mindful.org/10-ways-mindful-work/>

**A man is but the  
product of his  
thoughts...what  
he thinks,  
he becomes.**

MOHANDAS GANDHI





# Keep Your Thinking Positive

- Turn down volume of your inner critic
- Detach from fear
- Avoid catastrophic thinking
- Practice the power of affirmations and mantra



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# Practice Gratitude

**He is a wise man  
who does not  
grieve for the  
things which he  
has not, but  
rejoices for those  
which he has.**

EPICTETUS



# Detachment

**Feelings are  
waves of energy  
which we can  
choose to surf,  
rather than  
allowing them to  
overcome us.**

ARLENE ENGLANDER





# Detach From:

- Your own negative emotions like fear, anxiety, anger and sadness
- The negative emotions of others
- Expectations
- Outcome (embrace uncertainty)



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# Detachment Strategies

- Visualization of protective barrier
- Lifeguard analogy
- Unhook from conflict
- Drop your end of the rope
- Do the next right thing
- Zoom out for greater perspective





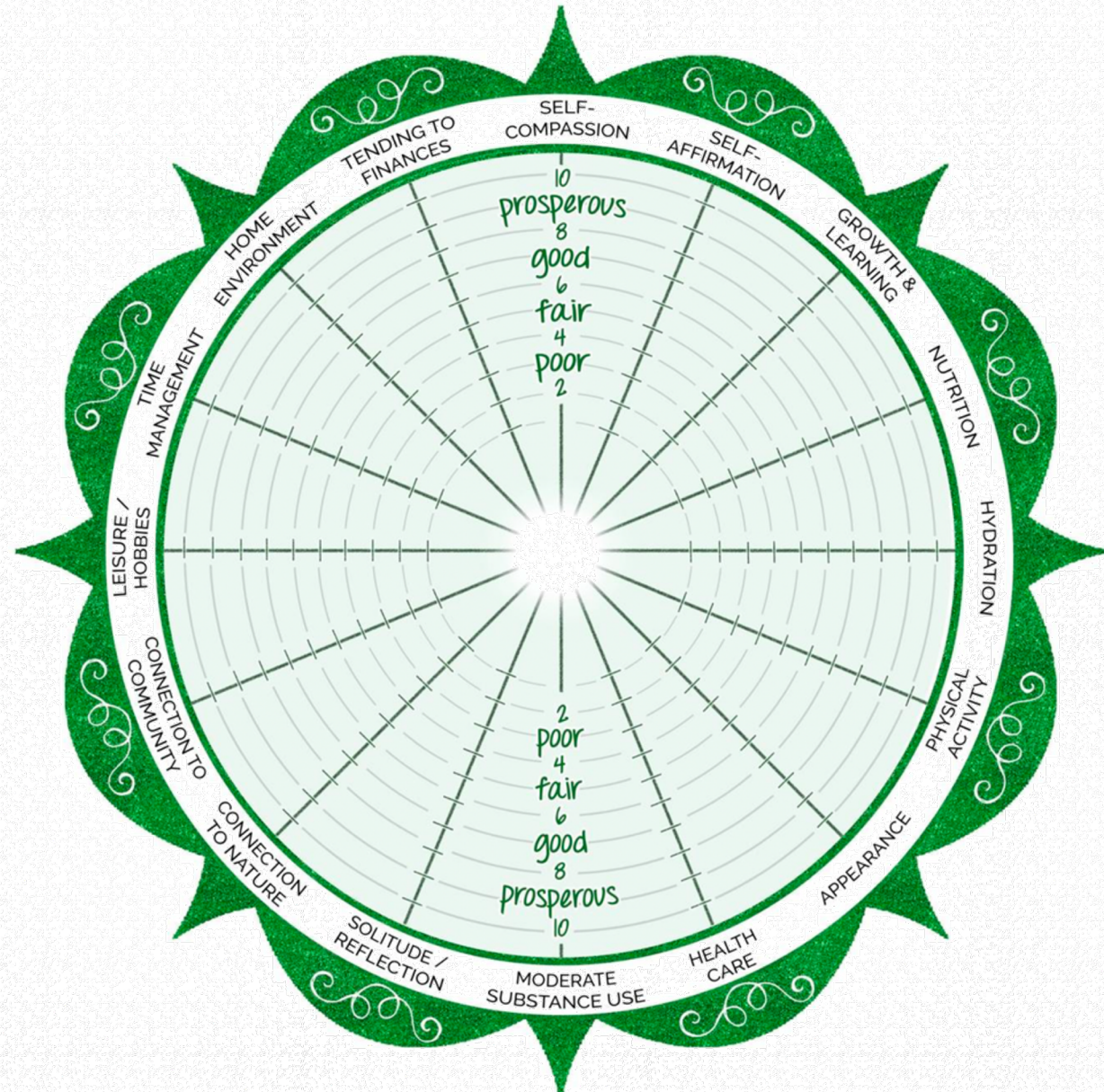
# Prioritize Your Own Well-Being

- Practice self-care
- Set healthy limits and boundaries with assertive communication



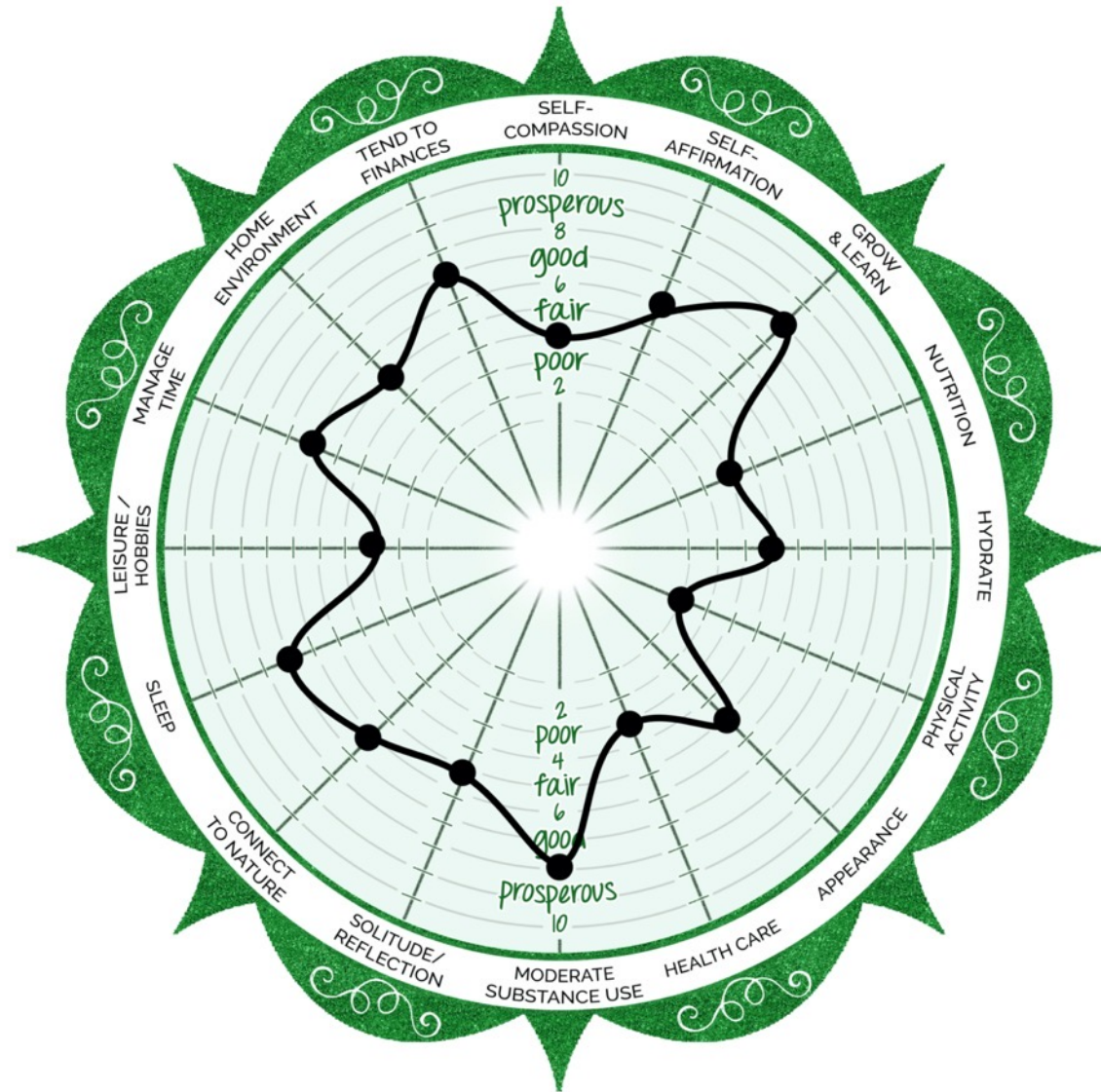
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# Self-Care Wheel





