

## COVID Fatigue and Stress

I know you're tired of COVID-19. I'm tired of it too. We've all had enough of trying to do our jobs with a mask on, covering for co-workers who are either ill themselves or caring for an ill loved one, and just waiting for the day we get that phone call saying someone close to us is now fighting for their life.

In addition to the effects of COVID, the building material industry is struggling with the stress of supply chain issues amidst an increase in demand. Good business is a "good thing" when supply is available, and you have enough healthy workers to keep up with the demand. When those things are limited, stress abounds.

We know this will not last forever, but for now let's look at some ways we can come through this stressful time, mentally and physically healthy...

### **Tips for coping with stress (COVID and otherwise):**

#### **1. Limit the amount of news you watch.**

According to Roxane Cohen Silver, Ph.D., an international expert in the field of stress and coping, excessive news and visual images about traumatic events can make us even more anxious. With unending COVID updates and political coverage, one of the worst things you can do is park yourself in the recliner after work and watch hours of CNN or FoxNews.

#### **2. Take steps to improve your sleep.**

You may not be able to increase the number of hours you sleep while coping with the uncertainty of the pandemic combined with increased workloads, but there are some steps that may help improve your sleep:

- Unplug devices an hour or two before bed
- Try to keep a routine bedtime, even on the weekends
- Train your body to relax through reading, music, hot tea or yoga.....YES, yoga!

#### **3. Eat better and exercise.**

Eating healthier foods and exercising on a regular basis are proven mood boosters. Limit your intake of salt and alcohol, known contributors to fatigue and mood change. A mere 30 minutes of daily exercise a day can boost mental and physical health.

#### **4. Stay in touch with the important people in your life.**

For many, this Thanksgiving was the first time they spent a major holiday alone or away from close family. Make phone calls, texts, emails and, now that we are all experts at video chats, set up Zoom® calls or FaceTime® with those who mean the most to you. Just hearing the voice of a loved one or seeing their face can make your day.

**5. Don't be afraid to ask for help.**

If stress and anxiety are getting in the way of you living your best life, get some help! Reach out to your primary care provider or check your insurance provider for approved therapists in your area. If you are an employer, consider implementing an Employee Assistance Program where your employees can speak with experts confidentially.

Until we come out the other side of this, remember that BMSA is here to help you. If we can take some of the load off of you through educational offerings for your employees, safety training or just a listening ear, we're here for you.

And if you decide to take up yoga, I definitely want a video of that to post on our FaceBook page!!

Be safe, healthy and joyful 😊