

thrive!

Helping AU employees optimize their health and wellbeing.

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COPING WITH COVID-19 BURNOUT

Gain control when things are out of control

Note: This is the fourth in a series of articles from Auburn University Human Resources (AUHR) on dealing with COVID-19, mental wellness and other relevant topics. Email thrive@auburn.edu if you have comments or suggestions for future topics. Visit aub.ie/thrive to read previous articles.

"You said some things never change, but since then, everything has done nothing but change."
-Olaf, "Frozen 2"

While change is as much of a certainty as rolling Toomer's Corner after a big win, you may concur with the world's most popular snowman. There has been so much change in the past year, you wonder if chaos is the new normal.

Fortunately, Anneliese M. Stroup has some good news. Stroup is a licensed professional counselor with American Behavioral, which administers Auburn University's Employee Assistance Program. She says there are several things that you can control -- even in the midst of a pandemic. That is a good thing, because Stroup says our mental health greatly impacts our physical health.

Last week, she presented the webinar "Managing COVID Fatigue: Saving Your Sanity During the Pandemic" to approximately 145 employees. We encourage every employee to take 45 minutes to watch the recording, which is available on demand at aub.ie/thrive. (It would be ideal for a staff meeting.)

While you may not be able to control the daily headlines, the pandemic or the actions of others, Stroup says there are several things that you can control. They include:

- Your positive attitude.
- Your kindness and grace. (Refer to [last week's article](#) for more information on that.)
- Limiting your social media.
- Your own social distancing.
- Finding fun things to do at home.
- Turning off the news.
- Following CDC recommendations.

Stroup also says to focus on your thoughts, your feelings and your actions. Taking control of your thoughts has to come first.

"You have to change your thoughts before your feelings line up," she says. "Think about what you're thinking about."

However, she warns against spending too much time thinking about items that you cannot control. Just because that is human nature doesn't make it a good thing.

"What you can change, change. What you can't change, leave it alone," she says.

Stroup says it is just as important to cut yourself some slack, and even take some time to congratulate yourself for big and small accomplishments.

"Remind yourself, 'You know what? I'm doing the best that I can do,'" she says.

Doing these few things can help you gain control of your life in the midst of chaos. Olaf describes it another way: **"We're calling this, controlling what you can when things feel out of control."**



WELLNESS WEBINAR ON TAP TOMORROW

* The webinar **"Working Toward Wellness: Supporting Mental Health in a Zoom World"**, will be offered tomorrow (Thursday, Feb. 4), at 2 p.m.

* Participants will learn strategies to respond to their own mental health and wellbeing.

* Panelists include: Nadia Bhuiyan, Director, Auburn University Psychological Services; Doug Hanks, Director, Student Counseling and Psychological Sciences; and Eric Smith, Director, Health Promotion and Wellness.

* You can register online at aub.ie/workingtowardwellness. (As of Wednesday approximately 140 employees have already registered.)

* If you have additional questions, email thrive@auburn.edu.