# Sample Completed Self-Care Wheel



# Poll #3: Self-Care

What are you going to improve on for better self-care? (multiple choice)

- 1) Nutrition
- 2) Exercise
- 3) Sleep
- 4) Leisure/hobbies
- 5) Self-compassion
- 6) Unplugging from technology





Support

**Alone we can  
do so little,  
together we can  
do so much.**

HELEN KELLER



# Barriers to Accessing Support

- Fear (difficulty trusting)
- Pride
- Shame or stigma
- Guilt
- Fear of imposition
- Low self-esteem, not feeling deserving
- Learned helplessness
- Hopelessness
- Loss of power and control (ego)
- Loss of credit (ego)
- Early life messages
- Expense
- Introversion or shyness

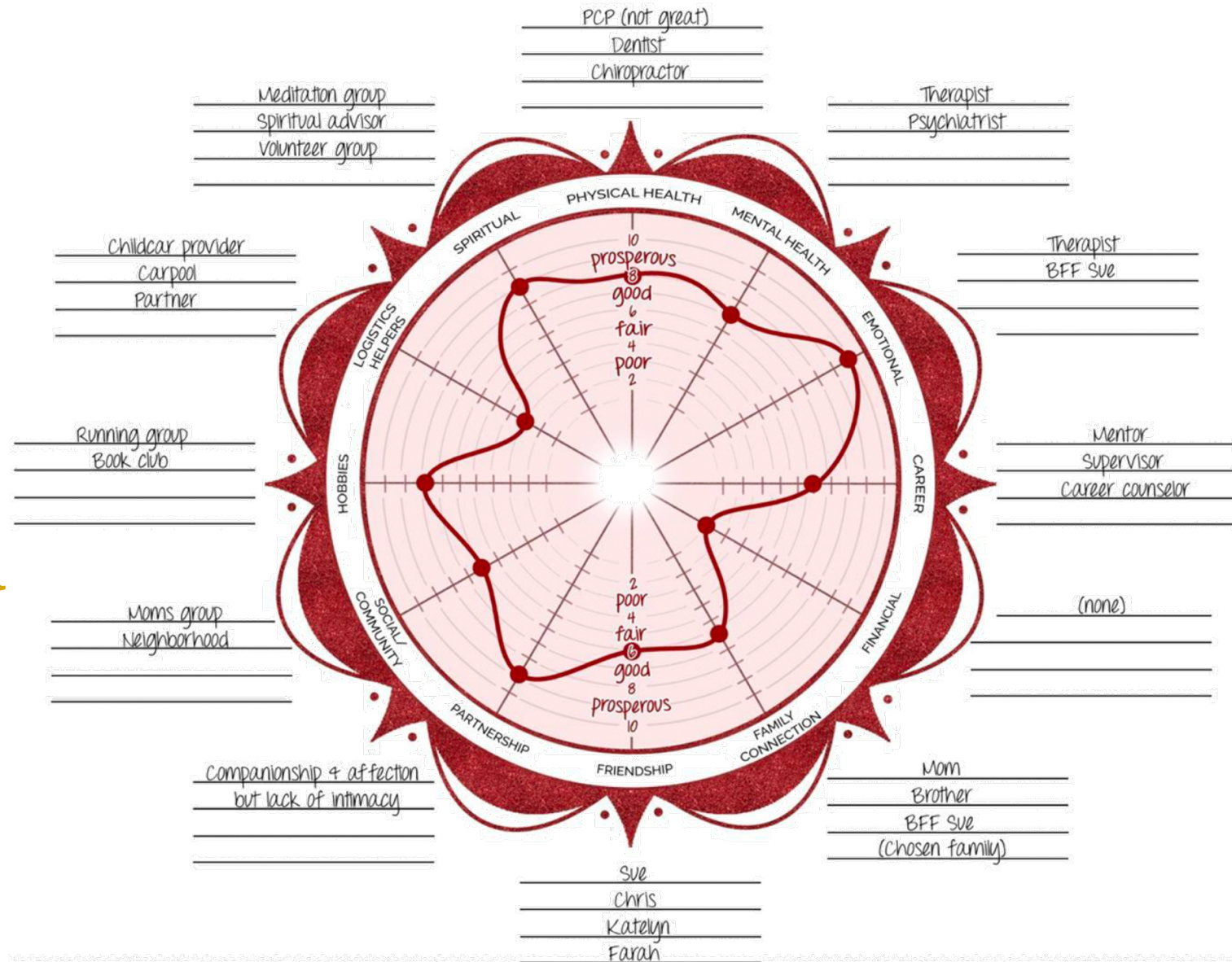
# Support Network Wheel

The Support Network Wheel is a circular diagram with 12 segments, each representing a different area of life. The segments are labeled around the perimeter: PHYSICAL HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, EMOTIONAL, CAREER, FINANCIAL, FAMILY CONNECTION, FRIENDSHIP, PARTNERSHIP, SOCIAL/COMMUNITY, HOBBIES, LOGISTICS HELPERS, and SPIRITUAL. Each segment has a radial scale from 2 to 10, with handwritten status labels: 'prosperous' at 10, 'good' at 8, 'fair' at 6, and 'poor' at 2. The wheel is surrounded by 12 sets of horizontal lines for notes, with 3 lines per segment. The wheel itself has a red, flower-like border.

Segment	10	8	6	4	2
PHYSICAL HEALTH	prosperous	good	fair	poor	
MENTAL HEALTH					
EMOTIONAL					
CAREER					
FINANCIAL					
FAMILY CONNECTION					
FRIENDSHIP					
PARTNERSHIP					
SOCIAL/COMMUNITY					
