



EMPLOYEE

ASSISTANCE NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2024

PROVIDED BY SAINT ALPHONSUS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



BUILDING RESILIENCE AND FOSTERING HOPE

Please close your eyes and picture the image of an iceberg.

The top of the iceberg is the way you show up in the world and what's under the water line is what you are experiencing internally. Sometimes, what others see or what we convey to them, is not the depth of what we are navigating. Many times, others really don't have any idea what we are trying to manage every day on a personal level, within family units, professionally, and with our own mental health. We struggle to remain open and vulnerable, honest about our experiences, hopeful about the future, and barely have the bandwidth to get through the day let alone support another person.

Throughout the pandemic and following its aftermath, humanity in general has struggled to reestablish some form of hope and/or resilience. This leaves many of us feeling isolated, alone, defeated, discouraged, worried, angry, and burned out on life. One of the most powerful strategies to support and strengthen resilience is to focus on and embed social emotional assets in the culture of a workplace and home. So how do

we work to build resilience and hope when our tanks are so depleted?

Let's start by looking at the different elements of resilience. Research indicates there are four assets that stand out in successful work/school/home environments: Optimism, belonging, pride/self-esteem, and purpose. Below we will discuss the connections between these assets and resilience and trauma.

Optimism

Optimism is the belief that the future can and will be better. This does not mean we engage in toxic positivity; we must honor our difficult experiences and feelings while focusing on the shift from the present stressors to the future. If hope is a dream of better things to come, optimism is the belief in one's capacity to make those dreams reality. One of the most limiting effects of poverty, trauma, and adversity is a learned helplessness and hopelessness—the belief that one can't change what happens and is helpless in the face of adversity. Being around others who believe that anyone is capable of learning, achieving, and developing grit and perseverance allows for a shift in negative thinking patterns to those that are more optimistic,

or hope filled. Optimism turns the tide of negative thinking and builds hope and belief in the future. This is critical when one is trying to recover from the effects of adversity and trauma.

Belonging

The sense of belonging is a basic human need. Belonging is simply the belief you are connected to others who care about you. A sense of belonging fosters resilience by providing strength in numbers, knowing you are not alone in your experiences, thoughts, and/or feelings. Think of it as a lone tree being more vulnerable in a storm than a grouping of trees who add protection to one another in a storm. Most of us have been in a position where we feel like no one understands what we are experiencing or care about what we are going through, or have felt invisible at one point or another in our lives. People who have survived and then thrived following immense adversity or trauma often state they had one or two individuals who cared and provided some degree of support. It only takes 8 MINUTES of connection, to assist someone in feeling supported and cared for by another. Please consider asking someone, "Hey, do you have 8 minutes to chat?" This is a way of letting someone know a

(continued on page 4)



Saint Alphonus
A Member of Trinity Health

EAP MISSION Saint Alphonus Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a voluntary, confidential counseling service that assists employees and their families with issues that affect their quality of life at home and work.

CHANGE COMES IN STAGES

With the New Year well upon us many have already let their resolutions go by the wayside.

Change is generally not easy to maintain and is rarely accomplished in a straight line. In the 1970's Prochaska and DiClemente developed the well-known Transtheoretical Model of stages of change which outlines six stages of change.

The six stages include Precontemplation, Contemplation, Preparation, Action, Maintenance, and Termination.

Precontemplation – People in this stage typically don't see the need for a change in their behavior and are not considering taking any action to live life differently in the foreseeable future.

Contemplation – During this phase people have some sense that they have a behavior that may be problematic, and they begin to thoughtfully consider the pros and cons of changing the behavior in question, giving equal weight to the potential benefits and disadvantages to making a change.

Preparation – Small steps start to be taken toward the desired change and people begin to see some of the possible benefits of changing their behavior. In this stage people are preparing for action.

Action – People are in the active process of modifying the behavior they wish to change, utilizing alternative coping strategies to help solidify the change in their lives.

