



# THE EAP CONNECTION

## Getting Back to a New Normal

As our country shifts to reopening, there is yet again a “new normal,” as well as a mix of different emotions that are surfacing for people. Some may be feeling excited to get back to some semblance of normal. Others may be hesitant or anxious about what it will mean for them or how their health and safety could be impacted. For many, it’s a combination of feelings. Here are a few tips to help you navigate the transition.

### Do What You Can to Stay Safe

While our communities and workplaces reopen, there are things you can do to help protect your health and safety. Wearing face masks, practicing social distancing, washing your hands regularly, avoiding face touching, and reducing unnecessary contact with those outside your home are all advised. In the workplace, it’s also a good idea to follow your company’s policies for cleaning/disinfecting and maintaining safety. Remember that it’s not just you who benefits from following safety recommendations, but also those around you.

### Address Anxious Thinking

For those struggling with anxiety, identifying things you can control and learning to accept things you can’t change can help you cope. While there are things you obviously don’t have control over during the pandemic, you do have power over how you respond. Educating yourself on best safety practices and taking the proper precautions can contribute to your safety and give you a sense of control over the situation.

### Find Purpose in Activities

Distracting yourself with productive activities transitions your focus away from ruminating on anxious or negative thoughts. Find something that you can do, whether work, household cleaning, hobbies, or other projects. A sense of accomplishment from making progress on or completing an activity can also go a long way in boosting your positive outlook. Consider volunteering and helping others to make an impact in your community during this difficult time. It can be just as beneficial to your mental well-being as to those you help.

### Practice Self-care

Especially during challenging times, self-care is critical to maintaining your mental wellness. Eating healthy, moving your body, and staying hydrated support you in feeling your best. Exercising can also provide an outlet for letting out some of that negative energy. It’s not selfish to schedule self-care time and do things that you enjoy and find relaxing.

### Be Respectful of Other Perspectives

Everyone processes situations differently. As you rejoin colleagues in the workplace, being respectful of different perspectives is going to be more important than ever. You never know the unique circumstances that could be impacting the behaviors, attitudes, or opinions of those around you. Be sensitive to those who may be struggling with mental challenges, physical health, financial issues, grief, marriage, and/or family problems due to the pandemic.

The transition may take a bit of time to get used to again as we determine what the future will look like for our homes, workplaces, communities, and nation. Remember to be understanding, patient, and kind to yourself and others. As always, ERC’s counselors are available to help you lift the mental burdens that hold you back from your full potential. If you are struggling with a mental health challenge, schedule an appointment by calling 1-800-222-8590.

## HOW TO USE YOUR EAP BENEFIT:

ERC: Counselors & Consultants is your company’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider. For additional information, visit our website [ERCincorp.com](http://ERCincorp.com) or call 1-800-222-8590.