



As a group, physicians and other healthcare professionals are not very good about seeking healthcare. Many don't even have a primary care provider or visit the dentist regularly. Yet, in this time of COVID-19, it is particularly important that we take advantage of available services to help us function at our best. Resilience-building exercises and other mental health services are a vital part of training for elite athletes, the military, and others in high-pressure careers. **Learning skills and strategies to better manage stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, demanding work responsibilities, and burnout would benefit most everyone in academic medicine as well.**

Many individuals refrain from reaching out to professional colleagues in the mental health fields due to concerns about time, cost, stigma, or a mistaken belief that it is better to just “suck it up” and “push through.” The reality is that this often results in unnecessary suffering. **Those who reach out for help are often surprised to learn how much better they can feel, how much more productive they can be, and how much the quality of their work and relationships can improve.** If you feel you are struggling now (and let's face it, who isn't having a harder time?!), please do yourself a favor and take advantage of the many FREE, CONVENIENT resources to access CONFIDENTIAL services ([scroll down for information on accessing the resources](#)).

If you are concerned about a friend, family member, colleague, or trainee but unsure how to approach them, check out this resource from Mental Health America that can help you get started:

STARTING A CONVERSATION

If you think someone that you care about is struggling it can be hard to start a conversation with them about what is going on in their life. If a face-to-face talk is too intimidating, you can start with a text message or an email.

Use the prompts below to help you think through what specifically has happened, or what you've noticed about your friend or loved one that has caused you to be concerned about them.

Start the conversation when there is an open window of time to have an in-depth discussion, and you won't have to cut the conversation short to take care of other obligations. Plan to set aside at least 30 minutes to an hour.

FOR THE PAST (DAY/WEEK/MONTH/YEAR/ _____), IT SEEMS LIKE YOU HAVE BEEN FEELING (UNLIKE YOURSELF/SAD/ANGRY/ANXIOUS/MOODY/AGITATED/LONELY/HOPELESS/FEARFUL/OVERWHELMED/DISTRACTED/CONFUSED/STRESSED/RESTLESS/UNABLE TO FUNCTION OR GET OUT OF BED/ _____).

YOU SEEM TO BE STRUGGLING WITH YOUR (BREAK-UP/DIVORCE/JOB STRESS/JOB LOSS/NEW JOB/DEATH OF A LOVED ONE/HOUSING ISSUES/DEATH OF A PET/RECENT HEALTH DIAGNOSIS/FRIENDSHIP FALLING APART/RELATIONSHIP/FINANCES/ _____).

I'VE NOTICED YOUR (CHANGES IN APPETITE/CHANGES IN WEIGHT/LOSS OF INTEREST IN THINGS YOU USED TO ENJOY/LACK OF ENERGY/INCREASED ENERGY/INABILITY TO CONCENTRATE/ALCOHOL OR DRUG USE OR ABUSE/SELF-HARM/SKIPPING MEALS/OVEREATING/GUILT/PARANOIA/LACK OF SLEEP/SLEEPING TOO MUCH/RISKY SEXUAL BEHAVIOR/OVERWHELMING SADNESS/ANGER/RAGE/ISOLATION/CUTTING/TALK OF SUICIDE/ _____).

TALKING TO YOU ABOUT THIS MAKES ME FEEL (NERVOUS/ANXIOUS/HOPEFUL/EMBARRASSED/EMPOWERED/PRO-ACTIVE/SELF-CONSCIOUS/GUILTY/ _____), BUT I'M TELLING YOU THIS BECAUSE (I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU/IT IS IMPACTING OUR RELATIONSHIP/I AM AFRAID/I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO ELSE TO DO/I DON'T KNOW IF ANYONE ELSE HAS TALKED TO ABOUT THIS/ _____).

I WOULD LIKE TO HELP YOU (TALK TO A DOCTOR OR THERAPIST/TALK TO A GUIDANCE COUNSELOR/FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO/TALK ABOUT THIS LATER/CREATE A PLAN TO GET BETTER/TALK ABOUT THIS MORE/FIND A SUPPORT GROUP/ _____).
WHAT CAN I DO?