Maintenance – In this part of the change process, people have maintained the desired change for more than six months and intend to continue the changed behavior moving forward. During this stage people are trying to prevent relapse to earlier phases of the change process.

Termination – This stage is often not achieved, and most of us move back and forth through the previous stages. In this phase people have no desire to return to their previous behavior and are confident they will not relapse.

In this model, the original authors made it clear that most of us will vacillate between the various stages, noting that change is not linear, it is hard and sometimes relapse is a part of making more permanent change. Having adequate support, resources, and the belief in ourselves that we can make and sustain positive changes in our lives are instrumental to successful change. Here at Saint Alphonsus EAP we would be honored to help support you as you make necessary changes toward having the healthiest and fullest life possible.



INGREDIENTS

Shrimp Taco Sauce

- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup sour cream or Mexican crema
- 2 teaspoons sriracha sauce or more water as needed to thin sauce

Grilled Shrimp Tacos

- 10 9-inch bamboo skewers soaked in water 15-30 minutes
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro plus more for garnish (optional)
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper or more
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

cont.

- 1 pound shrimp peeled and deveined
- 8 corn tortillas
- 1 cup finely chopped green cabbage or red cabbage
- 1/2 cup finely chopped radishes
- 1 lime cut into wedges
- jalapeño peppers thinly sliced, optional

PREPARATION

Shrimp Taco Sauce

1. Whisk together mayonnaise, sour cream and sriracha sauce in a small bowl. Add water, a few drops at a time, to reach your desired consistency. Set aside.

Grilled Shrimp Tacos

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together cilantro, salt, pepper, cayenne and olive oil. Add shrimp and gently toss to coat.
2. Run one skewer through the fattest part of 7 or 8 shrimp (depending on shrimp size), nesting the shrimp so they are curved in the same direction. Run a second skewer through

- all of the shrimp near the tail. Adjust shrimp, giving each a little space, to help them cook evenly. Repeat with remaining shrimp and skewers.
3. Preheat grill to medium-high heat.
4. Place a large piece of aluminum foil near grill. Grill tortillas in a single layer for 30-45 seconds on each side until softened and lightly charred. Stack tortillas on aluminum foil and wrap. Place on grill off of direct heat to keep warm.
5. Grill shrimp skewers 2 to 3 minutes on each side, until shrimp are pink and just cooked through. Transfer to platter along with foil wrapped tortillas.
6. Assemble tacos: top one warm corn tortilla with 3 or 4 shrimp and sprinkle with chopped cabbage, radishes and cilantro (if desired). Drizzle with desired amount of shrimp taco sauce. Repeat with remaining tortillas. Serve with lime wedges and sliced jalapeño if desired.

PREP
15 m

SKEWER
15 m

COOK
7 m

HOW TO SET HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

Having healthy boundaries is one of the foundational aspects of healthy relationships.

They define who we are and who we are not and what we are comfortable with and what we are not. It's important to be able to identify what healthy boundaries are and how to set them so that we can have healthy relationships. This article will explain what healthy boundaries are, why they are important, and how to set them.

Boundaries are healthy limits we set between ourselves and other people and define what is appropriate behavior in our relationships. A person with healthy boundaries understands that making their expectations clear helps establish what behavior they will accept from other people and what behavior other people can expect from them. If you have healthy boundaries, you will share personal information appropriately (not too much or not too little), understand your personal needs and wants and know how to assertively communicate them, value your own opinions, be comfortable telling others "no," and accept when others tell you "no."

People who have unhealthy boundaries are sometimes described as "people pleasers" because they tend to prioritize what others want ahead of their own wants and needs. To set a healthy boundary, it's important to acknowledge that your wants and needs are just as important as another person's wants and needs.

How do you know if you have unhealthy boundaries? You may have unhealthy boundaries if:

- You tend to do things you don't really want to do.
- You often feel disrespected by those close to you.
- You find it challenging to speak up for yourself and express your feelings, thoughts, and needs.
- You feel obligated to take care of others even at the expense of taking care of yourself.
- You feel a lot of guilt and believe that it's wrong to prioritize yourself over others.

