

### Post-Pandemic Coping Tips

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The pandemic is still top-of-mind for most of us, but there's also a light at the end of the tunnel. More of us are fully vaccinated, businesses are opening to fuller capacities, and those long-awaited hugs from family and friends are now more of a reality. Because this past year has been abundant with information on how to be careful, stay safe, and help others to stay safe, you might find your return to the workplace, classroom, restaurants or other social events a bit disconcerting. You wouldn't be alone. According to Keith Morgen, PhD, of Centenary University, "There's going to be a notion of, 'This used to be a danger zone. Now it's not, but it still feels like one.'"

The return to a previous sense of "normal" is likely to be gradual for most of us. Here are a few coping tips for your successful return:

- 1) Take it slow but steady. For example, a trip to the grocery store can expand from 30 minutes to 45, and then to 60.
- 2) Know your limits and set boundaries accordingly. It's okay to say "no" if you don't feel comfortable with a social location chosen. Suggest other options.
- 3) Practice patience ... first with yourself and then with others. Resilience - our ability to bounce back from adversity - has never been tested quite like this before or for this long. Give yourself a break, and while you're at it, give others a break, too.
- 4) Live in the present moment. Rather than going too far into the future or the past, practicing living in the present moment helps manage the stressors of the post-pandemic experience. Prayer, meditation, or deep breathing exercises can also help.
- 5) Consider revisiting personal and professional goals that have been on hold for the past year.
- 6) Screen time – take a break. You'll be glad you did!
- 7) Manage the basics of your self-care as often as possible: nutritious food, 7-9 hours of sleep, drink water, move your body, get outside, laugh, play.

To speak with an EAP counselor, please call (402) 398-5566 or (888) 847-4975.