

Hello. I'd like to welcome everyone to today's session, "Healthy Mind Toolkit." We're glad you're here. You're in for a real treat with a lot of helpful information and strategies that our presenter is going to go over today.

Before we get started, I want to mention just a couple quick things. My name is Katie. I'll be behind-the-scenes technical moderator. Even though this isn't a live session, hopefully it will feel a little bit like a live session for you, so we encourage you that, whenever it is that you are listening in, that you go ahead and take a moment and participate in the surveys.

We have, on the left-hand side of the screen, a copy of the present's slide deck that you can download, and we also have Ask a Question section. That's not a live question-and-answer area, but you're more than welcome to type in if you have a question on this topic or anything, and send it to us. We'll get back to you, typically, within a couple days, depending on the nature of your question. So, a couple different resources there.

We also have an FAQ, or Frequently Asked Questions, area. You may have a question about an attendance certificate or some other technical question. Feel free to check that out as well. So, we hope that helps you make the most of today's session. Let's go ahead and dive in.

We are very pleased to have Laurie Kovens presenting today's topic. She's a licensed clinical social worker who has been in practice for a number of years, since 1993, and she's served in a variety of settings, both medical and employee assistance settings. She's worked with clients, families, community members, and coworkers to help them adapt in the face of ongoing change. She works with clients from a person-centered, strength-based approach, and her treatment orientation includes the modalities that you see listed on your screen.

Laurie's also an NASW certified clinical supervisor, and she's currently pursuing her master's degree in writing with a focus on narrative health care. Laurie is a frequent presenter. This is definitely within her wheelhouse, focusing on prevention and recovery from burnout, organizational management and development, resilience—some of the topics we're going to talk about today, in fact—as well as the use of writing and reflection for self-care and personal and professional growth.

So, Laurie, we're thrilled to have you here with us today. I'm going to go ahead and pass it to you so you can dive right in to the Healthy Mind Toolkit.

Thanks so much, Katie, and welcome everybody. Thank you so much for participating. We're going to go over some broad points and a little bit of detail, in terms of healthy living, some basic things that we can do to take care of ourselves as part of our everyday routine that help us be more focused, more alert, just feel a little bit better on a day-to-day basis. We're going to discuss the four cornerstones to a healthy mind. We're going to identify some of the barriers to cultivating those cornerstones, and we're going to look at some strategies that we can use to implement and create our own healthy mind toolkit.

Now, I'm sure that the items listed on this slide are not a surprise to anyone—some of the basic stats relating to sort of the current state of people's general physical wellbeing, some things that help and things that get in the way. 69.2% of adults are overweight or obese in the U.S., 80% of adults don't get the recommended amount of exercise, 43% of adults suffer adverse health effects from stress, and 75 to 90% of all doctor's visits are for stress-related ailments, and these stats come from the CDC (the Centers for Disease Control) and WebMD, and those are both really reliable sources of information.

So, let's talk a little bit about what does work; using a holistic approach, making gradual or slow changes to habits. How many folks out there have sort of woken up on New Year's Day and said, "That's it, I'm going to change my whole life. I'm going to turn over a new leaf. I'm going to go to the gym for an hour and a half every day, and I'm going to go to bed at 10:00 o'clock at night, and I'm never going to eat junk food again?" And we all know about how long those resolutions last. So, it's important, instead of setting high, unreasonable expectations for ourselves, to really look at the small changes, small incremental changes that we can make and sustain and build on over time.

We create a vision of our new self. So that's something aspirational. That's something that we're always working towards, not a new leaf that we expect ourselves to turn over and instantaneously lose all of our old habits and create new ones. And, again, we want to set achievable and measurable goals, make ourselves accountable for progress, and get

support for other people. And we'll talk a little bit more about how to dive into each one of those next steps as we talk today. We're going to look now in detail at these four cornerstones to a healthy mind. We eat right and smart, we exercise regularly, get some sleep, and not just some sleep but enough sleep, and that's more challenging for more people that you might think, and we want to become more resilient.

So, Michael Pollan, who is an author, writes regularly about food and diet and access to good nutrition, says "Eat food, not too much, mostly plants." Eating right and smart has a whole lot of components, and, again, we don't always dive into all of these at once. You pick the one or two to start with that feel most reasonable and accessible to you. So, as you're listening to the details on this slide, start to keep an ear out for what are the next step is that is you might be looking at.