To have healthy relationships it's important to have firm, healthy boundaries and the flexibility to adjust your boundaries depending on the person and situation. If we have boundaries that are too rigid, it might keep us from becoming close to others physically and emotionally and make it difficult to make friends and have close relationships. If we have boundaries that are too loose or porous, we run the risk of letting too many people into our life or becoming overly involved in others' lives, including those who may take advantage of us or harm us emotionally or physically. It may be helpful to visualize your boundary as a bubble around your body where you control what you allow in and out of the bubble. The bubble helps us determine how we expect to be treated (what we let into the bubble) and how we treat others (what we let out of the bubble). We can adjust the strength of the bubble so that it's more rigid or more porous, depending on who we're interacting with. For example, we might have a more rigid bubble or boundary when we're interacting with strangers but a more porous bubble or boundary when we're interacting with our family members.

The good news about boundaries is that everyone can learn how to set healthy boundaries. Here are some steps you can take to help you to identify, set, and enforce healthy boundaries:

Determine what you are ok with and not ok with

Take some time to think about your feelings, values, morals, and needs. Set your boundaries based on what makes you feel comfortable, especially when you're with others. Once you determine your boundaries, let others know your new boundaries and your expectation that they will respect them.

Start with setting smaller boundaries

If you're not used to setting boundaries, practice by setting smaller boundaries to help you build confidence. For example, if you have a hard time

saying "no" to others, practice saying "no" to smaller things that you don't want to do or events that you don't want to attend. The more often you're successful with setting smaller boundaries the more confidence you will gain in setting larger boundaries.

Be consistent and assertive

Most people will respect your new boundaries but others may push back. It's important to continue to be assertive and stick with your new boundaries even if others push back on them. Those who are resistant to accepting your new boundaries usually eventually accept them, although you may have to remind them of your new boundaries many times before they do. If someone doesn't accept your new boundaries, you may want to determine if you want to continue having a relationship with that person.

Set consequences for those who don't respect your boundaries

People might test you to see if your boundaries are weak or strong and whether you really mean what you say, so it's important that you have consequences for those who don't respect your boundaries. If someone won't respect your boundaries even after being reminded multiple times, you may have to distance yourself from them or not be friends with them anymore. If a partner won't respect your boundaries, you should have a conversation with them about your expectations in a relationship. If your partner continually won't respect your boundaries, you may have to determine if this is the right relationship for you.

Each time you set healthy boundaries and ensure they're respected you heal and strengthen your relationship with yourself and you strengthen your relationships with others. If you find yourself needing help identifying and setting healthy boundaries, working with a counselor can be helpful. The counselors at Saint Alphonsus EAP would be more than happy to help you learn how to set healthy boundaries.

EAP COUNSELORS

SAINT ALPHONSUS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



**Jared Belsher – Supervisor
MA, LCPC, NCC**

Jared is a licensed clinical professional counselor (LCPC) and national certified counselor (NCC) who has worked in outpatient mental health clinics and in private

practice since 2007. He received a bachelor's Degree in Political Science and a master's Degree in Community Counseling from Northern Arizona University. His approach to counseling is strength-based, which means that rather than dwelling on

things that are wrong, he focuses on the strength individuals have, and how they can use those strengths to overcome their obstacles. He uses a person-centered approach and additional counseling techniques such as cognitive-behavioral

therapy (CBT) to help clients discover healthier ways to cope and think about a problem.

(continued on page 4)

(continued from page 1)

connection of some kind is needed but the expectation is time limited.

