

# COVID-19 LEADERSHIP CHECKLIST MITIGATING TEAM STRESS

## SHARE INFORMATION

Sharing information establishes communication and trust with your team.

- Stay up-to-date on the latest developments
- Share what you know with the team
- Let them know when you don't know the answer

**Self Check: Have you updated your team recently?**

## CONNECT

Connecting with others can help prevent people from feeling isolated and alone.

- Run regular meetings to provide structure and stability
- Strengthen your team's sense of community and shared purpose
- Set up a group text to check in regularly with all team members including those without government iPhones

**Self Check: Are you connecting with your own leaders and teammates?**

## RECOGNIZE LIMITS

Stress can diminish people's ability to process complex information.

- Remember to repeat whatever is important and over-communicate
- Be patient if someone makes a mistake or isn't tracking
- Build in redundant checks for critical pathways to reduce errors

**Self Check: Are you making simple mistakes?**

**Do you need to take a minute to recharge?**

## MAINTAIN PHYSICAL RESILIENCE

When people take care of themselves physically, they can handle stress better.

- Prioritize sleep
- Encourage good nutrition
- Get regular exercise

**Self Check: Are you remembering to take care of your physical health?**

## MAINTAIN PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE

Using mental resilience skills can help people manage stress and stay strong.

- Encourage a balanced diet of news to avoid feeling overwhelmed
- Keep a detailed to-do list to keep things manageable
- Use positive self-talk or buddy talk to get through stressful moments
- Use “Grounding” (name 3 things you can see, hear, and physically feel) to reduce anxiety spikes and orient yourself to the moment

**Self Check: What mental resilience skills are you practicing?**

## NORMALIZE STRESS

It is important to acknowledge the impact of stress, letting unit members feel more connected and less emotionally isolated.

- Recognize your team’s stress (“This is uncharted territory”)
- Remember there are individual differences in how people cope with stress
- Give permission to talk about stress to the team
- Recognize that high-achievers are likely to feel even more stress during crises

**Self Check: Have you acknowledged your own stress level to someone?**

## SEIZE THE MOMENT

Leaders can reframe this moment as a critical opportunity for the entire team to contribute to the shared mission of finding solutions to the crisis.

- Remind your team of the important mission at hand
- Everyone has an essential role to play, no matter their rank or occupation

**Self Check: How can this challenge provide you a leadership opportunity?**

## CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES

Reduce stress and save energy by focusing efforts on what can be controlled and accepting what can’t be controlled.

- Encourage your team members to identify what they can control
- Have team members practice deep breathing and mindfulness when things start to feel like they are out of control

**Self Check: What is within your control? What do you have to accept?**



## TAKE THE LONG VIEW

**This isn’t a one-time process.  
Pace yourself and your team for a marathon.  
Remember to be kind to yourself and your team.**

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