And, again, we're not just talking about doing less of the things that you already do that might not be healthy, but doing more of the things that do promote health and wellbeing. So, plenty of fruits; vegetables; and whole grains, like brown rice and quinoa; looking at lean protein sources, meaning plant-based things like nuts and beans; looking at chicken, cutting back on red meat and full-fat dairy. You want to minimize saturated and trans fats. So that means maybe a little bit less meat, a little bit more chicken or beans, and certainly less fried foods and fast food.

So, we want to right-size omegas, which means getting the right proportions of things, increasing omega-3 fatty acids, including things like fatty fish like salmon or flax seeds, walnuts, and avocados, and reducing omega-6. Those are the unhealthy fatty acids, so corn, soybean, and coconut oil—rather, palm oil.

Vitamins and minerals, you know, get what you need directly from the source. In other words, if we are eating foods that are high in vitamins and minerals, our bodies absorb those better than just taking supplements. But supplements can help some people meet their nutritional needs. It's always good to consult with your primary doc or with a nutritionist when you have questions about that.

Avoid refined and processed food. Read and decode labels. So, where you're seeing in the right-size omegas bullet point, we're looking to reduce corn, soybean, and palm oils. All those things are listed in the ingredients of

most foods. You can see what kind of oils and fatty acids that you eat in the label, so you want to make steer a little bit away from those and towards things that have other sources of fat.

Think about anti-inflammatory foods. Those mean any fruit, particularly berries of any kind; vegetables, especially orange ones like squash and green vegetables; any kind of whole grains; walnut, almonds, pistachios, and other nuts and seeds; fatty fish, olive oil, and other healthy plant-based oil; and think about spicing it up, adding ginger, garlic, curry, and other spices, which can have an anti-inflammatory effect. Again, we're talking here about introducing things that promote health into our diet, not just eating less of the things that we know are not particularly healthy for us.

Limit sugar. So, sugar increases the inflammatory response in our bodies, and we may not feel that specifically, but it will make us more susceptible to stress-based illnesses and lower our ability to fight off the general stuff that runs around through the office and through home, like colds and flu. So, sugar feeds bacteria, and so you want to watch your intake of refined carbs. Avoid corn syrup that may show up in cereal and in soft drinks. A basic 12-ounce non-diet soda has seven to eight teaspoons of sugar just in that one serving. The same for something like a donut or a chocolate bar, things that we tend to grab throughout the day to give us a quit hit of energy.

Other hidden sugars, as well as hidden salt, can show up in peanut butter, yogurt, ketchup and tomato sauce, chocolate sauce, canned veggies, crackers, and even infant formula. Another way to sort of take care of ourselves nutritionally is to keep our eye on the portions that we take in. So, fast food portions now are two to five times bigger than when fast food first came on the scene in 1950, and the typical dinner plate size, just the diameter of the dinner plate is larger now than it was back in the 50s. So, there are trends out there in terms of portion size that sort of edge us, without thinking about it, into eating more than our bodies necessarily need at any given sitting.

Exercise regularly. Exercising on a regular basis increases energy level, it improves strength, self-esteem, it strengthened the immune system, and it can reduce stress levels. Your body can become more efficient at burning calories, thus giving you more energy and a steadier way over the course of the day.

In terms of self-esteem, participating in a team can minimize the isolation sometimes we feel, especially kids, and give us a sense of accomplishment. And I would say, too, there are lots of people who say, "Oh, I'm not good enough at X, Y, Z to play a team sport," or "that's really intimidating." And if a team sport doesn't appeal, then think about taking a class, a yoga class, an exercise class, a spin class—because there, you're still doing something in a group. You're still drawing on that group motivation and sense of accomplishment.

Exercise, as we said, strengthens the immune system. In general, you're less likely to get sick if you exercise regularly, and, remember, that over-exercising can weaken the immune system as well, so balance is key. I know that we all hear "no pain, no gain", and there are times when we may feel a little achy or a little tired after pushing ourselves beyond our usual limit, but we're not talking about, you know, injuring ourselves. So, if you have a question about if you're pushing yourself and you feel an ache and you're not sure if that is a healthy part of building your strength and your flexibility and your balance, check with a trainer or check with your doctor. You can even call a nurse line if you have that available through your health insurance, and just get a little perspective on that and make sure that you're not overdoing. And lastly, exercise reduces stress levels. It helps take your mind off the daily grind and productively channels and pent up thoughts and energy—kind of blows out the cobwebs a little bit.

