

Hi Everyone

Happy Friday! As we start the weekend, I thought I would write you a note of personal encouragement today versus an agency update. We are all handling the stress of the pandemic differently and we have so little chance to support one another in person. I don't know about you, but it feels to me as though this is going to impact our lives further into next year than we initially hoped. While UCP of Greater Cleveland is technically your employer, I hope that you know that each and every one of you is valued both professionally and personally. YOU are what makes UCP a special place.

All of us are experiencing varying types of stress - personal, financial, family, and cultural. We are feeling isolated and have a fear of getting sick. Many in our families are experiencing job loss and a few UCP staff remain on furlough. Many are working from home while trying to keep up with their children's schooling. Children are missing their friends and being in school. We are very worried about our elderly loved ones and may be separated from them. Cultural stress has to do with "What will be left after the pandemic? Will my favorite restaurant, hair salon, barber shop, etc. survive this?"

Responses to this stress include anxiety, sadness, changes in eating/sleeping patterns, etc. If you are feeling any of this, you are not alone! What we all need to do is find coping mechanisms that work for each of us. While feeling that so much in our lives is out of control, we need to control what we can. That includes having a positive attitude, following all health protocols, not watching an excessive amount of the news, finding fun activities to do while at home, and focusing your energy on what you have control over. I continue to be grateful for my health and the health of my family, UCP staff and UCP clients! We are all wearing our masks and staying home a lot! I know that many of you are making extraordinary sacrifices to maintain your health and the health of your co-workers and clients. I have found comfort in baking cookies and bread!

Experts tell us that we need to be grateful for all the good that IS happening in our lives. Set a routine of some kind in terms of your meals, exercise, entertainment, connecting with family, etc. My husband and I make sure to see our grandchildren and maintain virtual and phone contact with our grown children. I make it a point to talk with my sister more often. Connection with family and friends is more important than ever. Many are now suggesting we forego holiday gatherings, so I am already trying to plan some way of celebrating them virtually. The holidays will be rough.

As we move into the colder months, we must remain strong. I invite you to reach out to me or anyone else at UCP for any support that you may need. We are in this together and need to look into the future with hope and optimism! Have a wonderful weekend.

Take care,
Trish