



A Newsletter for Employees | Spring 2024
By the Sutter Health Employee Assistance Program

EAP Connections

Mental Health Awareness

A recent study by Mental Health America (MHA) found that about 21% of adults in the United States — or roughly 50 million people—suffer from a mental illness.

May is Mental Health Month, a time to speak openly about the prevalence of behavioral health issues and raise awareness about their wide-ranging impact.

What is Mental Illness?

Mental illnesses include different conditions ranging from mild to severe, including depression, anxiety and substance use disorder. Mental illness may be inherited or come on due to external pressures. It can be acute — lasting a limited amount of time — or chronic.

Getting Help

- Sutter EAP offers many resources online to help with mental health challenges. You can also speak, confidentially, to a licensed therapist. Call 800-477-2258 or visit sutterhealth.org/eap.
- Visit Mental Health America for more information and a toolkit you can use to spread awareness about Mental Health Month: mhanational.org.

In crisis? Help is available! Call or text 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org. You can also reach the Crisis Text Line by texting HELLO to 741741.

External Pressures

Personal stressors — from parenting to managing finances — can feel overwhelming at times, as can things like politics. These external pressures can impact your mental well-being more than you realize. According to MHA, there are four outside pressures likely affecting your mental health:

Current events

Constant exposure to worldwide, violent events and crises.

Social drivers

Worries about finances, education or transportation.

Loneliness

Studies show loneliness increases the risk of developing anxiety and depression.

Technology

Regular exposure to bad news and combative politics can contribute to anxiety.

Dealing with Change

Big life changes — whether at work or at home — can have a major impact on your overall well-being. In this fast-paced, rapidly-changing world, sometimes it may feel hard to adapt and keep up.



Scan for video.

In the webinar [Moving Beyond Burnout, Navigating Change](#), Anna Morgado, LMFT, a psychotherapist for Sutter Health, says that because change can be uncomfortable and uncertain, it triggers your survival mode.

“Your brain defaults to feeling unsafe as if you’re in physical danger, and you may feel overwhelmed or out of control of the situation,” she shares. “Using coping strategies and building your resilience can make change a little easier to deal with.”

Tips for coping with change at work and in your personal life:

- **Be prepared.** If you know change is coming, do some prep work. Create a list of goals that may benefit you in the long term. This could include working with a mentor or learning new skills or technologies.
- **Shift your mindset.** Focus on the positives of the change rather than the negatives. Remind yourself of past changes you’ve faced that had positive results. Focus on what you can control and let go of the rest.

- **Don’t forget to breathe.** Box breathing can help when you’re feeling stressed.

Breathe in for 4 seconds.

Hold for 4 seconds.

Breathe out for 4 seconds.

Hold for 4 seconds.

This technique works by distracting your mind as you count, calming your nervous system and tension in your body.

- **Establish or maintain a routine.** When things change around you, you may find some peace in stability and structure. Routines give you an anchor — a reminder that some things are still the same, and it gives your brain a little bit of comfort and rest.
- **Seek social support.** Whether it be from coworkers, friends or family, connect with supportive people in your life — at work and at home.
- **Focus on yourself.** Make time to check in with yourself and practice self-care however you prefer, whether it be a walk with friends, warm bath, rest or exercise.
- **Know when to seek help.** If feelings of stress or overwhelm impair your ability to function regularly with your daily tasks, speak to your doctor.

What is the EAP?

Sutter Health EAP provides referrals to licensed therapists who can help with personal problems that may impact your job, relationships or overall well-being. EAP is:

- Confidential.
- Open to all employees and eligible family members.
- No charge to you.

Call 800-477-2258 or
visit sutterhealth.org/eap

Routines give us an anchor—a reminder that some things are still the same.