Let's talk a little bit about sitting, which is something that so many of are so prone to do by the nature of our work and the way our leisure time is structured. Martha Grogan, a cardiologist at the Mayo Clinic, says, "For people who sit most of the day, their risk of heart attack is about the same as smoking." I was stunned when I saw that, and it made me want to stand up and start walking around my office as soon as I read it. So, there are lots of little ways to get up out of your chair, walk around, even if you're still at your desk.

Today, James Levine says, "Our bodies are breaking down from obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, depression, and the cascade of health ills and everybody malaise that come from what scientists have named sitting disease."

The British Journal of Sports Medicine says, "Prolonged sitting should be considered within occupational health and safety policies and practices just like other elements of posture." So, if you have break time available to you, take it. Think about taking one flight of stairs up or down from your office instead of the elevator if you are traveling multiple floors coming and going. Maybe take a flight of stairs up and down as part of your break, just to get up and move a little bit. And even if you feel like you can't get away from your desk or your office, get up and walk around. Even a minute or two, to just move your legs, swing your arms a little bit, and straighten up your posture from sitting at your desk, will help combat this sitting disease phenomenon. Take a moment and think about how long you sit in any given day. How long is your commute? How many hours in your chair at your desk job? How many hours in front of your TV or your smart device?

Let's take a look now at sleep. Katie, I'm going to let you take over here and walk people through how it will poll works.

Certainly. Thanks, Laurie. So, I'm going to go ahead and send that poll out. Everyone should see a survey that pops up on your screen, and the question is, how many hours of sleep do you get per night? So, just want to let everyone know this is anonymous. It's just a chance for you to kind of to pause and reflect and interact. So, we've got four options for you. You can select the first option, A, four to six hours; option B, six to eight hours; option C, eight to ten hours; or option D, less than four hours.

All right, so once you've had a chance to participate in that survey if you'd like, you're going to actually see a list on the screen, or a chart rather, of everyone else who has listened into the session and kind of find out where everyone else falls on those four options. So, thank you for participating, and I'm going to pass it back to you, Laurie.

Great, Katie. Thanks so much. Think about the response that you gave from that poll in light of this information. We need, on average, between seven and eight hours of sleep each night, so think, again, about when you took that poll, how close to that do you come on a regular basis. Is it once in a while? Is it pretty good during the week, but kind of crummy on weekends because you stay up a little later, you go out to a special occasion, you go to a movie, watch a TV show maybe a little later because you can sleep longer the next day?

People who sleep seven to eight hours, on average, on a regular basis tend to live longer, and if you sleep less than seven hours on a regular basis, the results can really be quite profound, and we can get used to living without sleep. Our adrenaline takes over and we just sort of get used to living, on a daily basis, with sort of a dragging feeling. So, some of the effects of long-term lack of enough sleep include a depressed immune system, lapses of attention, slow thinking, irritability, poor memory, poor judgment, anxiety and depression, increase in accidents, and decrease in work performance.

And, again, sometimes we get used to living with some of those facts, and sometimes getting better sleep and more sleep is a matter of changing habits. But sometimes there are physical symptoms and other circumstances that really interfere with our sleep on a regular basis, and if you feel like that is an issue, there are external things going on or physical sensations or symptoms that you're experiencing that are interfering or disrupting your sleep, then it's a good idea to check that out with your family doctor, or even have a chat with an EAP counselor to talk about whether there are stressors that are kind of keeping you preoccupied or wound up in a way that keep you from getting good solid sleep on a regular basis.

Let's look at a few tips for better sleep. So, the first thing to think about is to go to bed and wake up at the same time, even on weekends and days off. Keep to a routine. Your body clock tends to set itself if you give it a chance. Create a good environment for sleep. That means screens off. That means not having a lot of noise, as little light as possible. Try to sleep comfortably, not too hot or too cold in the room, or in terms of the things that you have on the bed. Have a routine. Let your body know how to relax for sleep.