Pride

Pride and self-esteem are necessary to combat the limiting effects of any form of adversity. This can be done by promoting the development of internal locus of control through opportunities to succeed at increasingly challenging tasks. This assists in naturally building a sense of pride and ability that one “can do hard things” and overcome the challenges that may be presented with those hard things. We can engage ourselves, teams, and/or children in building on small successes and victories while working toward larger goals. It’s important that we celebrate those small wins while continuing toward longer-term goals. Think of it like going on a long hike and taking the time to pause at each bend in the path. As you take in the view, you are reflecting on how far you have come on your journey to get to this moment in time. Taking in all of the beauty and feel the sense of accomplishment. When the trail becomes difficult or arduous, tell yourself “just a little further or one

more bend.” Encourage yourself and celebrate along the way until you are at the end of your trail or top of your mountain...taking in a big deep breath, closing your eyes, allowing your heart to smile...you made it! Building personal pride and a sense of ability combats trauma by providing the tools to change one’s future.

Purpose

The final asset for building resilience and fostering hope is purpose. Finding and having purpose is critical for success following adversity and trauma. Purpose can guide life decisions, influence behavior, shape goals, offer a sense of direction, and create meaning. Purpose and meaning shifts through various life and developmental stages, which can leave us feeling lost or like we are floundering as we try to redefine what this means for us individually. Meaning and purpose has changed for many of us over the last few years; our reality and sense of security shaken, along with shifts in perspective and priorities. Meaning and purpose is a way for us to connect interests, passions, and abilities into current or new

pathways into our futures. It allows us to experience better physical and mental health, provides a pathway to improved happiness and joy, and improves our overall satisfaction with life. If this is an area in life you notice has changed and you’re not sure about next steps, please reach out to a trusted loved one or one of the counselors through the Employee Assistance Program.

Points for reflection

What supports do you, your team, family have in place so connections with peers can be developed or reestablished?

How will you specifically foster a sense of social belonging for those in your family and/or work environment?

What intentional actions can be taken to meet your own social-emotional needs so that you are more readily able and have the bandwidth to support others? Remember, we have to put on our own oxygen mask on first before we can help others.

EAP COUNSELORS

SAINT ALPHONSUS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



Jenny Lee Doty, MSW, LCSW

Jenny Lee has been practicing as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker since 2010 and is licensed in Idaho and Oregon. She has worked in the mental health field for more than 20 years in a variety of treatment settings including but not limited to schools, day treatment centers, hospitals, and local community agencies. Jenny Lee has provided treatment to children, pre-teens and teens, and the entire age range of adults in individual, group, and family settings.

Jenny Lee is skilled in working with complex family units, emotional and behavioral issues, trauma, depression, mood disorders, anxiety, domestic violence, complex medical/health issues, co-occurring diagnosis, psychotic disorders, self-harm, suicidal ideation, relationship issues, career changes, aging and retirement, gangs, Veterans, addiction, death and dying, and those involved with foster care and Child Protective Services. Jenny Lee practices from a strength-based approach to treatment, while using a combination of interventions tailored to meet each individuals' needs.



Melissa Young, MSW, LCSW

Melissa has been a Mental Health Professional for 30+ years having the opportunity to serve in a variety of mental health settings, with diverse client populations, working in various roles. As a Clinical Social Worker she has had the opportunity to work with survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence; as an Outpatient Psychotherapist within a Community Mental Health Center; a Peace Corps Volunteer in Asuncion Paraguay; Hospice Social Worker; and currently working as a Counselor at the Saint Alphonsus Employee Assistance Program and Safe connections LLC. She employs an eclectic approach to her work with clients, believing that a trusting and supportive relationship is key to any therapeutic success. In addition to her professional life, she is a mother of three sons, a proud dog, cat, chicken and horse owner.

Saint Alphonsus Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Regular Appointment Hours:

9:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m., Monday-Friday
In-person or virtual appointments available
(special appointment hours by request)

Phone: (208) 367-3300

Locations:

6140 W. Emerald St., Boise, ID 83704
3025 W. Cherry Ln, Ste 205
Meridian, ID 83642

Counselors:

Jared Belsher, MA, LCPC, NCC
Jenny Lee Doty, MSW, LCSW
Melissa Young, MSW, LCSW

www.SaintAlphonsus.org/EAP



Saint Alphonsus
A Member of Trinity Health