Your Health
by District Wellness Coordinator
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You are not alone with all the emotions you may be feeling day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute. For those that have listened to my stress management presentation, stress is cumulative and our body turns on the fight or flight response. The fight or flight response is our body’s physiological reaction to a perceived threat. You may start to notice a change in your breathing, increase in heart rate, sweating and tense muscles to name a few. In the 21st Century, the perceived threat is workplace stress, social isolation and viral pandemics instead of escaping a hungry bear.

Emotionally and mentally we show up to our lives distracted and full of anxiety. Socially, we turn selfish and disconnected from our own well-being and values. While navigating through these waters, we will find our lives are feeling short of meaningful connections. So, how do we emerge from this crisis more resilient?

We are built as social creatures and have a need for belonging and connect and care for others. Giving to others, or volunteering, helps us out the most. We live longer, are more satisfied with our life, have stronger immune system and are happier. Our personal well-being is linked to those around us and our natural surroundings. When we distance ourselves or ignore other’s pain, we are the ones suffering, our health can be at risk, and our natural surroundings are affected.

What are some things we can do to contribute to our overall health and well-being? Practice Mindfulness, deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, Yoga, brain games and checking in with each other are all ways we can build our body and our mind healthy.

Volunteer opportunities bring personal happiness, life satisfaction, improved self-esteem, and better overall physical and mental health. 25% of people who volunteer, see an improvement in their mood and overall health. In a pandemic, self-quarantines, remote working and physical distancing is putting our physical and mental health at risk. Through volunteer opportunities, we can start thinking about the good that will come of this along with considering what shape a post-virus economic recovery might take. If we open a classic economics textbook and research “economic recoveries”, we find out that they very often take the shape of letters in the alphabet. For example, a ‘V’ shaped economic recovery suggests a sharp and substantial move to the upside, whereas a ‘U’ shaped recovery would play out more as a gradual recovery and a ‘W’ shaped recovery would go through two sharp peaks and two sharp declines.

Whatever shape our recovery ends up taking and however long it lasts obviously remains to be seen, but I hope you have reminded yourself many times over the past weeks just how lucky you are to be working for such a caring and supportive employer. As you and I are well aware, PXU has generously provided for each of us, during this unpredictable and challenging time. Wow, how lucky we all are! Thank you, Phoenix Union High School District!

While the past month or so has been stressful, I hope it has helped you realize more than ever the critical importance of being physically, emotionally, socially and financially well.

If you have interest in learning more about our upcoming PXU Your Money Matters online classes or webinars (dates and times TBD), please send an email to: jenica.tallman@phoenixunion.org

As we continue to build out our district wellness plan, we hope to help you reach your peak in all four quadrants, knowing that when you are well and happy, you are well on your way to feel fearful, if you do. So, let’s start with a timeframe. How long will this continue and what can we expect a “recovery” will look like? While some experts project our current economic downturn will last months, others are suggesting a much (much) longer timeframe. The reality is, much like the mysteries surrounding the invisible coronavirus, a timeframe and look of an economic recovery are just as uncertain. However long it may last and however deep it goes, what we do now is the more you can learn today about your own finances, district finances, state and national finances, the better you will navigate your own (financial) future.

If you think the news today is all very bleak and heavy, you are not alone. And while we can easily find ourselves feeling pessimistic, I choose to think about the good that will come of this along with considering what shape a post-virus economic recovery might take. If we open a classic economics textbook and research “economic recoveries”, we find out that they very often take the shape of letters in the alphabet. For example, a ‘V’ shaped economic recovery suggests a sharp and substantial move to the upside, whereas a ‘U’ shaped recovery would play out more as a gradual recovery and a ‘W’ shaped recovery would go through two sharp peaks and two sharp declines.

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I look forward to getting to know you!