So, again, one of the things that I hear from people most often when we're talking about difficulty sleeping is that people have their phones, their tablets, their laptops, their TVs on right up until they turn out the light and go over to sleep. But the blue light that comes from screens is a stimulant, sometimes as much as a cup of coffee or a Coca-Cola right before you go to bed. So, again, when we're talking about letting your body know to sleep, that means screens off. Let your mind start to wind down, whether that's reading a book or doing a little bit of yoga or meditation or listening to some soothing music. There are lots of prompts that let our bodies know it's time to wind down.

And lastly, mind what you eat and drink. Eating or drinking too close to bedtime kind of gets our systems up and running in a way that can keep us awake, put more energy in our systems, particularly things with a lot of sugar or carbs or caffeine.

So, let's look at little bit at the next set of tips. When we're talking about, you know, helping the body relax, then we want to avoid nicotine, caffeine, and alcohol as much as possible. These are all stimulants that can keep you awake. Nicotine is a stimulant. Caffeine, you think about what time you are planning to go to bed, make sure that the last caffeine that you consume is at least eight hours before that. Plenty of us will have a pick-me-up, a cup of coffee, or a chocolate bar, you know, 3:00 to 4:00 in the afternoon to get through those last few couple of hours to get through our day, and what we don't realize is that when we're ready to bed, the effects of those things are still bouncing around in our systems, and it makes it harder for us to get to sleep and stay asleep.

And, alcohol also disrupts sleep patterns. You know, lots of folks will have a glass of wine or a cocktail at the end of the day to unwind and sort of mellow out. But, again, you get that rebound effect when it comes time to go to sleep. It's actually harder to fall asleep, stay asleep, and get quality sleep when you have alcohol active in your system.

Exercise and physical activity, on the other hand, can help us fall asleep at night. But, again, exercising and vigorous physical activity will lead to endorphins and other body and mind chemicals and hormones that can kind of wake us up and stimulate us, so if you're going to engage in that activity, try to not to exercise within three hours of bedtime. It will let your body expend stress and energy might keep you awake. But if you refrain from exercise for at least three hours of bedtime, you will be assured that any of those sorts of elevated hormones and brain chemicals are not in play when you're trying to wind down.

Be careful with napping. Daytime naps steal hours from nighttime sleep. So, if we sleep 20 to 30 minutes during the day, or after 3:00 p.m., we tend to fall into REM sleep and warn our bodies and sort of urge our bodies into that pre-bedtime relaxation, and it's really hard to come back from that level of relaxation and be solidly functional during the day. And it will also disrupt

the cycle of getting that full uninterrupted seven to eight hours of sleep at night.

When you are ready to go to bed, go to bed tired. Turn out the lights. If you don't fall asleep within 15 or 20 minutes, get up and do something else, and return to bed when you're tired, and don't stress about falling asleep. You know, for those of us who are chronically under-slept or have not had a great bedtime routine for a long time, it can take a while to reset our body clock in into routine, and, so, sometimes it takes a little bit of trial and error.

And lastly, use sleeping aids only as a last resort. Always check with your doctor before starting sleep medication, even over-the-counter stuff. And communicate with your doctor about how any medications or sleep aids that you're taking make you feel.

Katie, I'll go ahead and let you walk folks through this next poll.

Thanks, Laurie. I'm going to put this next survey up on the screen for everyone. You should see this up. Again, it is all anonymous, if you would like to participate, just reflect on this statement I'm going to read and indicate. Do you feel like it's a true statement or a false statement, and the thought is, it's not what happens to us but how we respond to what is happening that has the strongest impact in our lives? So, take a moment to think about that. For you personally, what do you feel? Do you tend to think that is a true statement or maybe not so true? So, once you've submitted that, you'll be able to see the other responses for people who listened in to today's session, and we thank you for participating.

And, Laurie, I will pass it back to you to talk to us about the next cornerstone of a healthy mind and be resilient.

Great, Katie. Thanks. So, there is no true recipe for resilience, because the way that you achieve it is different for everyone. But there are some factors that are common across the board, and we'll talk about each of these aspects in more detail. So, the basics we want to think about are paying attention to your feelings, focusing on what you have, recognizing your options, and being mindful of self-care. It's important to identify the specific emotions that you're experiencing instead of just saying to yourself that you're stressed out.

