



Member Assistance Program



United Federation of Teachers
A Union of Professionals

UNDERSTANDING STRESS

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is a feeling of being under abnormal pressure, whether from a new way of working, biological pandemic, shift in family dynamics, or financial worries.

How does your body respond to stress? Adrenaline hormones raise your blood pressure and increase your heart rate; your body then prepares for an emergency response -- **fight, flight or freeze.**

- Fight**: to confront the stressor.
- Flight**: to run away from the stressor.
- Freeze**: unable to move or react to the stressor.

Good Stress vs. Bad Stress

- Is stress good? Research has shown that stress can sometimes be positive: it makes us more alert and helps us perform better in certain situations.
- Good stress versus bad stress:
 - **Good Stress:** Moving, buying a home, planning a wedding, having a baby, graduating, retiring.
 - **Bad Stress:** the loss of a loved one, a breakup/divorce, financial worries, unemployment, illness/injury, legal problems.

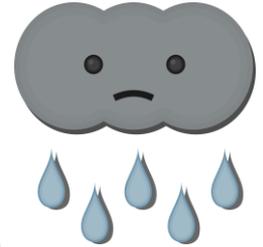
Stressors

- During these times, the stressors you feel can be good or bad. Some examples include:
 - a shift in family dynamics;
 - spending a longer period of time with one another in a confined space;
 - navigating a new work-home life balance;
 - focusing on self-care during uncertain times;
 - being sick/quarantined
 - feelings of hopelessness;
 - feeling out of control.

Who/what causes you stress?



HOW DOES STRESS AFFECT YOU?



- **Physical Symptoms**: Trouble sleeping, sweating, change in appetite, headaches, muscle tension, dizziness, heart palpitations, lack of energy.
- **Behavioral/emotional effects**: Anxiety, depression, irritability, low self-esteem, indecisiveness, addictive behaviors, acting out, overspending, over/under-eating, and panic attacks.
- **Social Stressors**: Distancing, misplaced advice, intrusive questions, feeling patronized, unconscious bias.



Steps To Help Protect Yourself From Stress

- Stay in control: educate yourself about the symptoms of the COVID-19 virus and steps to take if you're feeling ill. Visit www.uft.org/coronavirus for more information. If you are not feeling well, stay home and call your doctor. Know where your nearest hospital is located.
- Take healthy precautions - Wash your hands regularly, avoid touching your face, avoid sharing food and personal items. Follow the CDC guidelines.
- Be aware of your own feelings and how they impact others; be sensitive to the ways others cope with such stressors.
- Create a buddy system of support: Choose friends, family and colleagues who may be able to help you through a stressful period and talk it out with them.

Steps To Help Protect Yourself From Stress (continued)

- Social distancing doesn't mean emotional distancing: stay connected with people in a virtual way through Facetime, ZOOM, group chats, Google chat, and other applications that are available so you can remain at a distance and stay connected at the same time.
- Take a break from media and other anxiety-provoking outlets. Constant monitoring of news updates and social media feeds can significantly increase anxiety and stress levels. Unplug and turn off automatic notifications from news and social media apps. If you are curious about what's going on, make sure you are seeking out credible news sources.
- Utilize coping skills you already have. Whether it's deep breathing, physical exercise, or reading a book, self-care is an important activity and can be especially helpful during times of heightened anxiety and stress.

How is MAP Here to Support You?

- We remain committed to helping you through this uncertain time. You can opt for a phone or Zoom session with a counselor by calling **212-701-9620** or by emailing *mapinfo@uft.org*.
- We want to help you stay connected, so we have begun virtual support groups on various topics offered twice daily. For more information and to register go to: www.uft.org/virtual-support-group.
- Visit our website for additional resources that offer information and support.

The UFT Member Assistance Program (MAP)



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Member Assistance Program

What is MAP?

MAP provides supportive counseling to in-service UFT members for work-related and personal issues.

Professional mental health staff is available for individual consultations that are both confidential and free.

What services does MAP provide?

- Individual Consultations
- Support Groups - contact MAP for current offerings

Referrals to appropriate outside services including, but not limited to:

- Mental Health: Clinics, Psychotherapists, Psychiatrists
- Substance Use Treatment Centers (members and family)
- Domestic Violence
- Legal and Financial Services
- Trauma, Bereavement, and Loss

50 Broadway, 9th floor, Suite 904, New York, NY 10004
Phone: 212-701-9620 • Fax: 212-514-8428 • Email: mapinfo@uft.org

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Thank You!