



Tips for Dealing with the Stress of a Furlough

Handling the stress of the pandemic is difficult. But, if you have found that you have been furloughed there is an extra reason that can make you feel anxious, fearful and frustrated.

How do you help manage these feelings:

1. **Talk about it with your support system.** It is normal to feel angry and uncertain. Share your feelings with someone. And, remember that you are not alone! Even if your support network is temporarily diminished as a result of furlough and COVID-19, if you ever need to talk, your WorkLifeMatters EAP is here to listen 24/7/365. We can help!
2. **Take care of you!** Get exercise, eat healthy, trying guided breathing or medication, schedule virtual activities with friends and family. By taking care of you, you can be your best self and get ready for what is next.
3. **Recognize that your feelings may be heightened.** Now you not only have to worry about physical distancing but you need to move forward with an unplanned career path. Your frustration may move to irritability. Just acknowledging the feelings can often help you cope.
4. **Find ways to cut costs.** Make a list of your expenses and compare it to your current income. Look for ways to cut back. A lot of lenders are offering forgiveness programs or a delay of payment during the pandemic. School loans may be deferred. Check out your options and get educated on what is best. A WorkLifeMatters financial consultant can help you set up a budget, walk through options, and ease your fears.
5. **Maintain a connection with your furloughed co-workers.** They know what you are going through. You can come up with healthy strategies to stay connected and whether this temporary situation.
6. **Be kind and practice patience.** You may find yourself experiencing new things and processes. Try to see these as opportunities to learn, rather than obstacles. It's how we face our challenges that will ultimately determine our outlook.
7. **Talk with your human resource department.** Find out how you can keep up on the latest development with the workplace. Ask them about continuation of benefits. The more you know the better you are able to weather the storm.
8. **Use your extra time to learn something new or be creative.** Think back to when you said, "I would do that if only I had the time." Well now you have more time to get inspired and do those things. Take advantage of the break.

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