Ask yourself, what am I really feeling? Name or label the feeling. Are you frustrated, worried? Are you feeling overwhelmed, angry, frightened, or even elated? Is there a pattern in your reaction to specific event or people? For instance, do you get impatient and upset if you have to stand in long lines or if you're stuck in traffic or if you're on hold for a long time on the phone? Do you get irritated when others have expectations that you have trouble meeting? Are you frustrated that you don't have some time to yourself each day or that you're frequently interrupted, or do you get anxious when you're given too many tasks to do at work or at home? By identifying and labeling specific feelings, you'll be able to understand your reactions and have more insight into the options that will help address or resolve those situations.

Focus on what you have. Our perceptions can really exacerbate stress and how we interpret outside events. All of those things begin in our mind. An event occurs, our brain takes it in, it gets filtered through a mindset, which we've developed over years from early family experiences, teachers, and social history—all of this affects how we operate today. Each of us has our own individual way of looking at life, and sometimes we see things exactly as they are. Other times, we see things in a distorted way, the biases, our view of the world, and that creates unpleasant moods and feelings, and, finally, ineffective behavior.

Our mindset creates thoughts about the stressor; for example, "this situation is bad, this situation is unfair, bad things always happen to me." "It's always my fault when things go wrong," or "this is the worst thing that could possibly happen to me." These thoughts then create feelings of overwhelmed, angry, irritability, tension, and sometimes second guessing ourselves. The feelings then create moods like sadness or lethargy, lack of motivation, and then the moods, in turn, affect our behavior—things like an inability to focus, yelling or sarcastic, eating too much, staying up too late, et cetera. And before you know it, your perceptions can exacerbate your stress to a degree that you can't function effectively.

So, the reality is that you can change your own mindset. Once you see a situation in a different light, your feelings and moods are also positive. This gives you energy to focus on what needs to be done, to have a plan for getting results while maintaining your health. If you change your mindset, you can change your response to the situation. If you change your perception, you can reduce stress or be more resilient. Remember, a

negative mindset robs us of energy and a positive one provides a can-do attitude. Always ask the question, is there another way to look at this situation or event?

So, a quick example of that, we frequently, at the Employee Assistance Program, take calls from people who are feeling stressed or frustrated about workplace situations. We'll have someone call and say, you know, "I'm feeling really rattled, I haven't been able to stop thinking about work all day. I got a really terse email from a colleague asking me why didn't I do X, Y, and Z." And when we're already stressed and we're prone to have a lot of responsibility, and have strong work ethic, somebody asking us, "why didn't you do X, Y, and Z?" tends to put us on the defensive.

So, we might either say, "wow, this person is really being overly demanding" or "why are they asking me," or on the other hand, we can think, "I'm a terrible person for not having done this, and now I'm dreading going to into work and dealing with this, because everybody is going to think terribly of me." That takes us out of our ability to relax and deny a nice dinner with our family or watch a movie or do the other things that we need to do around the house, like paying bills or doing laundry. We just feel kind of exhausted and paralyzed because we can't stop thinking about this thing at work. Then you wind up having a crummy night sleep because you're still feeling preoccupied, but not in a way that helps you create a solution, just in one that sort of ratchets up the worry, and it just kind of spirals from there.

On the other hand, if, when you receive the email, you know that an email doesn't convey tone of voice—it doesn't have anything—we can kind of forget the context of the relationship with this coworker. This may be a coworker with whom we have a great relationship, and if that exchange had happened face to face, that person might have elaborated on where their question was coming from. They may be asking that question to help solve a problem, right? Was this thing not done because you were waiting for more information from someone else? Was it not done because you got asked to prioritize something else? Was it done and that person just didn't receive the communication?

And so, instead of spending numerous hours after receiving that message, just say, okay, I think what I need to do is clarify where this question was coming from this person, and that is the thing that I can do tomorrow. And

when I have more information, then I will know how to respond. You've taken yourself very quickly through that process of shifting your mindset, seeing things as they are, determining whether your mind is creating the stress, identifying your thoughts, "well, I'm anxious about this? Why? What's my greatest fear?" You know, and knowing your mood, and then you can plan from there.