HOBBIES					
LOGISTICS HELPERS					
SPIRITUAL					



# Sample Support Network Wheel





# Poll #4: Support

Which kinds of support do you need more of? (multiple choice)

- a) Emotional
- b) Professional
- c) Community
- d) Family/friends
- e) Spiritual



# Access Support

- Avoid isolating with your feelings
- Connect with loved ones
- Ask for what you need
- Participate in online communities
- Utilize teletherapy



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# Resilience

**Life will give you  
whatever experience  
is most helpful  
for the evolution of  
your consciousness.**

**ECKHART TOLLE**





# Mindfulness as Resilience Training







# Key Components to Building Resilience

- Prioritize your mental health & wellbeing
- Seek and give support
- Strive for work/life balance
- Engage fully in life; don't isolate yourself
- Develop a sense of purpose/meaning in life

**We are in this together!**



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# Resilient People

- Understand that challenges are a part of life
- Promote health and wellbeing
- Enjoy connection & collaboration
- Are open, flexible and adaptive
- Are emotionally intelligent
- View challenges as opportunities
- Learn from mistakes
- Avoid worrying
- Have a sense of humor even when stressed





# Utilize Your Benefits:

- Vacation
- Flex Spending/Health Savings Accounts
- Sick benefits & FMLA for time as needed
- Insurance Benefits (Mental Health Parity Law)

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# Utilize Your Benefits:

- Whil
- Talkspace
  - 24/7, text, video, audio
  - Therapy and psychiatry (12 per year)
- Community Mental Health Providers
  - Quantum Health
- See 2021 Benefit Enrollment Guide and the Digital Commons for more information

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# EAP Services

- LifeMatters EAP
- 8 free sessions per issue, per year
- Immediate family members also eligible
- Counseling for stress, mental health, substance abuse, relationship issues, etc.
- Resources to alleviate stressors
- Childcare & Eldercare
- Legal & Financial
- Educational resources







# Meditation Resources

- [Calm: 30 Days Free](#)
- [Headspace: Free Trial](#)
- [Jack Kornfield: Compassion in the Time of Coronavirus](#)
- [Eckhart Tolle](#)
- [Jon Kabat-Zinn](#)
- [Tara Brach](#)

# What are you going to do now?

<b>KEEP</b> <b>(doing)</b>	<b>START</b> <b>(doing)</b>	<b>STOP</b> <b>(doing)</b>

# Poll #5: Outcome

What are you going to do differently based on this presentation? (multiple choice)

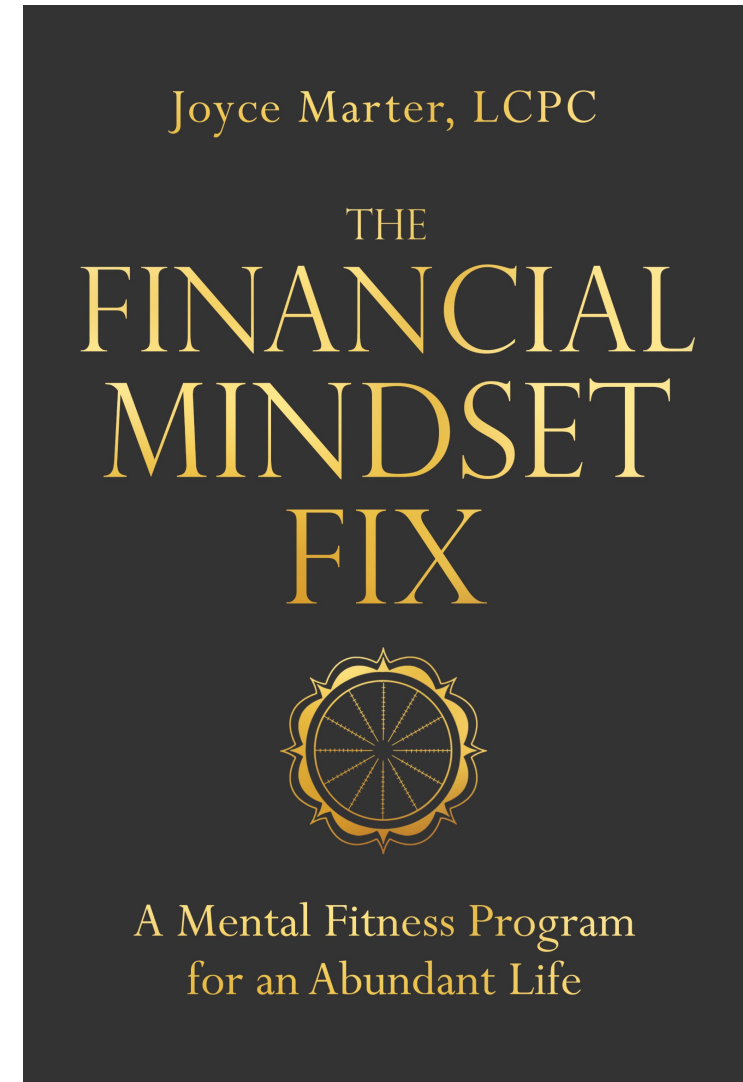
- 1) Practice better self-care
- 2) Practice mindfulness
- 3) Access Support
- 4) Contact the EAP/Seek counseling
- 5) Recommend counseling to somebody





# Upcoming Resource

- Published by [Sounds True](#)
- Available for pre-order
- Available in bookstores July 27th
- Mental Health & Financial Health Corporate Wellness Program



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