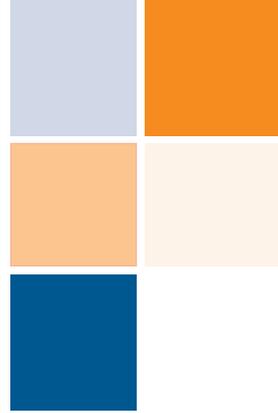


# KeySolutions

Employee Assistance Program



**Spring 2020**



## **April is National Stress Awareness Month**

Stress has become such a predictable part of our lives that in April 1992, an entire month was dedicated to stress awareness. The idea was to promote awareness of stress and effective ways to deal with such an intruding visitor in our daily lives. The negative influence that undue stress can have on our body, our emotions and our mind is tenfold in its impact.

Dr. Stephen Sideroff, renowned expert in resilience and alternative approaches to dealing with stress and mental health, describes the most fundamental aspect of stress as “the danger to survive.” He relates stress to the caveman and his struggle to survive on a daily basis. Each day the caveman was on constant alert to survive the elements of nature and the deadly predators that roamed the earth.

In today’s world, we are not on constant alert to survive a raging, toothed predator or protect territorial land. Our stress exists in different ways. Stress can come from various areas of our life including; work, family, relationships, financial issues, health/illness, parenting, death/divorce, or situations and events that create uncertainty or fear. For example, the recent world event of dealing with COVID-19 may create additional stress, anxiety and concern for individuals and families. Everyone will react differently to this experience.

Stress may cause symptoms in the body such as skin problems, acid reflux, inflammation, increased blood pressure, aches and pains and muscle tightness. Anger, lack of concentration, irritability, depression and anxiety may impact the mind and negatively influence emotions. The suggestions below may be helpful during this time of uncertainty regarding COVID-19 and other stressors in our lives.

There are a multitude of ways to deal with stress in positive ways. Ideas might include exercise, having family and friends who are understanding and supportive, hobbies, maintaining a positive work/life balance, setting healthy boundaries with others and getting out into nature and fresh air. Making changes in diet or creating a healthier lifestyle can be other ways to ward off stress. Establishing good time management skills and setting realistic goals can also help reduce daily stress.

If stress is causing greater difficulty in your life than you can handle on your own, please reach out to KeySolutions EAP to schedule a session with a counselor. Talking things through, finding positive solutions and learning good coping skills are just a few of the take-aways that counseling can provide. We are here to help. Call us at 605-334-5850 to schedule your counseling session.

*Article by Beth Hall, KeySolutions EAP Counselor  
www.keysolutionseap.com*

**Call us at 605-334-5850 or 888-450-7844**



## Healing After the Loss of a Pet

The heartbreaking pain of losing a beloved pet can be devastating. Our pets provide us with endless loyalty, unconditional love and true companionship. When life is stressful and hard to bear, animals/pets can provide us with the love we need to get through the challenges ahead. When we lose a pet to an accident, old age, euthanasia or health issues, we become painfully aware of what we have lost. It is extremely important to our well-being to be able to grieve the loss of a pet or an animal.

It takes time to journey through this grief and it does not happen the same way for everyone. There is a particular type of grief, called disenfranchised grief, which happens when society may not consider the loss important. This can be true when it comes to the loss of a pet or animal we loved. Society may wish for us to get over this type of loss much quicker, as opposed to losing a human loved one.

Disenfranchised grief can keep us in silence without the support we may need. When we lose our dog because he is elderly and needs to be euthanized, we may find it hard to talk about it with others. They may not fully understand or acknowledge the emotional sadness involved in the loss. There are many people who are proud pet parents, but there are also individuals who work in the animal field that may also experience animal loss and grief. Veterinarians, technicians in animal hospitals, zoo keepers, animal shelter staff/volunteers, pet sitters, trainers, and groomers, just to name a few.

When we lose a pet, it is vital to talk to someone who might understand. It might be helpful to talk with someone who can relate to losing a pet themselves. Perhaps talking to a family member or a friend who will listen and validate how you might be feeling. Find ways to remember your pet through photos, or keeping a favorite blanket or toy. It is a worthy thing to give yourself permission to grieve in your own way, in your own time, regardless of what others may think or say.

“Until one has loved an animal, a part of one’s soul remains unawakened.” – Anatole France

*Article by Beth Hall, KeySolutions EAP Counselor.  
www.keysolutionseap.com*

### ATTENTION ALL EMPLOYEES:

KeySolutions EAP is available to **all employees** and family members. You **do not** need to be enrolled in your employers insurance to utilize this benefit.

## How KeySolutions Works for You...

**Counseling Services:** KeySolutions is here to **help you** and your family with any of **life’s challenges**. During your appointment, you will meet with one of our experienced professionals and together decide on a **plan of action**.

**Free and Confidential:** Employee Assistance Program services are at **no charge** to you or your immediate family. All services will remain **confidential**.

**Employees and Family:** KeySolutions is available to all **employees** and **family members**.

**Anywhere You Live:** The Employee Assistance Program is available to you wherever you live. We have a network of counselors ready to serve you. Please call KeySolutions first and we will inform you of those counselors.

**Contact Us:** You can visit us at [www.keysolutionseap.com](http://www.keysolutionseap.com), or email us at [info@keysolutionseap.com](mailto:info@keysolutionseap.com). Call us at 605-334-5850 or toll-free at 888-450-7844.