Recognize your options and influence your outcome. If your perception is not distorted, then you may want your strategy to be one of problem solving. In this approach, we look at the issue itself and then look for a solution that works for us at the time. Facing our challenges head on, we have the opportunity to grow stronger and wiser and more resilient. These are opportunities for growth. So, again, identify a problem or challenge.

Let's take an example of overwork, something that we often hear about at the EAP. "I have too much to do and not enough time to do it. I'm putting in work or thinking about work in my off-work hours, and that's leaving me tired and frustrated and really overwhelmed." So, what is the problem here? Is this a short-term or long-term problem? How long has it been going on? If you are overworked, is it because someone is out and you are temporarily taking on an extra burden until a colleague returns? Or is it something that is expected of everybody all the time and you see people quitting or taking time off for illness or calling out sick just to catch up on their sleep?

When you look at where the problem or challenge is coming from, then you can think about solutions. "Do I just need to pare down some things in my personal life on a short-term basis for a couple of weeks or a couple of months? Is there somebody that I can delegate other things to at work? Is it time to push back about an unreasonable workload, and who can I talk to?" Get input. Choose and implement your option of choice. If it works, keep at it. If it doesn't work, try another option. There's usually more than one right answer to any problem, whether it's at work or at home.

Be mindful of self-care. The fact is, resilient people do take care of themselves, follow healthy habits, and don't allow themselves to wear down. They understand the correlation between physical and emotional energy. So, reminders, eat a nutritious diet, get enough sleep, exercise, know your limits, get support, and use relaxation techniques. And you know, some folks are really good at doing most or all of these things most

or all of the time, and if you're one of those folks and you're still feeling stressed out, worn down, feeling overwhelmed, not sleeping as well as usual, more irritable, or you feel like you're not keeping up these routines as well as you usually do, or you're doing it and you're still not feeling yourself, that's a good time to check in and say, where is this extra stress coming from? What's going on?

If some of these routines are slipping, it usually means that there's something pushing you beyond a reasonable limit and it's a good time to stop and take stock of that within your yourself, with a partner, with a trusted work colleague or supervisor, or if you feel like you need a really neutral perspective, reach out and talk to somebody at your EAP. They can really help you sort through some of these things and get a little closer to a clear identification of the problem and some options for next steps.

So, take a look at this illustration. Mind full with lots of things, or mindful, an awareness and appreciative attention to the things going on around you? So, just take a moment and notice where you are right now. Which one of these bubbles looks more like the inside of your head?

When we talk about mindfulness, we're talking about paying attention to the present moment with intention, while letting go of judgment. We're maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, actions, and surrounding environment. We're living in a moment and I wakening to experience, and we're observing thoughts and feelings from a distance without judging them good or bad.

Let's take a moment to practice this a little bit. And, again, this slide deck will be available, I believe, and I'll let Katie confirm that. So, if this one-minute breathing space exercise helps you, you know, you can find it online or you can download the slide and kind of keep it handy, because it only takes one minute. So, we're going to use our breath as an anchor to the present, and we're going to follow the acronym STOP, S-T-O-P. Stop for a while whatever you're doing; take a slow deep breath and let go of the business in your head. Give yourself a nice long exhale and relax any tense places that you notice in your body. Open to the experience of present moments. Any bodily sensations, any sounds you're noticing? Anything in the room that's drawing your eye, other than your computer screen? And then proceed and reconnect with your activity with a smile and sense of calmness.

So, some next steps, I know a lot of people will say, I know I need to make all of these changes, but my life is too hectic right now. There are too many demands. The idea of adding X, Y, and Z to take care of myself just adds to a list that's too long. Here are a few ways that we can start to take action now, hopefully without feeling overburdened, because the idea of integrating these things into our lives is to reduce stress and not to add to it, so make it a priority.

Keep it simple. Every day is a new day. We can make choices every day, and, again, you have a whole list of choices you can make here about where and when you eat, to turning off screens before you go to bed, setting your bedtime routine to start even five minutes earlier than it did last night. It shouldn't be a science project. You can build a routine over time. If it's not a routine, it won't last. But you can make gradual changes.

Work towards long-term health goals, not a quick fix for short-term gain. Leverage your resources and tools. Anything you have available for time management, like even setting reminders on your phone or on your calendar to say, "okay, it's time to take a two-minute S-T-O-P break." "I'm in between emails, now is the time that I can take a minute, look around me, feel my body, take a few inhales and exhales and drink a little water." Get up and walk around your office, and then sit back down and pick up where you left off.