Below are several resources available to members of the UF College of Medicine community:

Talkspace Online Mental Health Services

- Unlimited access to no cost online therapy for GatorCare members 18 years+ (this means your covered spouse too!)
- Online therapy available via private messaging or live video from a secure, HIPAA-compliant digital platform
- Can access anytime, anywhere, no need to leave/return to work and figure out parking
- Staffed by licensed mental health providers
- Get started at <http://talkspace.com/gatorcare>

Mental Health Triage Line and Care

- Available to all employees of UFCOM and UF Health
- Call the UF Health Staff Telepsych Service Center between 8:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. (7 days per week) at 352-265-5459 or email c19peersupport@shands.ufl.edu (provide your name, contact number, and best time(s) to receive a call back)
- A licensed mental health professional will perform a quick screening and help you identify the services that would be most useful and convenient for you
- The EAP offers 6 FREE sessions of counseling per academic year (meaning 6 sessions before June 30, with an additional 6 sessions beginning July 1)
- Employees are able to get an immediate appointment through this triage system
- Telehealth is also an option, which helps with the scheduling, and after-hours appointments are available to meet your schedule's demands

Traditional Mental Health Services Through Your GatorCare Insurance

- Community providers (those outside of UF Health) have been added in to the Tier 1 network to expand availability of services
- The best way to find out who is in network is to call New Directions at 866-287-9569 or your Florida Blue onsite customer service representative at 352-594-3354

COM students can continue to seek mental healthcare through:

- UFCOM Office of Student Counseling & Professional Development: <https://counseling.med.ufl.edu/>
- UF Counseling & Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>

FREE SMART Couples relationship skills workshops

UF/IFAS Extension Department of Family, Youth, & Community Sciences is again offering their popular SMART Couples relationship skills workshops (now via Zoom) starting in June. The FREE workshops (for either singles or couples) are offered on Zoom from 6-8pm. These workshops are open to anyone and there are several days to choose from. Click the link to register today, as "seats" are limited:

<https://smartcouples.ifas.ufl.edu/classes/alachua/>

If you have any questions you can email Jaime, the SMART Couples Instructor at j.haynes@ufl.edu or, txt/call at 904-514-3730

Relationship Skills Workshops

FREE, FUN, AND GIFT CARDS

Improve Communication. Resolve Conflicts.
Strengthen Your Relationship.

Attend a SMART Couples workshop and laugh and learn at the same time. "Couples that laugh together, last together." ~ Dr. John Gottman, Psychologist, Researcher, Therapist



Enroll in a
SMART Couples
workshop today

Preregistration
is required.

Please go to Classes at
smartcouples.org
or contact

Jaime Haynes
University of Florida
IFAS Extension
Family, Youth & Community
Sciences
904-514-3730 (cell)
j.haynes@ufl.edu

LIVE WORKSHOP ONLINE VIA ZOOM

Register today at smartcouples.org under Classes, Alachua County
Workshops are held once a week for 5 weeks

Relationship Skills Workshop

Before You Tie the Knot (for singles and couples)

Tuesdays: Jun. 2, Jun. 9, Jun. 16, Jun. 23 & Jun. 30 from 6-8pm.
Wednesdays: Jun. 3, Jun. 10, Jun. 17, Jun. 24 & Jul. 1 from 12-2pm.
Thursdays: Jun. 4, Jun. 11, Jun. 18, Jun. 25 & Jul. 2 from 6-8pm.

Couples Workshop

ELEVATE: Taking Your Relationship to the Next Level

*Attendance as a couple is required

Mondays: Jun. 1, Jun. 8, Jun. 15, Jun. 22 & Jun. 29 from 6-8pm.
Wednesdays: Jun. 3, Jun. 10, Jun. 17, Jun. 24 & Jul. 1 from 6-8pm.

Check out our easy-to-use website at
SMARTcouples.org

Funding for this project is provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Support Enforcement. These services are available to eligible persons, regardless of race, gender, age, disability or religion, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, P.L. persons needing accommodations or an interpreter to participate in programs should contact their UF Policy Extension Office no later than 5 days prior to the scheduled meeting time or call 1-800-633-6775, TDD.

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UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



Finally, the UFHR Wellness team continues to offer **online workshops to teach strategies to manage stress and increase resilience**. In addition to the live-via-Zoom options, they have added an asynchronous "on demand" option to better meet the needs of UFCOM and other members of the HSC. You can read more about this resource and register below:

Join UFHR Wellness for the **Resilient Gators** series to learn about resilience, how to build it and how to use this quality to help tackle life's challenges. Choose from either of these series of two 30-minute Zoom sessions:

- Wednesday, May 20 & May 27, at 1 p.m.
- Thursday, June 2 & June 4, at 10 a.m.

*OR, you can sign up to participate “on demand” at a time
that is convenient for you!*

[REGISTER HERE >>](#)

Please take advantage of the resource(s) that would best meet your current needs! 😊

Stay well,

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