Healthy meal shopping, planning and tracks, exercise tips and tricks, how many of us have all kind of apps on our phone that keeps us distracted and entertained if we're standing in line at the dry cleaner or the post office, or if we're waiting for a meal to be delivered at a restaurant, or we're waiting for the timer to go off on the oven or the washing machine at home? Take a couple of minutes, download an app like Calm that will walk you through a brief guided meditation, or just give you some soothing sounds to listen to for that minute instead of looking at the next YouTube video or news story or Instagram post.

Last takeaway, let's take a quick look at those four building blocks we talked about and see if you can come up with four simple things, one in each of those categories that you can start today. Nutrition: Maybe drink an extra glass of water somewhere along the day. Maybe start with a smaller

portion on your dinner plate. Maybe have a banana instead of a chocolate bar when you need that last jolt of energy to get through your workday.

Exercise: Like we talked about, take an extra flight of stairs instead of taking the elevator all of the floors in your building. Get up and walk around the office a little bit extra. Take a walk around the block when you go home before you go inside.

Sleep: Can you turn off the screens five minutes earlier than you did last night? Go to bed a little bit earlier. And mindfulness, can you give yourself a couple of those soft moments to look around you, to feel your body, take a deep inhale and exhale, stretch a little bit? Notice what's going on outside of the rectangle of your computer screen and the ring of your phone, and then pick up where you left off.

I'll let Katie walk you through a little bit more about how to get assistance from your Employee Assistance Program.

Thank you, Laurie. We do want to thank everyone for joining, and also want to thank Laurie especially, for sharing her expertise and practical suggestions and guidance on this topic of putting some things on our healthy mind toolkit, so thank you so much, a lot great information today. As Laurie has mentioned today, everyone has access to your EAP, or Employee Assistance Program. It is at no cost to you. It's confidential, and there's a lot of different things that your EAP can assist with. I know Laurie mentioned some of those, whether it is personal stressors, grief, loss, a variety of situations, you can reach out to your EAP.

Your EAP can also provide assistance with practical things. Perhaps you're moving and you'd like some help researching movers in the area or new apartments or pet sitters. Perhaps you have an elderly loved one who has recently been admitted to the hospital and it's no longer going to be as safe for him or her to come home, and so you need some assistance with some elder-care options. Legal, financial, a lot of different thing they can help with, so please contact your EAP. It is at no cost to you. And if you do not have that contact information, just ask your HR Department, and they will direct you how to get in touch with your EAP. Typically, it's a phone number and/or website, an online way to do that.

So, a couple little last-minute wrap-up items. Again, the EAP is available 24/7, so if you have additional questions on this topic or things, you'd like assistance with, go ahead, you can get access to your EAP. If you have a question or two related to this topic, and perhaps it's not urgent in nature, you're welcome to use that Ask a Question section. You should see that on the left-hand side of your screen. Simply type in your question and send. We do receive it via email, and we'll reply back via email, typically, within a couple days or so, depending on the nature of your question.

I do want to also let everyone know that we do have a brief survey when we logoff, and we'd appreciate you taking maybe 15 seconds to do that. And then finally, on the left-hand side of your screen, as we mentioned earlier, there's a copy of the slide deck; for example, this STOP resource that Laurie was referring to, you can go ahead and download that handout, maybe print that out, keep that as a reminder at hand, so you'll see that in the Event Resources section.

So, thank you everyone. Thank you, Laurie. Laurie, I will just pass it back to you for a final word to close us out.

Thanks so much, Katie, and thank you, everybody, for attending today and taking some time out from your day to think about some additional ways to nurture yourself. Again, I want to echo Katie's reminder to reach out to your EAP if you have any questions about how to manage stress, how to think through incorporating some of these tools into your day-to-day life. If you feeling that's more of a struggle than you need it to be, there are lots of folks who can point you in the direction of good tools and resources to start making those incremental changes that will start to make a real change on hour you feel on a day-to-day basis, whether that's practical resources or emotional support.

Thanks again for reaching out. If you have other questions, please do forward them to us, and we'll be happy to respond to continue to help you get the most out of the time you invested in this presentation today. Thanks so much, and have a great day.